The Development of Artistic Interest: Case Studies of Gallery Visitors in Taipei and London

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I, Lo-Yun Chung, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

This thesis explores the development of artistic interest among gallery visitors in Taipei and London through qualitative research methods. The research focuses on the developmental trajectories of the artistic interest of 28 art enthusiasts – gallery visitors with a self-defined interest in visual arts – and how those visitors perceive the roles of museums in relation to the development of their interests.

The thesis first establishes the theoretical framework for studying the development of artistic interest through a review of literature on interest development, motivation, leisure and cultural participation, and interest-driven pursuits. Art enthusiasts' pathways to art – the developmental trajectories of artistic interest – are then analyzed through three developmental dynamics of interest: pivotal influences, interest-related resources, and perceived values and roles, drawing on semi-structured interviews and gallery observations. The research identifies a number of settings which are influential in sparking or sustaining artistic interest, and finds interest-related resources to be in active dialogue with these settings. The roles of museums, despite being reflected within the contexts of influences and resources, are perceived in wider contexts, e.g. education, social interaction, evoking authentic experiences, or identity building. The research identifies two general patterns: early pathways and late pathways. Artistic interest is found to develop through the following phases: an initiating phase, 'a-ha moment' (reflective awareness), maintaining phase, and stabilizing phase. A cross-group, comparative analysis is also presented, revealing some culturally specific observations of interest development among art enthusiasts in Taipei and London.

The thesis concludes with a reflection on key findings regarding the development of pathways to art, and the roles museums play in the cultivation of artistic interest. I highlight, in particular, the cross-boundary nature of interest development, in which museums play a crucial role in nurturing early interest as well as forging late phase interest. Based on the research findings, I suggest that museums develop programs with individuals' needs at different phases of interest development in mind.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Research context

This PhD project considers the development of artistic interest among gallery visitors; it explores gallery visitors' prolonged engagement in visual arts by considering the intersection of interest development and structural factors that prompt art participation. My firsthand experience working in art museum education sowed the initial seeds for this project. Before embarking on this PhD thesis, I had spent some years working in several art galleries in Asia and North America. My role as an education officer in a museum gave me opportunities to run exciting art programs for visitors while observing visitors' experiences. Through my role, I observed that visitors/participants' quality of engagement varied: some engaged enthusiastically in programs/exhibitions, and demonstrated certain qualities, such as self-direction, resourcefulness, and determination throughout their participation in programs or exhibitions. The behavior of such visitors gave birth to my interest in the motivations behind active and prolonged participation in art, particularly in museums.

People visit museums for various reasons. Vibrant discussions on motivations for museum visits identify interest as one of the psychographic factors shaping a distinct museum experience, and as a prompt for visiting a museum (Falk 2009; Falk and Dierking 2013; Leinhardt and Knutson 2004; Perry 2012; Rounds 2004). However, museum visiting, particularly in the case of galleries, has a sociocultural root. Researchers have agreed upon the fact that structural factors, such as education and social position, endow a person with a certain level of cultural competence, and play an important role in cultural participation (Bennett et al. 2009; Bourdieu 1984; Hsu 2011; Merriman 1989). A recent research initiative at King's College London has

similarly addressed 'science capital' and its implications for boosting scientific enterprise (Archer et al. 2015), highlighting the sociocultural root of science participation, particularly in the case of science museum visitation. This research is inspired by the debates on the complexity of what motivates people to visit museums. Through analysis of a select group of 'art enthusiasts', defined as people who have a self-defined interest in art or art 'hobbyists' (Stebbins 2011), this thesis explores museum visiting as an interest-related pursuit, and as part of a broader of landscape of cultural participation (especially participation in visual arts). This work thus has two foci: art enthusiasts' experience of developing an interest in art; and art enthusiasts' perception of museums and galleries in relation to interest development.

Interest, a psychological notion consisting of positive affects and cognitive development (Hidi and Renninger 2006), has been acknowledged as an important motivational factor in the study of learning. Heated discussions on how studies of interest inform educational practice are particularly visible in the field of science (e.g. Dohn 2014, Renninger and Bachrach 2015). Research connecting interest in science to engagement in learning science and the identification with science ('science identity') (Bell et al. 2009), as well as studies linking early interest in science to the development of careers in science (the study of 'pathways to science') (Crowley et al. 2015), have garnered academic interest and impacted science education practices. However, the way that interest studies may inform the field of art (e.g. arts education, museum studies) has remained under-explored. This research could therefore intersect well with current studies on interest in science, and inspire dialogue between academic explorations of artistic interest development, educational and professional practices in art-related fields, and the museum field.

This thesis focuses on 'pathways to art'. Such rhetoric is borrowed from Crowley et al.'s (2015) 'pathway to science careers', and refers to the developmental trajectory through which artistic interest develops and is sustained. This entails art enthusiasts' engagement with art across various settings, rather than referring to a specific setting such as education or career development. General as it seems, this

research focus is grounded in ecological and sociocultural perspectives of learning and development, which understand learning as a developmental process of individuals contingent on various systems of interaction beyond the individual (Bronfenbrenner 1977), and consider development to be embedded in distinct sociocultural communities and mediated by dynamic tools (Barron 2006). Moreover, the domain of art in this thesis only refers to visual arts, namely, the art forms of drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, architecture, video, filmmaking, applied art (e.g. textile art), decorative art (e.g. ceramics) etc. (Encyclopedia Britannica 2016). I have conceptualized art as the visual arts to distinguish it from other art forms, such as music, dance, and theater, because it is difficult to establish strong and direct links between other art forms and museums and galleries, the latter being one of the primary fields this thesis aims to impact. Even so, this distinction does not prevent me from drawing links between art enthusiasts' involvement in music, dance, or theater and their engagement in visual arts. In fact, my findings suggest that art enthusiasts demonstrate interest in several art forms, and they perceive their engagement in different art forms as part of their 'art identity'. Therefore, the focus on interest in visual arts serves the purpose of keeping the lines of inquiry to the development of interest connected with visual arts related themes, and aligns with the aim to explore museum visiting as an interest-driven pursuit and aspect of cultural participation.

Special focus is paid to art museums in this work. This thesis considers art museums places of interest for those who seek opportunities to engage in art and to learn about art. As the field of visual arts is heavily dependent on institutional resources (Bennett et al. 2009), art museums and galleries remain the dominant venues in which artistic encounters take place. Moreover, art museums represent one of the significant learning settings outside of the formal education system. As people spend the majority of their lives (97 percent) outside the formal education system (Falk, Dierking and Adams 2006), museums certainly merit significance as a learning environment featuring free-choice, self-driven and self-directed learning (Heimlich and Falk 2009). Still, this research concentration does not preclude me

from drawing links between museums and other artistic learning spaces, or virtual settings where people may access art. My findings reveal that art enthusiasts pursue their interests across various learning settings, and they perceive each setting as providing different opportunities and resources to cultivate those interests.

From this brief discussion on the background of my research, it should be clear that this research speaks to and draws from various disciplines, especially museum studies, visitor studies, learning science, cultural psychology (e.g. interest research), cultural sociology, and arts education. As previously outlined, I intend to explore the topic of artistic interest via two lines of discussion: the development of pathways to art, and the roles museums and galleries play in interest development. To achieve this, I have adopted a qualitative methodology that facilitates exploration of the developmental processes of artistic interest. Working with two small groups of art enthusiasts who I recruited in Taipei and London, I explore the nuances of interest development by comparing data collected from participants in Taiwan (GT) and in Britain (GL).

Taiwan has always been my planned field site, as it is where my personal observation of gallery visitors and work experience in museum education took place and ultimately sparked my research questions. Moreover, since the launch of the '2014-2019 Aesthetic Education Initiative', the Taiwanese government has increasingly acknowledged the importance of aesthetic education and raised public awareness of the need to build a culturally active society. This has stimulated academic interest and discussion with regard to the means of nurturing popular interest in culture and encouraging public participation in the arts. As a member of both the museum professional and museum research communities in Taiwan, my research practice has been informed by this trend.

The selection of Britain as a comparative case study was based, first, on the fact that Britain is geographically and economically convenient to conduct research given where the PhD was being undertaken. Furthermore, the ratio of annual museum and gallery participation in Britain is very similar to that of Taiwan. Figures reported in the 2011 Cultural Statistics Report commissioned by the Taiwanese Ministry of

Culture (2011) suggested a 47.4% annual percentage distribution of participation in museums and galleries among young adults and adults, whereas Britain had a 53% annual percentage distribution of participation in museums and galleries between July 2012 and June 2013 according to the Taking Part Survey (2013/14 Quarter 1) produced by Britain's Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2013). This made Britain a sensible choice for comparison. Moreover, few examples of studies focusing on the developmental process of artistic interest exist; therefore, conducting additional research in Britain was perceived as further filling this gap.

1.2 Research questions

As noted in Section 1.1, this thesis explores the development of interest by studying and comparing personal experiences of art enthusiasts. Specifically, this thesis is concerned with the process through which an artistic interest is formed, pursued, and experienced as 'a pathway to art'. The investigation also entails identifying key factors that prompt the emergence and development of an interest, and exploring the relationship between museum visitation and interest. I consider three core research questions to address the above-mentioned themes:

RQ1 How does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?

1. What do pathways to art look like?
2. What are the dynamics in the development of artistic interest?
3. How do these dynamics play out in the process of interest development?

RQ2 What roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest?

1. What motivates an art enthusiast to visit museums?
2. How are museums and galleries perceived in general and in relation to interest?

RQ3 How do processes of interest development differ or converge between art enthusiasts in Taipei and in London?

Research Questions 1 and 2 center on the two main focuses of this thesis: the developmental process of interest in visual arts, and the perceived roles museums play in such a process. Research Question 3 synthesizes the discussions from Research Questions 1 and 2, and examines them comparatively and cross-culturally. Through these research questions, I develop my arguments pertaining to the wider question of interest development among gallery visitors in Taipei and London.

1.3 Thesis structure

This thesis has ten chapters. In Chapter 1, I outline the rationale for conducting this research and present the research questions. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 review existing literature in order to situate the study of artistic interest development in a wider context. These two chapters also build the theoretical framework for this research, and provide insights to draw from when analyzing art enthusiasts' experiences. Chapter 2 considers two contexts that are essential to the understanding of artistic interest: the psychological and sociological accounts of interest. I examine the understanding of the pursuit of interest as a psychologically motivated behavior, and I highlight the contribution of this account, including: the conceptualization of interest as measured by the affective, cognitive and behavioral components via different methods; consideration of interest from a developmental perspective; and examination of interest in relation to intrinsically motivated experience (e.g. flow). I also examine interest as contingent on an individual's sociocultural environments, and shed light on the influences of early socialization and formal education via a discussion of the concepts of 'cultural capital' and 'habitus'. In Chapter 3, I turn to empirical studies, in which the concepts of interest, motivation, and identity are discussed as they relate to several contexts, including museum visiting, learning (about science, technology, and music), and career

development (in science). I draw from a broad range of interest-, identity- and motivation-related studies, and underscore key dynamics of interest development (e.g. family and parental influence) that help me elaborate on the developmental process of artistic interest, identity-related observations of interest development, which supplement my arguments on artistic interest development, and motivations to visit museums, which provide insights for my discussion on the perceived roles of museums.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodological approach and research methods chosen to address the research questions posed. I explain the research design, as well as the methods used to collect data. I also discuss in detail the processes through which I recruited research participants in Taipei and London, as well as the rationale for selecting participants as case studies. In addition, I briefly discuss the data analysis process, ethical issues and reflexivity in this chapter.

From Chapter 5 through Chapter 8, I present my analysis of two case studies. Chapters 5 and 6 focus on Group Taipei (GT), and present a cross-analysis of 14 art enthusiasts recruited in Taipei. In Chapter 5, I elaborate deeply on pathways to art, featuring four selected art enthusiasts. Through this close examination, I highlight four significant themes, which help address Research Questions 1 and 2: pivotal influences on interest, interest-related resources, perceived roles and values of museums, and the developmental phases of interest. The first three themes are conceptualized as the developmental dynamics of artistic interest. In Chapter 6, I pursue all four themes further by presenting a cross-analysis of data gathered via interviews and observations. I begin with a brief discussion on the profiles of GT art enthusiasts. I then highlight the pivotal influences GT participants encountered throughout their pathways to art, including key persons (e.g. family, mentors, peers), key institutions (e.g. schools, art studios, museums), and key activities and practices (e.g. creative practice, volunteering, traveling) that had an impact on their interest. I identify interest-related resources that GT participants considered relevant to interest development, including distributed content (e.g. printed publications), relationships and connections with certain people (e.g. membership in interest

group), and venue-based resources (e.g. art courses in museums). I also discuss how GT participants perceive the roles and values of museums, and how artistic interest emerges and develops in different phases. Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 focus on Group London (GL), and present a cross-analysis of 14 art enthusiasts recruited in London; these two chapters are structured in a manner that mirrors the structure and text hierarchy of Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 9 brings together the preceding four chapters, and comparatively examines my analysis of the two case studies. To address Research Question 3, I draw comparisons between GT and GL on the following findings: the profiles of art enthusiasts, the three developmental dynamics of interest that shape the pathways to art, and the developmental phases of interest. Through the comparison, I examine the findings I drew from the two case studies within a wider context. Finally, Chapter 10 concludes the thesis with a summary of my findings, the contribution this research makes to the existing body of literature on interest development, and directions for future research and professional practice.

Chapter 2

Studies of Interest and Motivation

Chapter 2 situates this research within the existing literature by reviewing relevant works that are essential to and have implications for the study of artistic interest. The pursuit of interest can be understood as a psychologically motivated behavior, and it may be considered contingent on an individual's sociocultural environment. Both psychological and sociological discussions of interest are essential to the study of artistic interest, and will help me address Research Question 1 (RQ1) 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?'

This chapter consists of four sections. Sections 2.1 and Section 2.2 focus on psychological approaches towards the conceptualization of interest and motivation, which are integral to my understanding of interest and its development. As this research sets out to explore the developmental process of artistic interest, studies of interest and motivation, which are important psychological terms closely related with each other, provide a foundation for defining key terms and methods to explore the motive to engage in art as psychological phenomena. Sections 2.3 and Section 2.4 turn to the sociological accounts of interest, which provide an important perspective on the formation of interest. Personal involvement in art can be read as a manifestation of cultivated predisposition, lifestyle and taste, and such reading of interest adds a sociocultural perspective to the study of interest. Studies reviewed in this chapter originate from different disciplines, primarily psychology, educational research, sociology, and museum studies.

2.1 Interest and its development

In this section, I discuss studies regarding the conceptualization of interest, namely the definition, forms and characteristics of interest (Section 2.1.1), followed

by a brief discussion of measurement of interest (Section 2.1.2). I then elaborate on Hidi and Renninger's developmental phases of interest (Section 2.1.3), as it is most relevant to this research. I first present a brief history of interest research below.

As early as the turn of the 20th century, psychologists noted that interest was the most important motivational factor in learning and development (Hidi, Renninger and Krapp 2004). Interest has now been recognized as 'a critical motivational variable that guides attention, facilitates learning in different content areas, and for learner of all ages, develops through experience' (Renninger and Hidi 2011:169). Studies of interest emerged in mainstream psychology with the revival of affective (motivational) processes in the 1980s and 1990s, before which affective variables had long been neglected and considered peripheral in studying the development of mental functions (Boekaerts and Boscolo 2002). After a long struggle, interest has been linked to cognitive outcomes in addition to emotional responses, and was given a central place in studying learning and achievement in both academic and vocational settings as a key motivational term (Hidi, Renninger and Krapp 2004; Schiefele 2001). As the conception of interest received scholarly attention, a burgeoning number of studies of interest appeared in the past three decades, addressing distinct research questions and reflecting different theoretical backgrounds.

Reviewing the development of interest research for the past three decades, Renninger and Su (2012) highlight two strands of research on interest: studies that track interest over time and address the developmental process of interest, and studies of earlier or later phases of interest, which aim to understand the impact of interest as a motivational variable. Because this research aims to explore the developmental process of artistic interest, emphasis is placed on developmental studies of interest rather than studies that look into specific phase of interest and its impact on learning.

2.1.1 Definition and characteristics of Interest

Interest refers to liking, preference, or attraction. More importantly, interest is a psychological state of heightened affect that often leads to reengagement with a particular content (Renninger 2009). In educational psychology where interest research is considered an important field of research, it is defined as both a psychological state or process that occurs during interactions between a person and an object of interest, and a relatively enduring predisposition to engage with particular content (Hidi and Renninger 2006; Krapp 2007; Schiefele 2001). An object of interest may refer to concrete things, a topic, a subject matter, an abstract idea, or any other content of the cognitively represented life-space (Krapp 2007). The dual meaning of interest implies that interest evolves through time, and can be distinguished between a less-developed form, i.e. situational interest, and a well-developed form, i.e. individual interest.

2.1.1.1 Situational interest and individual interest

A rich body of research has drawn a distinction between situational interest and individual interest. Situational interest refers to an affective reaction triggered in the moment by environmental stimuli that may or may not last over time (Hidi and Renninger 2006); a temporary emotional state aroused by specific features of activity or task (Schiefele 2001). It is noted that individuals may respond to environmental stimuli differently, due to genetic predisposition or prior experience (Hidi and Renninger 2006). Individual interest, on the other hand, is a personal and relatively stable orientation towards certain domains (Schiefele 2001); an enduring predisposition to attend to objects or events and to reengage in certain activity over time (Hidi, Renninger and Krapp 2004). Differentiating situational interest from individual interest implies that interest changes its form over time. Moreover, different components, i.e. emotional reactions and cognitive processes can be discerned when identifying interest, which leads to different conceptualizations.

2.1.1.2 Components of interest

Interest is conceptualized as having both affective and cognitive components. The fundamental characteristics of interest involve, first, affective components, which include focused attention and positive feelings and emotions (Hidi and Renninger 2006; Krapp 2007); and feeling-related valences – such as stimulation, enjoyment – are used to measure interest (Schiefele 2001). The experience of flow – a sense of 'losing oneself', total immersion, effortless attention (Nakamura and Cikszentmihalyi 2002) – is a perfect illustration of the affective aspect of interest/intrinsic motivation, and will be explored in Section 2.2. Interest also involves cognitive components, which include knowledge processing, perceptual and representational activity (Hidi and Renninger 2006; Krapp 2007). Relevant to cognitive processing is value-related components used to measure interest, e.g. attribution of personal significance (Krapp 2007; Schiefele 2001). 'Stored knowledge' – a person's developing understanding of the procedures and discourse knowledge of particular activities or ideas – and 'stored value' – a person's developing a feeling of competence and the corresponding positive and negative emotions that surface as he or she works to answer curiosity questions – are two cognitive components specifically used to differentiate later phase interest, i.e. individual interest (Renninger, Ewen and Lasher 2002) from early phase interest. It is also noted that different level of engagement, self-efficacy, and goal setting or self-regulating behavior may be identified between situational interest and individual interest (Hidi and Renninger 2006). These components are summarized in Figure 2-1.

The conceptualization of interest varies in the extent to which affect, knowledge and value are the focus of inquiry (Renninger and Hidi 2011). Some researchers conceptualize interest as addressing both affective response and cognitive processing, and include affect/feelings, knowledge and value as components (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006). Others focus on certain component, such as affect and value (e.g. Krapp 2005) to address certain aspects of the way in which individuals engage with particular content. It is fair to say that both affective

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and cognitive components serve as indicators to identify interest, particularly when addressing interest development. As conceptualizations of interest vary, there are no agreed-upon methods for measuring interest and its development (Renninger and Hidi 2011). Rather, measurements are determined by the focus of research questions and how interest is conceptualized.
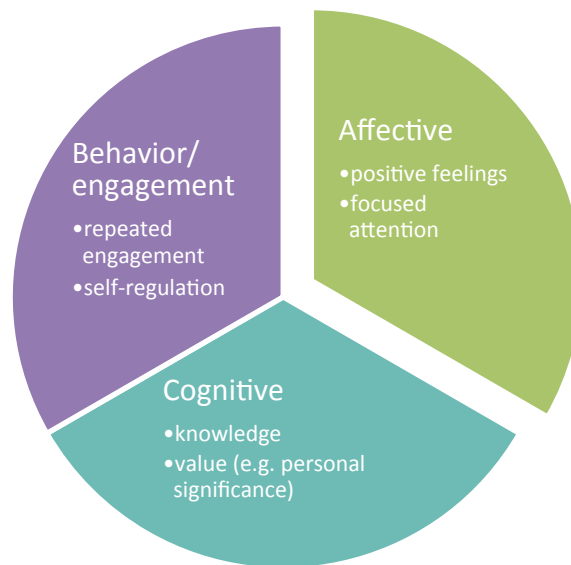
Figure 2-1 Components of interest

Apart from making a terminological distinction between situational and individual interest, interest is also conceptualized at different level of specification. Schiefele (2001) points out a contrast between object-related (knowledge domain) interest (e.g. interest in history) and activity-related interest (e.g. interest in mountain climbing). Krapp (2007) also notes that 'vocational interest', conceptualized as a personal characteristic, refers to an attitude towards specific topic or a certain kind of activity; the contents of an individual's interest are usually used to predict future preferences for certain actions and the individual's development.

2.1.2 Measurement of interest

As addressed in Section 2.1.1, there is no established measurement for interest

and its development due to different conceptualizations. Such specification is not possible because of differences in the structure of discipline and differences in research questions (Renninger and Su 2012). Researchers may address affective components of interest, and only focus on momentary psychological state of interest (e.g. preferences) regardless of further reengagement when assessing interest (Renninger and Hidi 2011). To date, interest development has been measured using self-report measures and behavioral measures (Renninger and Hidi 2011; Renninger and Su 2012).

Renninger and Hidi (2011) provide a detailed discussion on both self-report and behavioral measures. Self-report measures (e.g. surveys or interviews) aim at capturing respondents' perception, and require respondents to rate or comment on the level of interest in a given situation. In general, they argue that although the content and the structure of items used to assess interest in surveys or interviews vary, selected items should align with the working conceptualization (ibid:175). Moreover, researchers should ensure that participants across age groups interpret selected items of a scale in a conceptually similar manner, particularly in quantitative self-measures of interest (ibid:176); researcher should not solely base their findings on positive feelings when measuring interest, as negative affect may be associated with both earlier and later phases of interest development (ibid:176). Despite that a single item (e.g. emotion) may provide the basis for identifying interest, for the purpose of understanding the trajectory of interest development, multiple sets of items and multiple sources of input (e.g. interview with participants and parents) should be employed to ensure the richness of data (ibid:176). Barron's (2006) study of adolescents' interest in developing computer fluency demonstrates the use of self-report measure (retrospective interviews) with multiple inputs (students, parents and tutors), which enables the researcher to build rich, in-depth case studies of interest development (see Section 3.2.4).

Behavioral measures (e.g. participant observation, ethnography, or the use of video) capture respondents' behavior during naturally occurring interactions. Observational data provides further insights into whether participants were in a

position to realize their own reactions (Renninger and Hidi 2011). Renninger and Bachrach (2015) use observational method to study the triggering process of interest in an out-of-school biology workshop. Since experiences that trigger interest are often considered unexpected and ephemeral, they find that through observation, it is possible to capture students' behavioral reactions (e.g. engagement or non-engagement in a given activity), of which students may not be aware when a potential trigger (e.g. a hands-on activity) is introduced (ibid:66). Observational method also enables researchers to capture *different* responses to *different* triggers, which may be seen as a strong feature of the observational method (ibid:66). However, the limitation of observational methods is that the process of conducting observation is labor-intensive and the sample of participant may not exceed a certain number, as the Renninger and Bachrach's study showed. This raised questions about whether and how the findings might have differed if the demography of the participants or the learning context varied.

Observations may have a strong potential to increase understanding of the triggering process, and inform research and practice concerned with interest development (Renninger and Bachrach 2015), but observations are not sufficient on their own. Observation is often used in combination with self-reporting to understand the context of the learning environment, such as the museum or the classroom (Renninger and Hidi 2011). However, it should be noted that in a well-developed form, interest might be assessed based on participation, whereas in a less-developed form, it might not be well predicted by participation alone (Renninger and Su 2012). In addition to participant observation, Renninger and Hidi (2011) report two other observational methods, online measure and neuroscientific methods, whose strengths and limitations are not yet proven by empirical studies, and are in their infancy for measuring interest.

The above discussion makes an important point: no matter which measure is adopted to assess interest, one needs to be aware of aligning the methods with the intended conceptualization of interest. Furthermore, one should be aware of the complications of items used to assess interest, and take into account certain factors,

e.g. age-related differences and disciplinary differences.

2.1.3 Four-phase model of interest development

As established in the preceding sections, an interest (situational interest) may be aroused by environmental stimuli in an early phase, and may or may not develop into a more stable form (individual interest) in a later phase. More importantly, the way that interest affects learning varies, depending on whether the person is in an earlier or later phases of interest development (Renninger and Hidi 2011). In this section I discuss a recent development in interest research featuring on the developmental studies of interest, which addresses the changing relation of a person and a subject or content over time.

Hidi and Renninger (2006), building on their previous work and existing empirical studies, propose the 'Four-Phase Model of Interest Development', which characterizes interest in four developing phases: triggered situational interest, maintained situational interest, emerging individual interest, and well-developed individual interest. This model is established on the distinction between situational interest and individual interest, and suggests that interest develops from forms of initial triggering (situational interest) that may be sustained by a relatively enduring predisposition (individual interest) to reengage with particular content over time (Renninger and Su 2012). Descriptions of the four developmental phases are summarized in Figure 2-2.

As Figure 2-2 suggests, each phase is characterized by different indicators, known as learner's characteristics. In general, at earlier phases ('triggered situational interest' and 'maintained situational interest' phases) interest is primarily characterized by focused attention and positive feelings, and therefore, can be identified in terms of affect or liking. As interest develops at later phases ('emerging individual interest' and 'well-developed individual interest' phases), it is characterized by enriched knowledge and value, and can be assessed by indicators of stored knowledge, stored value and repeated engagement in addition to positive

feelings (Hidi and Renninger 2006; Renninger and Su 2012). Each phase of interest is characterized by other motivational variables, such as different levels of effort, self-efficacy, goal setting and self-regulating behavior (Hidi and Renninger 2006). However, while the early phases may seem to be characterized by affective responses, the identification of interest needs to account for the relation between feelings, value and knowledge, and that change in this relation might be expected with development (Renninger and Su 2012). Similarly, there is need to account for knowledge and value, as well as affect when assessing later phase interest, and should further inform the development of measurement for interest (Renninger and Hidi 2011).

Triggered situational interest
- **A psychological state of interest that results from short-term changes in affective and cognitive processing. The learner:**
- attends to content, if only fleetingly
- needs support to engage from others and through instructional design
- may experience either positive or negative feelings
- may or may not be reflectively aware of the experience

Maintained situational interest
- **A psychological state of interest that is subsequent to a triggered state. The learner:**
- reengages content that previously triggered attention
- is supported by others to find connections among their skills, knowledge, and prior experience
- has positive feelings
- is developing knowledge of the content
- is developing a sense of the content's value

Emerging individual interest
- **A psychological state of interest as well as to the beginning phase of a relatively enduring predisposition to seek repeated reengagement with particular content over time. The learner:**
- is likely to independently reengage content
- has curiosity questions that leads and seeks answers
- has positive feelings
- has stored knowledge and stored value
- is very focused on his or her own questions

Well-developed individual interest
- **A psychological state of interest as well as to a relatively enduring predisposition to reengage with particular content over time. The learner:**
- independently reengages content
- has curiosity questions
- self-regulates easily to reframe questions and seek answers
- has positive feelings
- can preserver through frustration and challenge in order to meet goals
- recognizes others' contribution to the discipline
- actively seeks feedback

Figure 2-2 Hidi and Renninger's four-phase model of interest development

(Renninger and Su 2012:170)

In addition, the development of interest does not necessarily involve 'reflective awareness' or 'metacognition'; a learner, despite making cognitive evaluation of the content he or she learns, may not be aware of his or her interest until later phases (reflective awareness), and neither does a learner necessarily recognizes the role interest plays in learning (metacognition) (Renninger and Su 2012:169). Moreover, knowledge plays a central role in distinguishing early phases from later phases of interest development (ibid:169). Developing knowledge drives a learner to ask curiosity questions, which leads to reengagement and generates value. Hence, knowledge is considered an important indicator to be present at later phases of interest development.

This model, however, needs to take into account a few complications. For example, although the four phases are sequential and discrete, situational interest may also occur simultaneously with individual interest (Renninger and Su 2012). Interest may be sustained and supported by others (e.g. teachers, peers), or because of challenges/opportunities; and interest may also fluctuate or fall off over time (Renninger and Hidi 2011). Moreover, the length and characteristics of each phase are influenced by individual experience and personal quality (e.g. genetic makeup, temperament), as well as the learner's environment (Renninger and Hidi 2011). This point is supported by empirical studies. Lipstein and Renninger (2007) confirm that the trajectories of interest development are dependent on different learning environments, i.e. closed environment (e.g. classroom), or open environment (e.g. summer workshop). Pugh et al. (2010) also report that interest development is influenced by individual characteristics, i.e. prior knowledge, one's identification with science (science identity).

To summarize, it has been established that interest is an important motivational variable that guides attention and facilitates learning, and develops through experience (Renninger and Hidi 2011). Interest researchers have agreed upon the following points: (1) Interest is content or object specific. It refers to an individual's attention and engagement with particular events and objects; (2) Interest involves a

particular relation between a person and the environment, and is sustained through interaction; (3) Interest has both cognitive and affective components, although the relative amount of each may vary depending on the phases of interest; (4) A person is not always aware of his or her interest during engagement; (5) Interest has a physiological/neurological basis; brain activations differ when a learner is and is not engaged with interest (2011:169).

2.1.4 Implication

Section 2.1 has reviewed research concerning how interest is conceptualized according to the component to be addressed and the focus of the research question; how interest is measured, and some implications for research and practice; and the developmental process of interest. The research discussed has three key implications for the topic of this thesis.

The above discussion underpins this thesis, but also helps differentiate the thesis from other interest research. On a conceptual level, I draw from the research discussed in this section, and I conceptualize interest as both a state of preference for art, and an orientation to engage with art. I take into account the cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects of interest. However, I consider cross-setting, less-structured and informal engagement (e.g. creative practice at homes) an important dimension to be addressed in this thesis, which distinguishes this thesis from other interest research. Interest researchers have a shared concern with the effect of interest mainly in formal and text-based learning, and there has been plenty of research conducted in classroom settings, and in fields such as sciences, mathematics, and literature. Art, however, differs from the above learning contexts, and so does the development of artistic interest. Rather than treating art simply as a discipline and focusing on how interest affects a person's acquisition of knowledge or skill of art in a fixed setting, this thesis takes a further interest in how artistic interest emerges from individuals' interaction with art across various settings, and how interest develops into a tendency to engage in art. This requires further

exploration of participants' engagement in art in everyday life, and in various forms, as opposed to a focused observation on the interaction with objects of interest in a fixed setting.

On a level of research findings, this thesis draws from some of the insights generated by the research discussed before to elaborate the phases of interest development. As inquired by the research question 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest', this thesis is concerned with the perception of the developmental processes of interest, and this requires an exploration of how art enthusiasts account for their own experience of developing an interest in art. This may include how people perceive what a 'trigger' to interest is (if there is any), and how the form of interest changes through time. Hence, findings regarding the 'triggering process' (Renninger and Bachrach 2015), and similar studies that elaborate on interest-driven pursuits (see Section 3.2) enable me to understand and identify early phase interest. Other findings also provide a theoretical framework to study artistic interest; in particular, the characteristics featured in early or late phases of interest development, as Hidi and Renninger's (2006) model shows, help me identify key moments in a developmental process.

It is also noted that the terms 'trigger' and 'spark', which are seen across different interest research and interest-driven pursuit studies, are borrowed and used interchangeably in this thesis to categorize the initiation of an interest; the two terms both refer to the action of an interest being piqued. However, I do not lose sight of participants' own unique perception of their experience. This approach to capturing the developmental process of interest taken in this thesis is retrospective, context-specific, and participant-focused, with an intention to delineate how non-art-professional adults perceive their own development of interest.

On a methodological level, this thesis is informed by interest research in adopting measurements that align with research aims and assess different components of interest. As the inquiry of artistic interest is not limited to momentary interactions but include prior experiences and engagements that are pervasive in one's life, it is considered appropriate to adopt measurements such as

retrospective interviews coupled with participant observations, which help capture both participants' perception of the experience of interest development, and their behavioral patterns. Different components of interest, e.g. feelings, knowledge, value, and engagement, will also be taken into account in designing research methods.

2.2 Intrinsic motivation

In this section, I begin with an introduction of the definition of intrinsic motivation, and then discuss two theoretical models of intrinsic motivation: self-determination theory (SDT) and flow theory. The notion of intrinsic motivation is relevant to the discussion of interest. The two terms are often used interchangeably particularly in educational context (Boekaerts and Boscolo 2002). Researchers suggest that interest is a central prerequisite for intrinsic motivation (Boekaerts and Boscolo 2002), and a driving force for intrinsically motivated activities (Schiefele 1991). Interest, when conceptualized as an affect, is closely linked to intrinsic motivation. Individuals who are characterized as interested in something are free to direct their attention towards objects or activities that attract them; it is the freedom to direct one's attention, as self-determination theorists argue, that provides the condition for satisfying the innate needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness that are intrinsic to the self, and that keeps people engaged in intrinsically motivated activities (Ryan and Deci 2000a).

Similarly, studies of flow experience describe intrinsically motivated behavior by the term 'flow state', which refers to a psychological state of total immersion when engaging in intrinsically rewarding tasks in which the level of challenge posed by the task and an individual's capacity reach balance. It is suggested that the experience of competence and felt significance are essential to maintaining the state (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi 2002). Intrinsic motivation has been a useful concept in studying learning in a broader context, and has influenced the design of learning scheme in the museum (Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson 1995).

2.2.1 Intrinsic motivation and self determination theory

Although interest is considered an important condition for intrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and interest are two different psychological phenomena. Most obviously, interest is content specific, whereas intrinsic motivation does not necessarily indicate any attachment to a particular content. Schiefele (2001), who defines interest as a set of feeling- and value-related beliefs measured through cognitive processing, explains that interest is a relatively stable set of beliefs stored in long-term memory; whereas intrinsic motivation is understood as a specific mental state – the actual wish or intention to do something.

Intrinsic motivation can be distinguished from extrinsic motivation by the orientation of motivation, which refers to the goals and attitudes that give rise to action. Precisely, intrinsic motivation is a type of motivation that refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, whereas extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separate outcome (Ryan and Deci 2000a). When a person is intrinsically motivated, he or she is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external pressures or rewards (Ryan and Deci 2000a). Intrinsic motivation and conditions that foster or diminish intrinsic motivation have been the main focus of self-determination theory.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is an approach to human motivation and personality based on the assumption that humans are genetically programmed to learn and develop (Ryan and Deci 2000b). SDT investigates people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs using empirical methods. SDT's conceptualization of intrinsic motivation is based on the assertion that all behaviors are motivated by psychological drives; this therefore leads to SDT's assumption that intrinsic motivation is an inherent propensity catalyzed, rather than caused, when individuals are in such conditions (Ryan and Deci 2000a). Following this conceptualization, the emphasis of studying intrinsic motivation is placed on the conditions that facilitate or undermine such motivation. In other words, SDT aims at specifying contexts, in which innate psychological needs are satisfied when

individuals engage in a task.

Based on the hypothesis that humans are naturally endowed with a system of basic psychological needs, SDT proposes that intrinsically motivating activities are believed to be ones that satisfy three innate psychological needs: the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The three innate psychological needs refer respectively to: the desire to feel efficacious and to be able to attain valued outcomes (competence); the desire to be self-initiating and to have a sense of acting in accord with one's own sense of self (autonomy or self-determination); the desire to feel connected to and to be accepted by significant others (relatedness) (Krapp 2005). Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), a sub-theory of SDT, further confirms that satisfying the innate needs enhances intrinsic motivation. CET points out that certain social contexts, such as being given performance feedback, conduce towards feelings of competence during action, and enhance intrinsic motivation. However, it is so only when the feelings of competence are accompanied by a sense of autonomy (Ryan and Deci 2000a). The need for autonomy is related to the need for competence (Krapp 2005), meaning that people who are highly intrinsically motivated experience satisfaction of both the needs for competence and autonomy. The need for relatedness is confirmed by studies showing that the quality of social relation is a significant predictor for positively evaluated aspects of motivation and development (Ryan and Deci 2000b).

To conclude, SDT points out that intrinsic motivation may be enhanced when individuals: are given freedom when engaging in a task, and opportunity for self-direction (autonomy); are able to perceive competence from completing a task (competence); develop the feeling of belonging to the group of individuals who share the same interest (relatedness).

2.2.2 Flow experience

Intrinsically motivated behavior is also the main concern of studies of flow experience. Studies of flow experience are one of the four approaches (the

phenomenological account) to studying control and mastery behavior, which looks closely at what people actually experience when they engage in activities that involve mastery, control and autonomous behaviors (Csikszentmihalyi, Abuhamdeh and Nakamura 2005). Asking the question, 'why do people engage in time-consuming, difficult, and often dangerous activities for which they receive no extrinsic reward', flow experience emerges as a result of studies of 'autotelic activities' – things people do for the activity's own sake. Flow researchers focus on rock climbers, chess players, artists, and athletes; respondents report a similar subjective experience that drives them to go to great lengths to experience it again, which the researchers then term as 'flow experience', an analogy of a current that carries people along effortlessly borrowed from respondents (ibid).

Flow experience refers to a psychological state of total immersion, and is defined as follows:

> Flow is a subjective state that people report when they are completely involved in something to the point of forgetting time, fatigue, and everything else but the activity itself. (…) Attention is fully invested in the task at hand, and the person functions at his or her fullest capacity. (ibid:600)

During flow, people are characterized by the following features: an intense and focused concentration on the here and now; a loss of self-consciousness; a sense that one will be in full control of the situation; a sense of time passing more quickly or slowly than normal (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi 2002). Hence, the above characteristics make the experience of flow activity intrinsically rewarding. Focused concentration and loss of self-consciousness are linked together; during flow, respondents engage in activities that receive full attentional resources, and experience a loss of self-consciousness because no attention is diverted from the activities to the self. Sense of control derives from lack of anxiety; during flow, respondents experience a lack of anxiety about losing control, which is a typical

situation in normal life and is the main source of 'psychic entropy', and the increasing sense of control makes flow experience an enjoyable one. Finally, an altered sense of time is also a result of focused concentration during flow, as all attention is invested in the activity at hand, respondents are not attentive to the passage of time, or report time passing quickly (Csikszentmihalyi, Abuhamdeh and Nakamura 2005). Flow experience is also studied as 'optimal experience', in which people are in a state of 'effortless attention' where they lose sense of time, of themselves, and of their problems (Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura 2010).

Furthermore, there has been a discussion of how flow experience occurs and can be maintained; hence, conditions under which flow experience emerges are identified. Researchers suggest that one may enter flow when perceived challenges posed by the task and one's capacities reach a balance, and therefore, experiences of competence and felt significance are essential to maintaining flow state (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi 2002). Flow tends to occur when: the activity one engages in contains a clear set of goals; there is a balance between perceived challenges and perceived skills; there is clear and immediate feedback, on which flow is dependent (Csikszentmihalyi, Abuhamdeh and Nakamura 2005).

An important point is made from the above discussion: one may design activity that produces flow by meeting the above-mentioned conditions of flow (i.e. clear goals, matching challenges and skills, and immediate feedback). Hence, flow experience has informed the development of museum by providing principles for designing learning activities. Museum curators and educators may first begin by creating the 'hook' that captures visitor's curiosity, and then create opportunities for multi-faceted involvement, e.g. sensory, emotional and intellectual, and finally facilitate flow experience by meeting the three conditions of flow activity (Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson 1995).

To conclude, studies of flow experience provide a phenomenological account for what people actually feel when they experience flow in an engaging activity, which is characterized by full concentration (or effortless attention), loss of oneself, sense of control, and sense of time passing quickly. Because of the state of being

mentioned above, people are motivated to re-experience flow, which may lead to personal growth (Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson 1995). The experience of flow can occur under certain conditions, such as when one's capacity is in balance with challenges posed by the task.

2.2.3 Implication

In Section 2.2, two approaches to intrinsic motivation, self-determination theory and flow experience, are discussed. These approaches specify the reasons for people to engage in activities in which there is no extrinsic reward, and provide a detailed account of what people actually experience in these activities and the conditions for which such experience can be fostered. It is apparent that the two approaches share common ground in terms of explaining the root of intrinsically motivated behavior. The studies reviewed help achieve a more holistic understanding of human interest and motivation as two relevant phenomena, and have two implications for the investigation of artistic interest.

On a theoretical level, the perspective of interest research can be expanded by the inclusion of intrinsic motivation studies. Intrinsic motivation is closely linked to interest because interest provides a precondition for intrinsically motivated behavior. An assumption can be made that once interest in a given content is piqued, individuals are more willing and motivated to re-engage with the content; in other words, individuals are less driven by external rewards to some extent (e.g. academic achievement, employment opportunity), because individuals develop stored value (e.g. self-significance) towards the content of interest.

Following the first point, on a conceptual level, studies of intrinsic motivation and flow experience can be used to complement interest research to inform the elaboration of the developmental process of artistic interest. Characteristics of intrinsically motivating experience and flow experience correspond with affective and emotional reactions of a person whose interest is developing. In other words, people in the process of developing an interest may experience focused and

effortless attention, positive feelings, and perhaps, sense of losing track of time when engaging in interest-related activity, and this experience may be considered intrinsically motivating. These characteristics then can be used as indicators to identify different phases of interest development.

2.3 Serious leisure perspective

Interest and its development are not confined to psychological accounts; one may also account for the experience of pursuing an interest as shaped by social environments. Section 2.3 focuses on sociological discussions of contemporary leisure activities, which are pertinent to the pursuit of intrinsically motivating experience or interest. In this section, I discuss Stebbins' 'serious leisure perspective', which provides a sociological lens to understand the pursuit of artistic interest as leisure.

Stebbins has distinguished three forms of contemporary leisure: casual leisure, serious leisure, and project-based leisure. The three terms are conceptually relevant to each other. Serious leisure, a term coined by Stebbins (2001:54), describes the systematic pursuit of amateur, hobbyist, and volunteering activities that captivate their participants with their complexity and challenges. Serious leisure offers a substantial, interesting, and fulfilling experience that is 'deeply satisfying', engages participants in career-like and systematic pursuit of special skills, knowledge and the experience itself (ibid:54). In contrast with serious leisure, casual leisure refers to activities that offer immediate, intrinsically rewarding, and short-lived pleasure that require no or little special training to enjoy (e.g. watching television, hanging out with friends, and strolling in the park) (ibid:53). Project-based leisure refers to short-term, reasonably complicated, occasional though infrequent, creative undertaking carried out in free time; although it requires considerable planning, effort and sometimes knowledge and skills it is neither serious leisure nor intended to develop into such (e.g. birthday party planning, volunteering for sporting or art events) (Stebbins 2011:239).

2.3.1 Qualities and benefits of serious leisure

To understand the pursuit of artistic interest in the framework of serious leisure, one may look into the qualities of interest-related activities. Serious leisure is defined according to certain qualities found in amateur, hobbyist and volunteering activities, which further distinguish serious leisure from the other two forms. Six qualities are mentioned by Stebbins (2011:241-242):

- The need to persevere through difficulties and challenges;
- Career-like endeavor;
- Significant personal effort based on specially acquired knowledge, training, skill or experience;
- A unique ethos being formed, through which participants pursue their free-time interest;
- Strong identification (with a chosen pursuit) among participants;
- Durable benefits.

The benefits of serious leisure, which Stebbins addresses as a quality of serious leisure activities, further contribute to an understanding of the motivations for engaging in serious leisure or interest-related pursuits. Benefits are further categorized as personal and social reward (see Table 2-1). Although different weightings are given to each benefit, personal enrichment, self-gratification, and self-actualization are found to rank as the top three important benefits (Stebbins 2011).

Table 2-1 Benefits of serious leisure (Stebbins 2011:243)

Personal reward	Social reward
Personal enrichment (cherished experience) Self-actualization (developing skills, abilities, knowledge) Self-expression (expressing skills, abilities and knowledge)	Social attraction (associating with other participants) Group accomplishment (group effort in accomplishing a project; senses of helping, being needed, being altruistic)

Self-image (known to others as a particular kind of participant) Self-gratification (combination of superficial enjoyment and deep fulfillment) Re-creation of oneself after a day's work Financial return	Contribution to the maintenance and the development of the group (including senses helping, being needed, being altruistic)

The term 'reward' needs further explanation. Although financial return is considered a reward, for serious volunteers there is usually no remuneration at all. Moreover, each serious leisure activity may have a distinctive set of rewards; rewards are seen as counterweights to the cost encountered in the activity, meaning that the drive to experience the reward of a given serious leisure makes its costs more or less insignificant by comparison (Stebbins 2011:242). In other words, serious leisure offers a rewarding experience so much 'superior' than casual leisure that its participants report frequently getting 'so wrapped up in it that they temporarily forgot about the worrisome cares and woes in life' (Stebbins 2001:54). Interestingly, this finding echoes that of flow: individuals report being transported, losing self-consciousness, losing track of time, and are motivated to re-experience regardless of its costs (e.g. time, fatigue, safety) during flow.

More importantly, the discussion of social reward resonates with the innate need of relatedness, the desire to be connected to significant others and to be accepted by a group, as addressed in self-determination theory (Section 2.2.1). This implies that serious leisure (not all but those that are carried out in groups or involving groups) can be intrinsically motivating because its participants are connected to an interest group and enjoy their membership. The notion of social reward pushes the focus beyond psychological needs, highlighting the importance of social needs, which seems to be underdeveloped in studies of interest development and flow experience.

2.3.2 Amateurs, hobbyists, volunteers

On the other hand, serious leisure perspective generates insight for the study of interest-related pursuits by classifying three ways/types of engagement in serious leisure, including: amateurs, hobbyists and volunteers. Amateurs in art, science, sport and entertainment refer to the type of engagement in relation to professional counterparts that involve expertise in knowledge and skills, and a developed identity. Hobbyists, in similar fields as the amateurs, lack the ego of amateurs, but share an equal dedication to acquiring knowledge and skills required to participate in an activity. Volunteers differ from the above by altruism that motivates volunteering and a combined self-interest in a given area (see Figure 2-3).
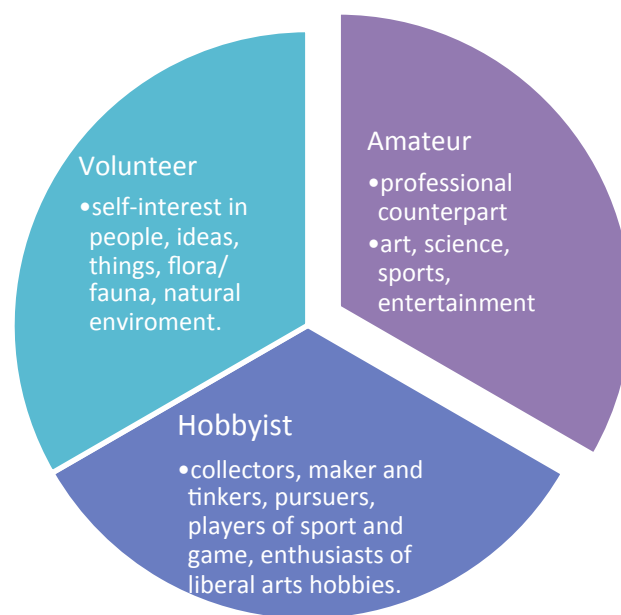
Figure 2-3 Three ways of engagement in serious leisure (Stebbins 2011)

These three types of engagement show relevance to artistic interest and art enthusiasts: amateur artists, collectors of art, and gallery volunteers can be understood as participants in the framework of serious leisure. Specifically, each type of participation demonstrates certain characteristics. For example, enthusiasts of liberal arts hobbies are identified by their systematic acquisition of knowledge for

its own sake accomplished by reading voraciously in domains including art, culture, sport, language, literature, history, and science etc. (Stebbins 2011); cultural tourism, a genre of tourism based on a special interest in seeking and participating in new and deep cultural experience, is also considered a common form of liberal art hobbies (Stebbins 1996:948); for liberal arts enthusiasts, social rewards such as meeting people, making new friends, and taking part in group affairs are less relevant to their concern (Stebbins 2001).

Similarly, volunteer as a type of engagement in the serious leisure perspective can also link to artistic interest, and this brings one's attention to gallery volunteers as participants of serious leisure. In Abu-Shumays and Leinhardt's (2002) study, museum docents or volunteers are considered to share the discourse running through the museum community; therefore, they constitute an important part of the community. Volunteers have particular window to how museums communicate knowledge; being at the center of the museum-visitor interface, volunteers' practice also informs their lens of museums as they move back and forth between the dual role of volunteer and visitors. Through Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of 'community of practice' (see Section 3.1.1), volunteers can be analyzed by ways of enacting as 'central member' (as volunteer) and 'peripheral member' (as visitor) of the museum community. By tracing the nuances between these two forms of participation, Abu-Shumays and Leinhardt (2002:47) argue that volunteers, although different from typical visitors, can be considered 'ideal museum visitors', given their connection with museum community, and expertise in museum communication, which may provide a special angle in understanding learning in the museum. Hence, gallery volunteers, as participants of serious leisure, can be seen as a special type of visitors with high level of interest and experience, and close connection with the museum community in general.

2.3.3 Implication

On a conceptual level, serious leisure perspective provides a typology for

analyzing engagement in serious leisure pursuits, which informs my analysis of the pursuits of artistic interest. The idea of 'art enthusiasts' can be further elaborated by people who: practice art as an amateur artist; have a hobbyists interest in art (e.g. frequenting art galleries, engaging in cultural tourism); collect art; volunteer at galleries to name but a few. In other words, one may draw from serious leisure perspective theory to account for a variety of interest-driven pursuits. This typology, on the other hand, sheds light on the research design undertaken in this thesis, in terms of defining the criteria for involving research participants and developing recruiting strategies (see Section 4.3.1).

Furthermore, findings generated by the perspective add more details to explore the experience of pursuing artistic interest, especially the characteristics of (qualities) and motivations (benefits) for such experience, some of which resonate with that of flow experience and intrinsic motivation discussed in Section 2.2. However, the discussion of social rewards, as opposed to personal rewards, raise interesting questions, as this has not been addressed in interest research, but may deserve more attention particularly in the context of volunteering in museums and galleries.

2.4 Cultural capital and habitus

In this section, I take the opportunity to explore the cultural sociological approach to the experience of art by reviewing Pierre Bourdieu's theory. As addressed in the preceding sections, interest can be conceptualized as a predisposition to engage with a specific content; hence, artistic interest can be understood as a motivational factor for an individual's engagement and participation in art, which shapes an individual's cultural practice. However, as Bourdieu (1984) argues, cultural practices, such as museum visits, reading, concert-going, and preferences in painting, music and literature, are closely linked to educational level and social origin. There seems to be a link between an individual's upbringing, personal interest, and cultural practice.

Cultural needs and practices are mediated by an individual's 'habitus', a

combination of habituated and internalized past experiences and opportunities and constraints presented at the moment, and 'cultural capital', the ensemble of cultivated dispositions internalized through socialization. Both notions are used to explain the socio-cultural structure of participation in art and culture, and are considered relevant to a person's involvement in museums. Although Bourdieu's theory does not deal with interest directly, it does provide insights into how cultural practices are manifested through taste, aesthetic preferences and engagement, providing a different approach to studying the development of artistic interest.

2.4.1 Encountering art in museum

There are two contrasting views on how people encounter art in museum setting: the aesthetic encounter approach, and the cultural sociological approach. Adopting the former, researchers consider viewing art in a museum as an 'aesthetic encounter' (Berleant 1990), or a transporting and intrinsically motivating experience equivalent to flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1991). The aesthetic encounter approach bases its argument on a museum's dual role in providing an ideal and 'neutral' space for aesthetic contemplation, while engaging its visitors in interacting with art (Berleant 1990; Csikszentmihalyi 1991). The aesthetic approach is grounded in developmental perspective of learning, claiming that gallery visitors experience visual interpretation according to different levels of mastery ranging from novice, moderately experienced to expert (Housen 1987; Yenawine 1997).

Contrasting with the aesthetic approach, the cultural sociological approach, which focuses on the cultural structure of museum visitation, questions the underlying universality of aesthetics. Researchers consider the assumption that 'museum provides a neutral space for aesthetic contemplation' problematic, and critique the developmental conceptualization of learning in galleries. The cultural sociological approach generally believes that cultural participation (e.g. museum visiting) implies issues of power and privilege, and is predetermined by an individual's habitus and cultural capital, which endows one with different level of

cultural competence (Bennett et al. 2009; Merriman 1989). Hence, museums that claim to provide an open space for aesthetic contemplation for every member of the society, in fact serve exclusively those who are privileged with cultural capital accumulated from upbringing and formal education.

To achieve a well-rounded analysis of the participation in visual art, one has to take into consideration structural factors that play a role in cultural participation. The following sections further explore the cultural sociological approach by discussing two concepts, cultural capital and habitus, which may generate insights for the analysis of artistic interest through the lens of cultural sociology.

2.4.2 Cultural capital

The concept of cultural capital was developed from Bourdieu's research into unequal academic achievement of children originating from families with different educational but similar social origins (Swarts 1997:76). In his research, Bourdieu argues that cultural capital inherited from family milieu better explains academic success or failure in comparison with measures such as one's natural aptitude, e.g. intelligence and giftedness (ibid).

Cultural capital is considered a form of power and can be mobilized as capital. In *Distinction*, where Bourdieu focuses on analyzing taste and pattern of cultural participation in French society, cultural capital is understood as cultivated dispositions, cultural competence, or familiarity with culture. Cultural capital is acquired in manners of early-stage tacit learning in family, and extends in school:

> The ideology of natural taste contrasts two modalities of cultural
> competence and its use, and behind them, two modes of acquisition of
> culture. Total, early, imperceptible learning, performed within family
> from the earliest days of life and extended by scholastic learning which
> presupposes and completes it, differs from belated, methical learning
> not so much in the depth and durability of its effects (…) (Bourdieu

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1984:66).

In other words, cultural capital is acquired through upbringing (e.g. parents or hired professionals sensitizing children with cultural goods), and through schooling (e.g. teachers rewarding those with large amount of cultural capital) (Swarts 1997:76). Cultural capital constitutes one's competence to appropriate and consume cultural goods, including music, works of art, scientific formulas, and works of popular culture. Hence, cultural capital can be understood as the advantage of the educated middle classes, who are physically as well as intellectually socialized into appreciating 'legitimate culture', which is institutionalized through being venerated in the educational system and the cultural apparatus associated with museums and art galleries (Bennett et al. 2009:11). In brief, cultural capital is handed down from parents to children as if it was an heirloom, and is strengthened in educational and cultural systems where repeated contact with culture is prolonged.

Bourdieu's conceptualization of cultural capital covers a broad range of resources including: verbal facility, cultural awareness, aesthetic preferences and educational credentials (Swartz 1997:75). More precisely, cultural capital exists in three forms or states: it exists in an embodied state, referring to the ensemble of cultivated dispositions one internalizes through socialization that constitutes one's appreciation and understanding of culture; it exists in objectified form, referring to objects such as books, works of art, and scientific instruments that require specialized cultural ability to use; it exists in institutionalized form, i.e. educational credentials (ibid). In brief, cultural capital is embodied, socialized and institutionalized.

Furthermore, cultural capital is manifested through taste, manner and lifestyle that map individuals of different social position into distinct social space of lifestyle (Merriman 1989). The implicit manner of acquiring cultural capital reflects the effect of cultural capital; it permeates into the choices one makes regarding everyday life, which implies one's taste and lifestyle:

The effect of mode of acquisition is most marked in the ordinary choices of everyday existence, such as furniture, clothing or cooking, which are particularly revealing of deep-rooted and long-standing dispositions because, lying outside the scope of the educational system, they have to be confronted, as it were, by naked taste, without any explicit prescription or proscription (…) (Bourdieu 1984:77).

In brief, by elaborating the concept of cultural capital, including the manner it is acquired and the form in which it exists, Bourdieu establishes a relationship between cultural practice and social class. Bourdieu's analysis of cultural participation points out that cultural practice is primarily determined by educational level and social origin. It becomes clear that individuals from certain social and educational backgrounds are more likely to acquire higher volume of cultural capital than others, and hence they are more likely to consume culture in a way that corresponds to certain tastes, preferences and lifestyle. Through the manifestation of taste and lifestyle, culture functions as marker of social class and classifies the individual by the distinction between 'the distinguished and the vulgar' (Bourdieu 1984).

2.4.3 Habitus

The concept of habitus explains how individuals habituate themselves to certain routines through operations of reproduction (Bennett et al. 2009). Habitus entails individuals internalizing past experiences, and externalizing into action while confronting the opportunities and constraints presented by a particular situation. Bourdieu conceptualizes habitus to evoke the idea of a set of 'deeply internalized master dispositions that generate action' (Swarts 1997:101). In *The Logic of Practice*, habitus is defined as:

A system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles

which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them (Bourdieu 1990:53).

The concept has been broadened over time to stress a bodily and cognitive basis of action, and to emphasize the inventive as well as habituated forms of action (Swarts 1997:102). Habitus, therefore, is understood as a set of dispositions acquired through early socialization that shape both embodied and cognitive actions rather implicitly and unconsciously, and are durable but adaptive (ibid).

Bourdieu's formulation of habitus is influenced by Panofsky's ideas of 'mental habits' and 'habit-forming force' developed from Panofsky's insights on scholasticism. For Panofsky, scholasticism not only represents a set of implicit cultural assumptions but also explicit theoretical positions; tacit mental habits are not only transmitted by institutions, practice and social relations, but also function as a habit-forming force that generates schemes of thought and action (Swarts 1997:102). Hence, Bourdieu draws from Panofsky's idea of habit-forming force, and conceptualizes habitus as a 'structuring structure' that generates action (ibid).

The terms 'structured structure' and 'structuring structure' are key to Bourdieu's conceptualization of habitus. As habitus derives from early-stage 'unconscious internalization of objective chances that are common to member of a social class' (Swarts 1997:104), these chances of success and failure are transformed into individual aspiration and expectation that are externalized in action, which reproduce the objective structure of life chances. In other words, internalized objective chances (structured structure) shape individual action as structuring structure, and existing structure of opportunity is then perpetuated and turned into corresponding durable dispositions. Habitus, therefore, can be understood as a 'deep-structuring cultural matrix that generates self-fulfilling prophecies according to different class opportunities' (ibid). A typical example of habitus at work is Bourdieu's observation of French working class youth in the 1960s, who did not

aspire to high levels of educational attainment because they had internalized the limited opportunities for academic success that previously existed (ibid).

Moreover, habitus implies a differentiating dimension, conveying 'a sense of place' in a social world as Bourdieu explains in *Distinction*:

> Objective limits become a sense of limit, a practical anticipation of objective limits acquired by experience of objective limits, a "sense of one's place" which leads one to exclude oneself from the goods, persons, place and so forth from which one is excluded (Bourdieu 1984:471).

In other words, habitus can be understood as an internalized structure that maintain the structure of a stratified social world as if there was a set of underlying rules regulating people by social class, telling them what they can and can not do. Following this, cultural institutions such as museums may evoke a sense of place for people of certain class, while excluding those who internalize limited opportunity to access a museum. Hence, a link can be found between habitus and social class. Individuals who internalize similar life chances (within the same social class) share the same habitus, and 'class habitus' that accounts for class differences across aesthetic tastes and lifestyles can therefore be identified (Swarts 1997:109). Class habitus enables the analysis of human activity across a broad range of domains (not limited to cultural practice) and suggests that there may be an underlying connection between different behaviors, reflecting class values and expectations.

However, the idea of 'habitus as a set of unifying dispositions shared among individuals from similar social class and manifested in similar tastes and lifestyles across domains' is challenged. It is critiqued by contemporary empirical research such as Bennett et al (2009:28), whose work argues that 'the dissonant taste profile shows a divided rather than a unified habitus' and notes that 'the cross over of cultural taste and practices that do not necessarily associate with a particular social group should be considered'. Habitus as a tool for empirical research is also criticized for being 'slippery' ('seeing habitus as anywhere and nowhere') and is considered

difficult to operationalize with change (Davey 2009:283).

Bourdieu's model (the 'distancing model'), too, faces challenge from North American sociologists, who propose the 'homophily model', a model that predicts a 'bandwagon effect' – the larger the segment of society in which a cultural form is liked, the larger is the proportion of people in that segment of society who like that cultural form (Mark 2003:319). Empirical studies, such as Hsu's work (2011:127) also prove that Bourdieu's model falls short in explaining the relationship between cultural taste and the two Bourdieusian variables (education and social class) in contemporary societies.

In brief, through elaborating the concept of habitus, Bourdieu explains individual action, including cultural practice, by an externalized scheme of cognitive capacity and action weighed against habituated and internalized life chances. This enables researchers to generalize individuals by internalized dispositions and externalized actions according to their class habitus, and to draw a connection across a broad range of behaviors. Similar to the working of cultural capital, habitus differentiates one from another through the manifestation of taste across domains and is not restricted to cultural participation.

2.4.4 Implication

In Section 2.4, I have focused on the cultural sociological approach to art by introducing Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and habitus. Two implications for the study of artistic interest are generated. On a theoretical level, the lens of cultural sociology zooms in to one's sociocultural roots rather than focusing on interaction between a person and object at the moment of encounter – a traditional concern of interest research. Hence, the cultural sociological perspective may help to elaborate, particularly, early development of interest through examining the development of cultivated dispositions in one's early life.

Relevant to the first point, on a conceptual level, the notions of cultural capital and habitus may shed light on the analysis of interest-driven activities. One can draw

from Bourdieu that imperceptible family learning and early engagement with cultural goods endow one with higher volume of cultural capital and predispose one's pattern of cultural participation. Hence, early socialization through family and schooling can be important dynamics to focus on when studying early development of artistic interest. Similarly, parents, caretakers and tutors may play a key role in initiating a child's interest. Moreover, habitus can be used to account for the diversity of practices related with art (e.g. museum going, collecting, engaging in cultural tourism) in the process of interest development. In other words, one may be able to trace certain practices to habitus manifested through cultural taste and lifestyle. However, the concepts do have limitations and one should employ the term for interpretation with these limitations in mind. Habitus as a concept may not be well operationalized in empirical research; the development of cultural capital may not entirely account for the emergence of early interest, because artistic interest may still emerge for those lacking cultural capital.

2.5 Summary

In Chapter 2, I review existing literature relevant to the inquiry of artistic interest. The four subsections presented in the chapter are essential to my research, and are reflected in both my methodological design and data analysis. The studies reviewed contribute to my conceptualization of interest and methods used to investigate interest. Insights and findings generated from these studies also enable me to address Research Question 1, first by identifying art enthusiasts from the general population, and also by forming thoughts to analyze interest developed in different phases.

In Section 2.1, I discuss how interest is conceptualized according to different components, how interest is measured, and I focus on the developmental process of interest, featuring Hidi and Renninger's four-phase model. It is established that interest is a critical cognitive and affective motivational variable that guides attention, facilitates learning in different content areas, and for learners of all ages,

and develops through experience. I also point out that artistic interest not only involves acquisition of knowledge and skill about art, but also involves individuals' day-to-day interaction with artistic content, and hence, should be conceptualized as a tendency to engage in art. Individuals' engagement with art in everyday life across various settings and in various forms will be the focus in this thesis.

In Section 2.2, I review two approaches of intrinsic motivation: self-determination theory (SDT) and flow experience. These approaches specify the reasons why people engage in activities where there is no extrinsic reward, and provide detailed accounts of what people actually experience doing intrinsically motivating activities, as well as the conditions for which such experience can be fostered. Intrinsic motivation is closely linked to interest, and the characteristics of intrinsically motivating experiences also correspond with affective and emotional reactions of a person whose interest is developing. Knowing these characteristics unveils the qualities (of an activity or an experience) individuals seek for when pursuing an interest.

In Section 2.3, I turn to sociological approaches towards contemporary leisure activities, the serious leisure perspective. Serious leisure is the systematic pursuit of amateur, hobbyist, and volunteering activities that provide its participants with 'superior experience'. The qualities of serious leisure as well as the benefits one gains from participating in it are identified. I point out that the notion of social rewards highlights individuals' social needs, which has been underdeveloped in the studies of interest development and flow experience, but may deserve attention in the study of artistic interest. This section also provides a typology of different engagement, which helps develop the conceptualization of art enthusiasts.

In Section 2.4, I focus on the cultural sociological approach regarding the encountering of art, featuring Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and habitus. I elaborate on the manner in which cultural capital, an ensemble of cultivated dispositions, is acquired and the various forms in which it exists. It is established that individuals with a higher volume of cultural capital consume more cultural goods and demonstrate tastes and lifestyles through cultural practices. I also discuss how

habitus, a system of internalized transposable and durable dispositions, operates as a structuring force for individual actions, and differentiates one from another by social class. This section adds a sociocultural lens to the study of interest, and stresses the importance of early socialization and imperceptible learning, as well as seeing different interest-driven pursuits as relevant, influenced by a unified habitus.

Chapter 3

Interest-driven pursuits

In Chapter 3, I look further into empirical studies, in which the concepts of interest, motivation, and identity are applied in relation to museum visiting, learning, and career development. The lines of discussion I pursue in this chapter are extended from Chapter 2, in which I addressed how studies of interest and motivation underpin my research and help me conceptualize interest and interest development in this thesis. In Chapter 3, I draw from a wide range of disciplines, including education, psychology, learning science, and museum studies, which shed light on how interest or motivation mediates and drives people's practice and engagement in particular domains (e.g. science) and settings (e.g. museums). These studies serve the purpose of situating my exploration of the pursuit of artistic interest in a wider context, and will help address my research questions.

Section 3.1 first outlines two theoretical approaches to learning, the sociocultural and ecological perspectives, which foreground the studies of interest-driven pursuits to be discussed later. Section 3.2 then reviews a number of studies of interest-driven pursuits in music, science and technology, and highlights some key findings that help elaborate the dynamic process of interest-driven pursuits. This line of discussion will help answer Research Question 1 (RQ1), 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' In particular, this will generate insights for identifying the dynamics that shape the development of artistic interest. Section 3.3 turns to the issue of (interest-related) identity development, which is considered contingent on interest development, as I briefly discussed in Chapter 2. This again, will help address RQ1, particularly, providing an angle to analyze the development of artistic interest (pathways to art) by identity-related observations. Section 3.4 focuses on motivation in the museum setting, which will help address Research Question 2 (RQ2) 'what roles do museums and galleries play in the

development of artistic interest?' In particular, this will help me define what I mean by the role played as in an art enthusiast's perception of museums in general and in relation to their interest. This chapter concludes with a summary of the key ideas and implications developed in each section.

3.1 Theories of learning

In this section, I briefly discuss two theoretical approaches that inform the theoretical framework of the study of interest-driven pursuits, which I discuss later in Section 3.2. Sociocultural perspective of learning, drawing on sociocultural theory, seeks to understand learning as an integral part of cultural and historical processes (Ireson 2008). It sheds light on the study of interest-driven pursuits in terms of looking at learning as collaborative, dialogical, and socially mediated processes, and taking into account of influences from different contexts. On the other hand, ecological perspective of learning considers learning as a developmental process of individuals within multiple systems beyond the individual (Bronfenbrenner 1977). It informs the study of interest-driven pursuits, particularly interest-driven learning in terms of highlighting the cross-boundary feature of learning, and addressing the interdependencies between settings and contexts that provide opportunities. In Section 3.1.1 and Section 3.1.2, I present brief discussions of the two theoretical backgrounds.

3.1.1 Sociocultural perspective

Sociocultural theory is a theoretical stand concerning with the relationships between learning and the social and cultural environment in which learning takes place (Ireson 2008:19). Vygotsky has inspired a generation of research taking the sociocultural stand on learning. Vygotsky's work, which focuses on understanding how social processes influence children's development of 'higher mental functions', i.e. concept formation, memory, voluntary attention as opposed to 'direct

association between a stimulus and response' (Ireson 2008:20), has a huge impact on the development of sociocultural theories. One of Vygotsky's major contributions is his argument that children's learning is a social process mediated by capable members of the culture, and that 'learning processes are transformed into developmental processes' (ibid:20). In other words, learning is achieved through interacting with others in the social world, and through internalization, we transform what we learn – making it our own – which results in development.

Lave and Wenger's study of 'situated learning' is an example of taking Vygotsky's ideas further. They argue that learning is an involvement of a whole person in relation to social communities, in which one becomes a 'full participant' (as a opposed to a 'peripheral participant') (1991:53). Wenger further develops his social theory of learning, and defines learning as social participation 'not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practice of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities' (1998a:4). Wenger (1998b) further notes that 'community of practice', a social entity that is defined by member's understanding of shared practice and joint enterprise, exists within organizations because participation has value to its members. As a concept used to elaborate learning within organizations, communities of practice emphasize the tacit aspect of knowledge exchange within an organization, which is kept updated by members taking responsibility to keep up with new developments, and provides home for identities (ibid). In other words, learning is treated as embedded in various communities and mediated by dynamic tools (e.g. means to generate or exchange knowledge) and resources (Barron 2006).

Moreover, by focusing on elements of 'individual', 'culture', 'environment', and 'historical development', a more holistic view of learning emerges that goes beyond an individual's meaning construction in particular time and space (Kelly 2007). In brief, sociocultural perspective considers learning and development as a collaborative, dialogical, and socially mediated process, and takes into account particular influences, such as learner's prior experience in learning to use a tool (i.e.

the cultural-historical context).

3.1.2 Ecological perspective

The ecological perspective of learning encourages a simultaneous focus of individual development and the context/environment in which development takes place (Ireson 2008). Bronfenbrenner's foundational work on the ecology of human development gives rise to the ecological study of learning and development. Arguing that the understanding of human development requires an examination of multi-person systems of interaction beyond a single setting, Bronfenbrenner (1977) illustrates a unique structure of environment, and argues that interactions within and across the four systems (see Figure 3-1) need to be considered beyond one's immediate situation.
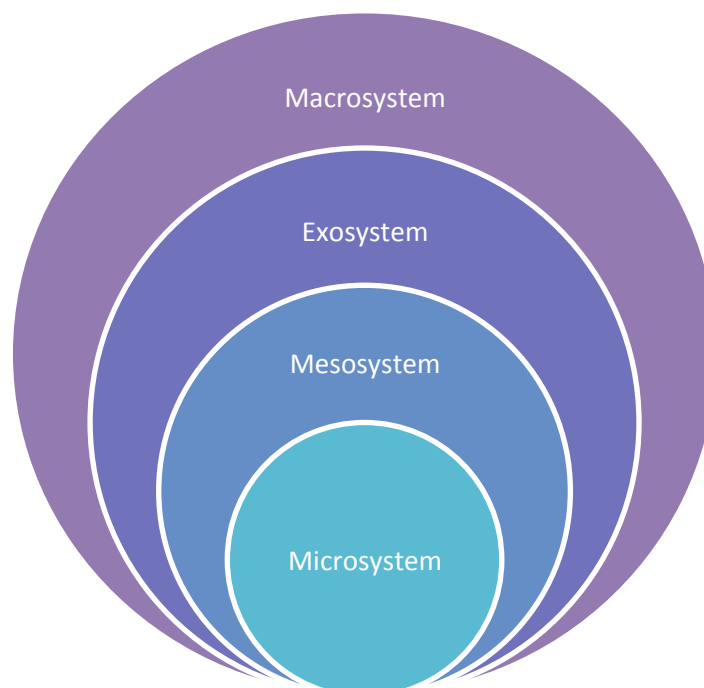
Figure 3-1 Model of ecological framework of development (Bronfenbrenner 1977)

In Bronfenbrenner's model, microsystem refers to the immediate environment containing the person, e.g. home, school or workplace. Mesosystem refers to the

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interrelations among major settings containing the person at a particular point in his or her life. Exosystem refers to the extension of the mesosystem embracing the other specific formal or informal social structures, e.g. the mass media. Macrosystem refers to the overarching institutional patterns of the culture or subculture, e.g. the economic, social, educational, legal, and political system (1977:514-515).

One of Bronfenbrenner's major contributions lies in his emphasis on the interactions within and between these four systems, and the fact that the systems should be viewed as interdependent. It can be inferred that the ecological perspective of learning looks into the interactions across different developmental settings and emphasizes the effects beyond immediate settings, placing learning in wider contexts, including the transitions across settings and across one's lifespan.

The ecological study of learning and development generates insights beyond developmental psychology, and informs learning research at the current time. Bell et al. (2009:37) propose an ecological framework of learning, looking into science learning through three lenses, which are known as the 'people-centered', 'place-centered' and 'culture-centered' lenses (see Figure 3-2).

In Bell et al.'s (2009:37) framework, the people-centered lens is concerned with the internal mental process and inter-psychological attributes relevant to learning, e.g. the development of interests, motivations, prior knowledge, affective responses and identities; it also attends to changes in individuals as a result of broader social and cultural processes. The place-centered lens looks at learning across particular places or physical features, with which specific forms and activities of learning are associated; it also focuses on the material, artifacts and tools used in different physical settings in response to certain problems (ibid:37). The culture-centered lens considers learning as cultural practice, and examines culturally originated resources that individuals bring to learning, and how individuals develop skills, commitment, knowledge and identities as they become proficient in cultural practices; it also points out that individual and culture mutually inform each other (ibid:39).
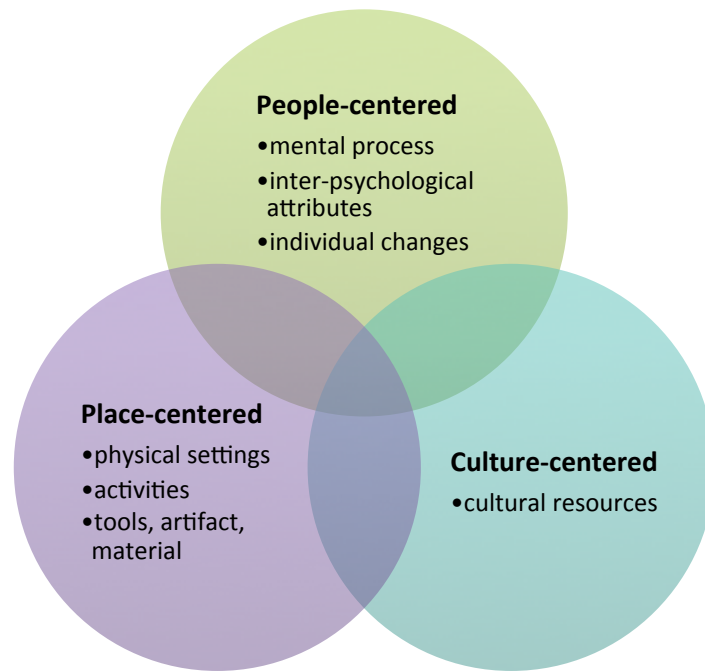
Figure 3-2 Ecological framework of learning (Bell et al. 2009)

Bell et al.'s ecological framework stresses that science learning situates in a larger ecology (multiple systems) of science composed of different science communities in their tangible (e.g. physical spaces and tools) and intangible (e.g. knowledge and practice, science-related policies) forms. Moreover, the framework is also informed by sociocultural perspective, since it emphasizes a structure of isolated individual learning giving way to cultural participation (2009:41). In brief, the ecological perspective proposes a multisystem and cross-boundary view, which looks at learning beyond the intrapersonal and interpersonal systems, and across different settings that associate with different forms and activities of learning. It also sees learning as a culturally informed practice.

3.1.3 Implication

The ecological perspective highlights the cross-boundary nature of learning, and it stresses on the interrelations between different learning settings. Together with the sociocultural perspective's emphasis on the social processes of learning, it generates implications for the inquiry of interest-driven pursuits. Researchers

looking into interest-driven pursuit/learning, therefore, tend to work from a framework that investigates cross-setting learning opportunities, and in the meantime puts emphasis on the learner's sociocultural path of learning, as well as the learner's autonomy in initiating learning (e.g. Barron 2006). In a similar way, my research is informed by the above-discussed viewpoints; it sets out to engage with the question of artistic interest development by identifying interest-related settings that art enthusiasts come across in their lifespan (that are significant to artistic interest), as well as by focusing on the resources, relationships and interactions art enthusiasts seek, build and initiate in relation to their interest in art.

3.2 Interest-driven pursuits

Interest-driven pursuits refer to different types of practice and engagement driven or initiated by a particular interest, including: self-initiated learning (e.g. learning to use computers), pursuit of a career (e.g. becoming a scientist), or hobbyist engagement in an activity (e.g. building and flying model rocket). In this section, I discuss studies of interest-driven pursuits, and how these studies illuminate my study of artistic interest development. Studying interest-driven pursuits leads to the building of a practice-based theory of interest, which can be seen as an extension of interest research discussed in Chapter 2.

This section consists of five subsections. Section 3.2.1 focuses on introducing two concepts that are relevant to the study of interest-driven pursuits: the developmental dynamics of interest (Crowley et al. 2015), and the pivotal influences (Pitts 2009) on interest-driven practice and engagement. In Section 3.2.2 and Section 3.2.3 I highlight two significant dynamics/influences related with parents/homes, and school/out-of-school activities. Section 3.2.4 turns to discuss self-initiated strategies, as well as the characteristics of interest-driven pursuits. Finally, Section 3.2.5 summarizes the findings I discussed in the preceding subsections, and points out the implications for my research. The studies I review in this section will generate insights for identifying key contexts that give rise to artistic interest, which, in

particular, help answer my research question.

Among the limited number of studies I review in this section, the majority focus on practice and engagement in the fields of science and technology; only one study (i.e. Pitts 2009) focuses on artistic engagement, i.e. lifelong engagement in music. This is because a greater number of studies covering a broad discussion of science- and technology-related practices are found in the literature of interest-driven pursuits and learning. In contrast, fewer studies focusing on the pursuit of arts and humanities interests can be identified in the literature, and even fewer are found relevant to the development of interest-driven practice and engagement in arts and humanities.

3.2.1 Developmental dynamics of interest and Pivotal influences

Crowley et al.'s (2015) work focuses on understanding how early interest in science develops into disciplinary expertise and engagement in science, and they characterize this process as a 'pathway to science'. Crowley et al.'s work looks into adult scientists, engineers and science educators, focusing on how science interest is triggered, deepened and sustained throughout life; the researchers also investigate youth's prospective engagement in science and technology, and the ways interest in science is supported and extended across everyday, formal and informal boundaries. This work, which traces and maps the developmental trajectory of science expertise and interest, generates invaluable insight highlighting the developmental dynamics of science interest.

Crowley et al. first argue that there is a close link between early interests in science and pathways to science careers. By conducting retrospective, life-history interviews with 69 adults working in science careers, Crowley et al. (2015:299) find that: people who have a career in science are often interested and engages in science during childhood; they demonstrate early interest in tinkering, understanding how things work, and taking things apart; they share an orientation around problem solving and mathematics. The developmental dynamics of early

scientific interest, defined as the 'experiences and resources learners encounter that trigger or sustain interest before children enter high school' (ibid:298), are then noted in Crowley et al.'s work. Three significant dynamics of interest, which play key roles in triggering and supporting early interest in science are specified (see Figure 3-3), including: museums, i.e. museum visits, special programs, museum-based clubs; fathers, i.e. fathers who engage in science; other out-of-school activities, e.g. boy scouts (ibid:300). School, interestingly, is found to be an important part in early pathway to science, but is rarely the beginning of the pathway (ibid:305). In short, early interest is not only a typical part of pathways to science careers, but it is also paired with certain dynamics, such as early engagement in science through out-of-school activities and family activities (ibid:305).
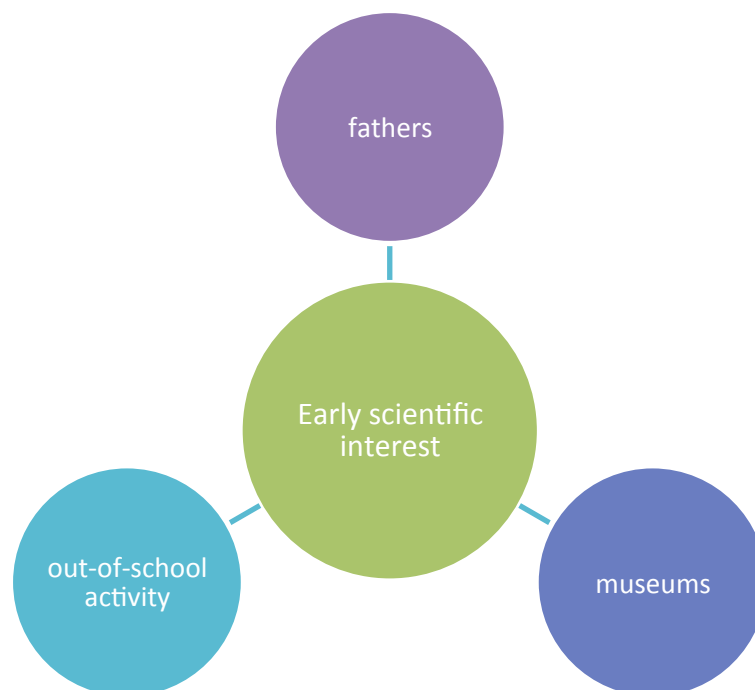
Figure 3-3 Developmental dynamics of scientific interest (Crowley et al. 2015)

A similar discussion is found in the work of Pitts (2009), which focuses on lifelong engagement in classical music, and is one of the few studies of interest-driven pursuits in art-related fields. In her work, Pitts frames what Crowley et al. term as the developmental dynamics of interest as influences, in which she

traces to home and school environment. By collecting musical life histories from 71 regular concert-goers, amateur performers, or music educators, who sustain an active interest in music throughout life, Pitts capitalizes on the influences from home and school environment for developing musical interest and lifelong involvement in music. Pitts further categorizes the context of influence by the following six categories: 'home influences and opportunities', 'education influences and opportunities', 'self-directed learning in childhood', 'adult learning and/or performing', 'experiences as a parent or/and teacher', and 'broader social/cultural influences in adulthood' (ibid:245). She then identifies the pivotal influences on a person's musical interest and lifelong involvement, including parental taste and involvement in music, having a gramophone at home, concert-going as a family activity, practicing instruments or singing at school, hearing inspiring players outside home or school etc. (ibid:246). By comparing the pivotal influences from home and school, Pitts finds that the most prominent influence on early musical development include parental involvement (listening to music), playing at school, and supportive attitudes featuring classroom music education (ibid:247-248) (see Figure 3-4).
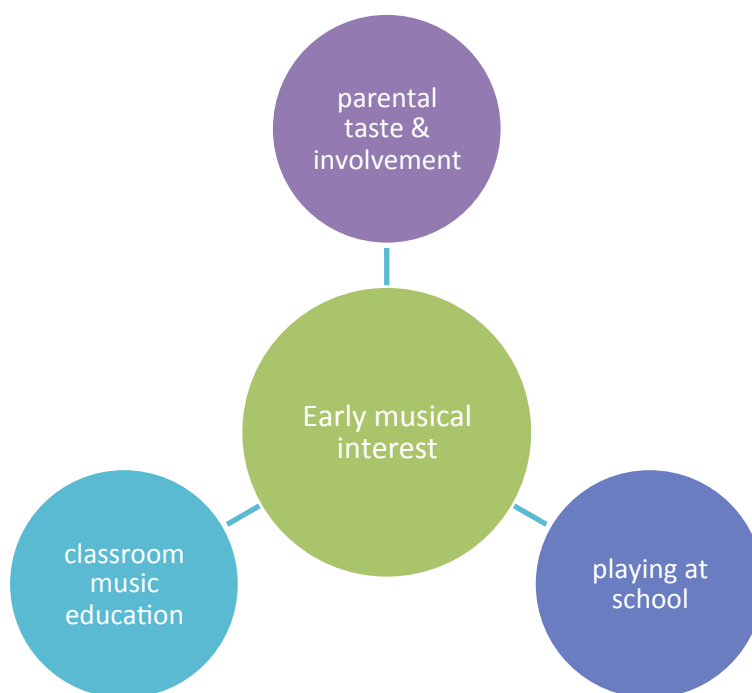
Figure 3-4 Pivotal influences on musical interest (Pitts 2009)

It should be noted that both the terms 'developmental dynamics of interest' and 'pivotal influences', as used in the above-discussed work, imply the resources individuals encounter in relation to interest. However, in both Crowley et al. and Pitts' work, interest-related resource is often blended in the discussion of interest-related experience in a given context. For example, Pitts considers home resources (e.g. having gramophones at home) part of the pivotal influence related with parental involvement in music. It can be inferred that resources in a given context may take a tangible form (e.g. gramophone). Furthermore, resources can also be equated with opportunity or access. Crowley et al., for example, refer parents (fathers) running repair workshops as home resource.

In brief, the developmental dynamics of scientific interest, as discussed in Crowley et al.'s work, and the pivotal influences on lifelong musical engagement, as Pitts' work pointed out, provide a set of working concepts for the inquiry of the process through which artistic interest develops. In this thesis, I use these concepts to guide my study of interest-driven pursuit in art. I pursue a line of investigation on the key developmental dynamics/influences (and resources) that are perceived significant in a pathway to art. In the following two subsections (Section 3.2.2 and Section 3.2.3), I highlight two developmental dynamics/pivotal influences from the work I reviewed in Section 3.2.1 and some new work.

3.2.2 Parental influence and mediation

Two developmental dynamics/pivotal influences, parental influence and school and out-of-school activities, are both noted in the above-discussed studies; they are believed to play an important role in the development of early and lifelong interests in science and music. In this section, I discuss further the findings related with the role of parents and family in several studies of interest-driven pursuits.

In the work of Pitts (2009), parents, as well as instrumental teachers and secondary school teachers are identified as influential and supportive figures in sustaining musical interest and further engagement (ibid:249). As Pitts specified,

parents' attitudes and approach to music may contribute to the nurturing of musical interest more than parents' own skills or involvement in music (2009:250). This opens the door to a further exploration of the characteristics of music education environments, which Pitts proposes may consist of 'the ideal home and school' (ibid:250-251). In short, Pitts' work points out that parents being supportive of children's engagement in music, together with parents' own involvement in music may help nurture early interest and lifelong engagement in music.

In the same work discussed in Section 3.2.1, Crowley et al. (2015) explore the relationship between learners' participation in an out-of-school science program and the learners' broader ecology – whether interest is extended to other learning settings. Researchers conducted surveys and qualitative interview with 218 pupils, and asked teachers to conduct classroom observations to document activities in the program. Their findings confirm the roles parents and out-of-school activities play in early pathways to science. Moreover, researchers point out that higher interest students are more likely to socialize more with learning partners, i.e. parents or friends who share their interest (ibid:307). They conclude that in a home setting, parents are pivotal resources in connecting children with science, even if parents do not connect their identities or lines of practice to science disciplines (ibid:313). It is also noted that home resources can nurture and sustain interest and participation, but lower home resources do not preclude an interest or a career in science (ibid:313). Crowley et al.'s finding is consistent with Pitts' in that parents' attitude, rather than their own identity or skill level, may contribute to children's developing an early interest and further pursuit of the interest or a career.

Parents are not only found to be influential in nurturing children's interest, but they are also found to take up a more active role in the process. Crowley and Jacobs' (2002) study of 'islands of expertise' engages with the relationship between parental mediation and children's development of expertise (or disciplinary) knowledge in a given domain. An island of expertise, as Crowley and Jacobs (ibid:333) define, is 'a topic in which children happen to become interested and in which they develop relatively deep and rich knowledge. A typical island emerges over weeks, months, or

years and is woven throughout multiple family activities'. It should be noted that 'expertise' refers to a higher level of knowledge and skill that children build around certain topics of which children usually demonstrate a rough understanding. Therefore, an island of expertise can be built from topics easily accessed in the cognitive ecology of family life, and rooted into everyday family activities, from which children develop extended knowledge and experience. Specifically, an island is co-constructed through children and parents jointly making choices about family activities (e.g. reading books, watching DVDs, using the web, and visiting museums), and learning collaboratively. Through building shared domain knowledge and collaborative learning (as two key elements supporting an island) children develop deeper knowledge on an island, which supports conversation and learning in a way that is 'more advanced than would be possible in domains in which children's knowledge is typically sketchy' (ibid:334). In short, this study confirms that family interaction in settings such as at homes and at museums gives rise to well-developed interest and knowledge among young children.

The role of parental mediation in helping children develop an island of expertise is further elaborated by Crowley and Jacobs (2002), and Palmquist and Crowley (2007). In both studies, researchers observe and analyze family conversation about dinosaur fossils in a museum, and they find that higher level of parental mediation in family conversation is associated with children's learning (i.e. children achieve a higher fossil identification score); and the most effective mediation forms include labeling objects and providing an explanation that links back to a shared family learning history (2002:351). It is also noted that children on highly developed islands assume more responsibility of initiating conversations, deciding object to be interpreted, and are more active in constructing knowledge at the museum (2007:278). In brief, parental mediation may help young children actively develop an interest and build knowledge. Parents can play an active role in developing family learning practice with children.

It can be extended from the above-discussed studies that early interest development is a fundamentally social process, in which family dynamics and

parental influence may have a positive impact on the development of early interest, and may further prompt the pursuit of interest-driven practice and engagement. One may also see that an informal learning setting, e.g. homes and museums, may play a unique role and may facilitate powerful and memorable learning opportunities in everyday moment around family life. This leads to the next section in which I discuss the influences derived from school and out-of-school settings.

3.2.3 School and out-of-school settings

School and out-of-school activities, as discussed in the Section 3.2.2, are noted as a key influence on the nurturing of early interest. Pitts (2009), for example, highlights practicing musical instruments or singing at school as a pivotal influence. She also argues that supportive teaching or mentoring figures in school or out-of-school musical learning settings may have as much influence on early musical interest as parents do.

Similarly, Crowley et al. (2015) study two groups of students with varied interest, and their findings suggests that higher interest students tend to: use more learning resources in out-of-school contexts not only for school but also for fun; for example, higher interest students report that they use webpages related with science out of personal interest, or participate in science excursions (ibid:307). These students are also found to have more science-related plans (for science careers) and develop a science identity (ibid:307). Crowley et al. conclude that out-of-school activity very often germinates early interest in science, although school-based activity also engages students in science; they also note that strong interest in science rooted in out-of-school engagement does not translate to strong school-based interest (ibid:312). Both Pitts and Crowley et al.'s work confirms that interest may be sustained in school-based (e.g. classroom musical education) or out-of-school settings (e.g. out-of-school science programs). Since learners with higher interest are more likely to explore learning resources beyond one setting, school-based and out-of-school learning opportunities can be equally important.

In brief, it can be extended from the above-discussed studies that interest involves different ways of engaging in interest-related pursuits, and that interest may be sustained across different learning settings. It is also worth noting that, specifically in Crowley et al.'s work, learners' own initiative in self-directing the path to pursue an interest becomes a crucial part of the developmental process of interest, in addition to external influences from parents, learning partners, or teachers. This point can be further elaborated in Barron's (2006) study of self-initiated, interest-driven learning, which I discuss in the following section.

3.2.4 The self-initiated individual

Following the preceding section, interest-driven pursuits not only thrive on the support individuals can get from home, school and the out-of-school environment, the individuals are also found to take initiative in the path to pursue an interest. Barron's work acknowledges that interest (and interest in learning) can be sustained by a variety of ideational resources within a person's lifespan (2006:200), and she also stresses that learners (adolescents) have a significant role to play in directing their learning path and sustaining their own development. Her work is briefly discussed as follows.

Focusing on self-initiated learning of computer skill and knowledge, Barron (2006) argues that learning is distributed over several settings. Building her work on the central thought of the ecological perspective (see Section 3.1.2), Barron considers learning as an ecological system, and develops the concept of a 'learning ecology', which she defines as 'set of contexts found in physical and virtual spaces that provide learning opportunities' (ibid:195). Using qualitative interview and surveys, Barron conducts case studies of high school students, who have strong interest in computers. She further identifies students' learning ecology of computer fluency, and analyzes the interdependencies between contexts that provide opportunities for learning, including home, school, community, work, neighborhood, peers, and different types of resources relevant to their interest in computer (see

Figure 3-5) (ibid:194-195).

Barron's (2006:200) key findings suggest that learners create learning opportunities for themselves, and capitalize on the ones that offer more learning opportunities once they are interested, assuming they have the time, freedom, and resources to learn. Moreover, she points out that interest-driven learning activities are boundary crossing, as Figure 3-5 shows, and self-sustaining (ibid:201). In other words, Barron acknowledges the role learners play in their own development of interest, and stresses that more experienced students access greater number of resources both in and out of school, and they are able to develop a more extensive network of relationships across various contexts, i.e. a more complex learning ecology.

Figure 3-5 Learning ecologies of computer fluency (Barron 2006)

Extending from the point that learners whose interests are sparked become self-initiated and create opportunity to learn, Barron (2006:203) identifies five

categories of self-initiated knowledge acquisition strategies from the case studies. Self-initiated learners tend to: 'find text-based information', 'create interactive activities', 'explore media', 'seek out structured learning', and 'build knowledge networks'. These can be seen as behavioral characteristics of a self-initiated learner, or an individual on the path of pursuing an interest.

Finally, Barron argues that interest-related identity development can be key to understanding interest-driven learning. Barron's (2006:220) findings suggest that expertise (in computer) development may go hand in hand with a growing sense of self or identity as connected with the activities and roles that this knowledge makes possible. Further discussion on interest-related identity development is presented in Section 3.3.

The emphasis on the role individuals play in interest-driven pursuits is also seen in Azevedo's work, which looks at persistent and hobbyist engagement in a set of activities closely related with model rocketry, i.e. building and launching model rockets. Azevedo (2011:147) focuses on 'lines of practice', which refer to recurrent and distinctive 'pattern of long-term, self-motivated engagement in open-ended practices', in order to theorizes how people build relationship with a topic or domain of interest. He points out that a line of practice can be motivated or constrained by two structural elements, preferences and conditions. Preferences refer to long-term goals, values and beliefs developed in the practice, e.g. the value of socializing with other rocketeers in the practice (ibid:162). Conditions refer to constraints and affordances impinging on the practice, e.g. budgetary constraints in building rockets (ibid:163). In other words, interest-driven pursuits can be sustained in different forms of practice; a line of practice can be sustained as individuals' preferences are attuned to conditions; individuals are in control of their own lines of practice through working towards their goals and values that are developed along with a line of practice.

Azevedo (2011:179) also draws a link between interest-driven pursuits and identity development, suggesting that extended and persistent engagement is supported by the emergence of identity. Using his informant, David, as an example,

Azevedo finds that model rocketry is a practice through which David builds identities of creativity and competence, manifested by David's taking pride in his design of model rockets, and highlighting his achievement (ibid:171). This finding is consistent with Barron (2006) and Crowley et al.'s (2015) work, both of which relate interest-driven pursuits with identity development.

In brief, it can be extended from the above-discussed studies that individuals have a significant role in their own development of interest. They become active and self-initiated in seeking and creating opportunities to learn, and in developing values and goals towards their practice and engagement. Furthermore, individuals also develop certain identities throughout the pursuit.

3.2.5 Implication

Three implications are generated from the four subsections in Section 3.2. On a theoretical level, one achieves better and holistic understanding of learning and development by treating them as a social process, and as an adaptive, interdependent ecological system. Taking the theoretical stand of sociocultural and ecological understanding of development is particularly helpful in studying interest-driven pursuits, which can be understood as beyond the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge, but inclusive of everyday practices and engagement in a person's repertoire in relation to a specific domain.

On a conceptual level, the studies reviewed in the preceding subsections throw light on the phenomena of interest-driven pursuits. Findings of these studies unpack key terms that inform my study of interest-driven pursuits in art. Specifically, working concepts such as 'developmental dynamics of interest' (Section 3.2.1), 'pivotal influences' (Section 3.2.1), 'conditions and preferences' (Section 3.2.4), and 'learning ecology' (Section 3.2.4) help navigate my exploration of artistic interest within the landscape of interest-driven pursuits. These terms can also be used to structure the chapters of data analysis in this thesis. Moreover, key findings such as the two developmental dynamics I highlighted: parental influence and mediation

(Section 3.2.2), and school and out-of-school settings (Section 3.2.3), are useful in interpreting data, particularly to identify the developmental dynamics of a pathway to art, which help address my research question ('how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?').

Finally, on a methodological level, the studies I reviewed have implications for the designing of my research. Retrospective interview, which is used as a primary data collection method in most of the studies, presents itself as an appropriate method to profile a person's life history and highlights the pivotal resources and moments that contribute to (or constrain) the pursuit of interest, which is essential to constructing a person's learning ecology. Combining with other qualitative methods, e.g. participant observation, the advantage of retrospective interview in capturing rich phenomena in learning and interest development may be further expanded, and can be used to create portraits of learning and engagement in other domains such as art. This enables me to address my research question, and has informed the methodological decision I made in this research.

3.3 Identity development

Section 3.3 explores in more depth the relationship between identity and interest. Identity development emerges as a relevant issue in the discussion of interest-driven pursuits in Section 3.2. As Barron (2006) argues, expertise development may go hand in hand with a growing sense of self or identity; her case studies also demonstrate that students articulate their 'imagined future self', seeing themselves working in the field of technology as their interest and expertise mature. Similarly, Crowley et al. (2015) also suggest that higher interest students are more likely to have science-related plans in the future, and to develop a science identity. Azevedo (2011) points out that a person's persistence in practice is supported by the building of identity; his case study of model rocketry shows that the practice is supported by rocketeers forging identities of creativity and competence. Hence, Section 3.3 explores the concept of interest-related identity.

Section 3.3 begins with a brief overview of identity and identity formation (Section 3.3.1) for the purpose of clarifying identity-related terms according to different disciplinary focuses. It is then followed by a more focused discussion on interest-related identity (Section 3.3.2), which is also termed as 'epistemic identity' (Greeno and Hull 2006), or 'learning identity' (Bell et al. 2009), in order to elaborate the link between identity development and the pursuit of interest. This section then concludes with a discussion of the implications drawn from the identity-related studies reviewed in Section 3.3.1 and Section 3.3.2.

3.3.1 Identity

In this section, I clarify the term 'identity' by discussing what identity means in social science disciplines. The purpose of this section is to situate the discussion of interest-related identities in a wider context of identity. Identity, a tool to study human conduct, is a construct widely discussed and studied in social science disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, in which different approaches and levels of analysis are employed. A variety of terms addressing different aspects of identity are used according to disciplinary concerns, which bring about different understanding of identity formation.

In psychology and sociology, researchers are most concerned with individually assigned identities, such as ego identity, personal identity or social identity. In psychology, identity can be understood as 'selfsameness', and is formed through achieving consistency in the subjective, personal and social dimension of self. Erikson sees identity as having three components: the subjective (ego identity), the personal (one's behavioral and character repertoire), and the social (recognized roles within a community) (Côté and Levine 2002:15). Identity connotes achieving 'sameness or continuity of the self, interrelationship between the self and the other, and integration between the other and other' (ibid:16).

Sociology (school of Symbolic Interactionism), on the other hand, shares interest in the interpersonal domain of identity with psychologists, but considers the

formation of identity taking place in social interactions. In sociology, identity can be understood as a constructed categorization that influences/situates the individual on both the micro level and the macro level of his/her life. Sociologists are concerned with personal identity, which 'works as multiple categorization of the individual that influences behavior and gives meaning to life' (Côté and Levine 2002:44); and social identity, which 'works as a positional definition of actors in relation to social organization and convention embodied in roles and statues' (ibid:45).

Anthropology and cultural studies rather focus on collectively shared identities, such as ethnic identity, or cultural identity. In social anthropology, identity is a consciousness of sharing certain characteristics within a group, such as language and culture (Sökefeld 1999:417). Identity, therefore, moves from the psychological understanding of selfsameness to the sameness of self with others. Cultural identity is also defined as a 'collective one true self hiding inside the many other more superficial and artificially imposed selves, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common' (Hall 1990:223).

Cultural studies, however, has abandoned the original connotation of sameness and unity, and given way to difference and plurality in contemporary discourse of identity (Sökefeld 1999). Identities are enacted through representation, i.e. language and cultural code, where subject positions are made available (Hall 1996:4); identities are constructed through excluding one from the other and by establishing a hierarchy (ibid:5). In this sense, both anthropology and cultural studies reject the claim that identities are foundational. Identity, precisely cultural identity, is unsettled, and can be seen as a production always in process (Hall 2003:222).

In brief, psychology and sociology are concerned with individual identities, e.g. personal and social identities, although the two diverge on how identity is formed. The two traditions prioritize the issue of how individuals struggle to find the sense of self and fit individuality into the social world. Anthropology and cultural studies focus on collective identities, e.g. cultural identity with reference to ethnicity, sexuality, gender etc. The two traditions, rather than seeing identity as unified and stable, consider identity constructed through exclusion and difference. Identification,

therefore, implies power struggle.

Interest-related identity, an identity through which individuals interact or engage with domain (or interest) related content and activity, can be understood as an individually assigned identity, precisely a personal identity, based on the preceding discussion. The sociological thinking around identity and identity formation helps explain the formation of interest-related identity. Sociologists see identity as something constructed internally by individuals and externally with reference to objective social circumstances experienced in day-to-day interactions, social roles, cultural institutions and social structure (Côté and Levine 2002:49). Interest-related identity can be understood as an individually constructed identity in relation to the experience of interest-driven practice or engagement, and through interacting with other individuals that are part of the interest-related community, such as hobbyists of the community of model rocketeers noted in Azevedo's study.

3.3.2 Interest-related identity

In this section, I turn to discuss interest-related identity. The purpose of this section is to further elaborate the relationship between interest-related identity and interest-driven pursuits, which as Section 3.2 established, is an important strand of discussion to understand the process of pursuing an interest/expertise. This section will help develop an identity-related analysis of interest development, which will address the research question related to the development of artistic interest (RQ1). Interest-related identity, according to Barron (2006), refers to an identity through which individuals interact or engage with domain or interest-related content and activity. What Barron termed as interested-related identity finds resonance with the following terms, including 'learning identity' (Bell, et al. 2009), 'epistemic identity' (Hull and Greeno 2006), or 'science identity' (Crowley et al. 2015), all of which, in fact, refer to the identity one develops throughout the pursuit of interest in learning, or interest in specific domains of practice and engagement.

Learning identity refers to the understanding of oneself as a learner or

participant in a given domain. It is often equated with a subjective sense of belonging or identification to a specific domain (Bell et al. 2009). Renninger (2009:106) defines learning identity as a 'learner's self-representation as a person who pursues a particular content and the processes that inform this development of self-representation'. Learning identity pertains to the ways in which individuals experience their agency in relation to the activities associated with the domain (Holland et al. 1998; Hull and Greeno 2006); it is also a way of talking about how learning change who we are (Wenger 1998a). Furthermore, learning identity can be experienced retrospectively in relation to current activity, or projected to future imaginings (Bell et al. 2009).

Bell et al.'s (2009) work highlights the importance of developing learning identity in science. Defining learning identity as the way 'learners think about themselves as someone who knows about, uses, and sometimes contributes to science (ibid:43)', Bell et al. maintain that identifying with the scientific enterprise, cannot be separated from the component of participation in science. Moreover, science identity development is worthy of its own focus with particular importance to informal settings that engage learners of all ages, the small number of people who view themselves as scientists, and the majority of people who do not become scientists as well (ibid:46). In other words, developing learning identity in science – how learners view themselves in relation to science – is essential to facilitating learning in the science community, and is considered as important as developing science interest, knowledge, reasoning, and practices.

While conceptualizing learning identity (science identity) in relation to scientific practices, Bell et al. (2009) argue that science identity not only resides in personal beliefs and attitudes, but it also emerges in moment-to-moment interactions, which position learners among different roles in particular situations (ibid:74). Through interacting with material resources and with other learners of science in socially defined settings, identities (e.g. competent, skilled, creative, or lacking in these qualities) are assigned to individuals (ibid:75). Identity, therefore, is more of an embodied experience in practice through participating in activities in a learning

community, in addition to a label or a self-image (Wenger 1998). In this sense, science identity can be linked to habitus (see Section 2.4.2); science identity as a set of internalized beliefs and attitudes built on learners' past engagement with the science, structures the way learners engage with science.

Finally, Bell et al. (2009:114) suggest that cultural factors including ethnicity, gender, social networks, and the socialization of children into ways of thinking or talking, may affect the development of science identity. Developing science identity should be understood as concurrent with and contingent on the development of other deeply held identities such as cultural identities (ibid:115).

In a similar way, Renninger (2009) argues that the development of learning identity is contingent on the development of interest in science, and age-related identities. Learning identity is found more likely to be established in the later phase of interest development, when the learner is more cognitively and affectively connected to the domain. Age-related identities ('sense of self and possibility') are also considered to evolve as part of the cognitively and affectively informed self-system (ibid:109). In other words, the development of a learning identity may inform a learner's developing capacity of self-representation, and may influence future self-definition.

Hull and Greeno's (2006) work, which considers after school programs as an alternative, important and unique space for identity formation, also deals with learning identity in a participatory sense. Learning identity is conceptualized as having the interpersonal, epistemic, and discursive aspects. It is formed as one participates through interacting with others and the subject-matter content of activities in ways that the person is committed, entitled and obliged to do so (ibid:83). One develops epistemic identity as one's expertise and understanding related to a subject-matter content of activities increases through learning. In the sense that one identifies with a specific discipline or domain such as science, epistemic identity is closely related to science identity, as noted in the work of Bell et al. and Crowley et al., and it also resonates with Renninger's point that learning identity emerges as a learner's interest matures. Moreover, one also develops

discoursal identity as one tells stories about who one was, is, and wants to become through the process of learning (ibid:84). In other words, learning identity can be seen as a 'positional identity' that enables learners to develop other identities in practice.

Hull and Greeno's view of discoursal identity resonates with Sfard and Prusak (2005), and Holland et al. (1998), whose works both link identity to the activity of communication. Holland et al. (1998:3) conceptualize identity as 'stories' in which 'people tell others who they are, but even more importantly, they tell themselves, and they try to act as though they are who they say they are'. Identity is seen as discursive, and can be defined as collections of stories about persons or narratives about individuals that are reifying, significant, and endorsable (Sfard and Prusak, 2005:16). In other words, one develops a learning identity not only by engaging in an activity and negotiating oneself in relation to a domain including its participants, but also by communicating how learning changes oneself.

In brief, it is generally agreed that learning identity is closely related to participation and practice in a given domain. Learning identity is manifested in a learner's personal narratives of belief, value and attitude in relation to learning and to a given domain. Learning identity is also experienced through interactions, manifested through learners' perception of themselves, which positions learners in relation to a domain, and urges them to take identity-related action and decision that informs self-definition. Learning identity is considered to emerge in later phase interest development, and is found to develop in contingency on other deeply held identities.

With the above points in mind, the development of artistic interest can now be interpreted as a process through which individuals perceive themselves in relation to the arts. An identity-related analysis of interest-driven pursuit in art is made possible by inquiries such as, how individuals identify with the role art plays in their life, how they see themselves as an art learner (more specifically a competent one), and how the above perceptions change as interest matures. This strand of analysis will be very helpful for my exploration of the pathways to art.

3.3.3 Implication

Two implications are generated from Section 3.3.1 and Section 3.3.2. On a general level, the link between identity and interest-driven pursuits is established and further developed. More specifically, it is found that, in science, identity develops in later phases of interest development. There is an opportunity to explore whether this observation can be extended to other domains of interest, such as visual art, as this thesis intends to do.

On a conceptual level, the studies I reviewed in Section 3.3 elaborate in greater depth about the meaning and formation of interest-related identity, such as the channel through which interest-related identity is manifested (e.g. through personal narratives of beliefs and values, and situated roles in relation to a practice in a domain); the mutually informing relationship between interest-related identities and other identities, such as self-definition, or cultural identities. The insights generated from the above studies can be used to develop identity-related inquiries of artistic interest. This can be done by probing into art enthusiasts' perception of, for example, how they identify with the role art plays in their life, how they see themselves as an art learner, or how the above perceptions change as interest matures. Developing an identity-related analysis of interest development will illuminate the developmental process of artistic interest, and help address the research question, 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?'

3.4 Motivation for visiting museum

In this section, I further discuss motivation in the museum setting. Museum visiting is an interest-driven engagement related to art that is of particular interest to my research. In Research Question 2, I ask, 'what roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest?' To address the question of 'role', I focus on motivation-related questions – what motivates people to visit museums, and how museums are perceived in general and in relation to interest. The link between

motivation and interest has been established in Chapter 2, in which interest is found to provide a precondition for intrinsically motivated behavior, and that the characteristics of intrinsically motivating experience correspond with the affective and emotional reactions of a person whose interest is developing. That said, artistic interest should be examined side by side with particular motivations to engage in art-related activities, such as participation in museums and galleries. Hence, I engage with studies of motivation for visiting museums in this section.

Fruitful results are found in a great number of museum studies investigating visitor's motivation for visiting. Existing research has established common categories of motivation for visiting museums that are found across various studies, such as 'social event' and 'learning/education'. These studies take different approaches and have diverse focuses to investigate motivations. In Section 3.4.1, I discuss studies (e.g. MacDonald 1995) that relate motivation to the perceived roles museums play in people's sociocultural life. These studies inform, on a theoretical level, my understanding of motivation. From Section 3.4.2 to Section 3.4.4, I review a limited number of motivation studies that inform my analysis of data regarding participants' perception of museums. In Section 3.4.2, I review studies (e.g. Falk 2006) that consider motivation more of an identity-related frame through which visitors engage with museums. These studies generate insights for the motivation category 'identity building' I created, and they echo the discussion of interest-related identity presented in Section 3.3. In Section 3.4.3, I turn to studies that address motivation as a particular experience (e.g. Packer 2008), which shed lights on two of my motivation categories, 'restoration', and 'escapism'. In Section 3.4.4, I focus on motivation as a special experience mediated by an object, which helps elaborate the category, 'place' as an object-centered experience. Section 3.4.5 concludes with the implications generated from the studies I discussed in the preceding four subsections.

3.4.1 Cultural itineraries

In this section, I present studies that inform my understanding of motivation for

visiting museums by looking into Macdonald's work and her conceptualization of motivation as 'cultural itineraries'. In addition, I review the work of Moussouri and Roussos (2013), which is influenced by Macdonald's approach, and their list of categories of motivation. One of the categories I created for analyzing art enthusiasts' motivation in my research are directly informed by the studies presented in this section, and some of the other categories also support the categories of motivation generated from these studies.

To begin with, motivations for visiting museums can be categorized by: context-specific motivations, which relate to certain type of museum or exhibited content, and generic motivations, which apply to museums in general and imply specific values museums stand for. Such distinction is addressed in Prentice, Davies and Beeho's (1997) work. They point out that generic motivations may include social interaction, informal learning, satisfying general interest and curiosity, or 'to have a nice day out', whereas context-specific motivations may include specific interest in history (in the case of visiting heritage sites or archaeological museums) (ibid:48). A discussion on generic motivation is found in Macdonald's work.

Macdonald's study views visitors' motivation for visiting in relation to museums' perceived place in visitors' social life. Using Lave's (1988) idea of a (shopping) list, Macdonald (1995:16) conceptualizes visitor motivations as 'cultural itineraries', which refer to a particular kind of list that 'proposes movements through space'. According to Macdonald, the ideas of itineraries and lists make it possible to think about motivations for visiting museums as 'slotting into wider sociocultural patterns' that are 'evident in visitors' own articulations and give ample space for considerations of visitors' own strategies for compiling their own individual lists or itineraries' (ibid:16). In other words, motivation for visiting museums can be understood as part of the general cultural routes in people's sociocultural life, with which they navigate through a space like a museum. Considering how visitors' cultural itineraries intersect with the museum may lead to a more generic and holistic understanding of the rationale of museum visitation.

Macdonald (1995:17) further identifies four itineraries, including life-cycle,

place, family event and education. These four itineraries represent how museums and museum visiting are perceived in visitors' social lives, and how people visit science museums and science exhibitions according to these cultural itineraries. In other words, the rationale behind museum visiting is not merely a particular interest in science; rather, what museums represent – museums' generic roles – in our lives. This idea resonates with Prentice, Davies and Beeho (1997), who argue that visitors' participation and non-participation in the museum should be viewed in relation to both their generic and site-specific motivations, including general interest in the exhibited content and generic reasons such as social interaction and education.

Based on Macdonald's conceptualization of motivation as cultural itinerary, researchers further explore motivation/itinerary and visitors' visiting agenda by observing visitor's pattern of in-museum engagement. In these studies, motivation is found to influence visitors' visiting strategy and behavior (Falk, Moussouri and Coulson 1998); visitors' entry (before-visit) and emergent (in-museum) agendas are found to shape on-site learning experience (Briseño-Garzón, Anderson and Anderson 2007). Moussouri and Roussos (2013), for example, identify two distinct visiting strategies that directly relate to two motivations/itineraries. Visitor groups with education-participation motivation/itinerary tend to visit only the exhibits, whereas groups with social event motivation/itinerary are found to spend a considerable amount of time on non-exhibit related activities and socializing with others (ibid:33). In other words, the way visitors navigate through museum spaces are informed by their motivation/itinerary.

Moreover, Moussouri and Roussos (2013:24-25) identify a list of 10 categories of motivation, which are drawn from many other motivation studies, including Macdonald's cultural itineraries. These categories (See Figure 3-6) can be seen as extended from Macdonald's four cultural itineraries (place, life-cycle, education, family/social event), which capture the generic roles of museums perceived by visitors; some categories, e.g. introspection, or biophilia, are context-specific and can be linked to certain types of exhibition content or museum.

The ten categories, on the one hand, provide insights for elaborating the

motivation categories I created in this research; some of the data-driven categories I created, such as 'learning', 'social interaction', 'entertainment', are consistent with that of Macdonald (1995) and Moussouri and Roussos (2013). On the other hand, I borrowed the category 'place' from the above studies to describe how museums are perceived as a cultural/recreational place.

Figure 3-6 Categories of motivation for visiting museums (Moussouri and Roussos 2013)

In brief, my understanding of motivation is informed by Macdonald's cultural itineraries. I see motivations as perceived 'roles' in relation to visitors' sociocultural life. This understanding helps breakdown 'role' as addressed in my research question, which can be understood as the perceived roles and values museums stand for in an art enthusiast's life (generic motivation), and as motivations in relation to a specific interest in art (context-specific motivation). Cultural itinerary/motivation categories

(e.g. 'place') also inform my analysis of art enthusiasts' accounts related to motivation.

3.4.2 Identity-related motivations

In this section, I discuss studies that focus on motivation categories related with identity or 'introspection' ('the need to self-reflect') as noted by Moussouri and Roussos (2013). Falk's (2006, 2008) and Rounds' (2006) studies address how identity shapes visitors' motivation, and they are briefly reviewed in this section. These studies inform my analysis, and help me create the motivation category 'identity building' in this research, which refers museums or museum visiting as an identity-building environment that evokes self-reflection.

In Falk's studies, identity is defined as a psychological construct, i.e. identity as an individual's sense of self, and is used as the lens to examine the meaning people make during their visit and beyond. Falk (2006:154) argues that visitors' motivations are closely aligned with individuals' sense of self and identity; visitors use the museum to satisfy their identity-related needs by enacting identities specific to their visit and using the museums to make personal meaning. Five identity-related motivations are identified from Falk's studies across different types of museums (e.g. science centers, art museums, zoos, aquariums, history museums) in various locations. They are: the explorer, the facilitator, the professional/hobbyist, the experience seeker, and the spiritual pilgrim (2008:156-158). These motivations are seen as clusters of visitors' entering attributes such as prior knowledge and interest (ibid:155), and are found not only to shape visiting behaviors and experiences, but also they are reinforced – being consistent with how individuals define themselves – as identities are enacted during the visit. Hence identity-related motivations can be used to profile visitors and to predict visitor's experiences and behaviors.

Similarly, arguing that visitors engage in 'identity work' while visiting the museum, Rounds (2006) uses the concept of identity to describe 'browsing behavior', a commonly observed visiting pattern in museums. Identity work, defined as 'the

processes through which we construct, maintain, and adapt our sense of personal identity, and persuade other people to believe in the identity' (ibid:133), is considered an explanation for visitors' partial use of exhibited content at the museum.

In brief, it can be taken from the above studies that identities are enacted and confirmed through museum visits. The link between identity and motivation is found in art enthusiasts' accounts that relate the perception of museums to identity building and self-reflection in my research.

3.4.3 Motivation as experience

In this section, I explore studies that approach motivation as a drive to seek certain types of experience that can be met by a setting like the museum. I discuss Pekarik, Doering and Karn's (1999) study, which looks into different types of satisfying experience in museums; Packer's (2008) study, which specifically focuses on restorative experience in museums; and Slater's (2007) study of escapism in art galleries. These studies, again, generate insights for some of the motivation categories I developed in my research.

Using qualitative interviewing and exit surveys on more than 2,000 visitors across nine Smithsonian museums, Pekarik, Doering and Karn (1999) develop the 'satisfying experience framework', which categorizes visitors' satisfying experience into four kinds: object experiences (ibid:157), cognitive experiences (ibid:157-158), introspective experiences (ibid:158), and social experiences (ibid:159) (See Figure 3-7). Moreover, they find that different types of museums or exhibitions (precisely, the presentation of objects and exhibition contents) seem to elicit different types of experience to varying extents. Object experiences are found to be most satisfying in art museums, whereas introspective experiences are the dominant type in history museums (ibid:162). However, they caution that these experiences should be seen as carrying different weight according to the setting.

By elaborating on the elements of an inherently satisfying experience, this study

echoes some of the motivation categories discussed in the preceding sections. Categories such as 'learning/participation' can be understood by, for example, the discussion of cognitive experience, in which the elements of knowledge and information museums offer can be linked to museums' educational value as perceived by visitors. Object experience, and its emphasis on the role of objects in mediating satisfying experiences can be discussed in relation to the category 'place'; it can be extended that visitors perceive museum as a cultural destination, where they are most likely to be attracted by seeing specific objects in museum collection. This point is further discussed in Section 3.4.4.

object experience
- seeing the real/uncommon/valuable things, being moved away by beauty

cognitive experience
- gaining information or knowledge, enriching one's understanding

Satisfying experience

introspective experience
- recalling childhood/travel experiences or memories, reflecting on the meaning one is looking for, feeling connected

social experience
- spending time with family/friends

Figure 3-7 Satisfying experience framework (Pekarik, Doering and Karn 1999)

However, studies have shown that cognitive and affective changes resulting from museum visits tend to decline over time unless these experiences are subsequently reinforced by personal relevance (Anderson, Storksdieck and Spock 2007). Memories of museum visits are considered to shape visitors' motivation (Anderson 2003).

Packer's work builds on Pekarik, Doering and Karn's (1999) satisfying experience framework, and moves beyond the experiences visitors gain from visiting museums to explore beneficial experiences, which, according to Packer (2008:35), is where the

meaning of museum experience emerges. Looking at beneficial outcomes beyond learning, Packer draws on the approaches of psychological well-being and mental restoration to conceptualize beneficial experiences in museum setting. She proposes a framework featuring the value and benefits of museum experience in three dimensions: psychological wellbeing, subjective wellbeing and restoration (2008:38) (See Figure 3-8).
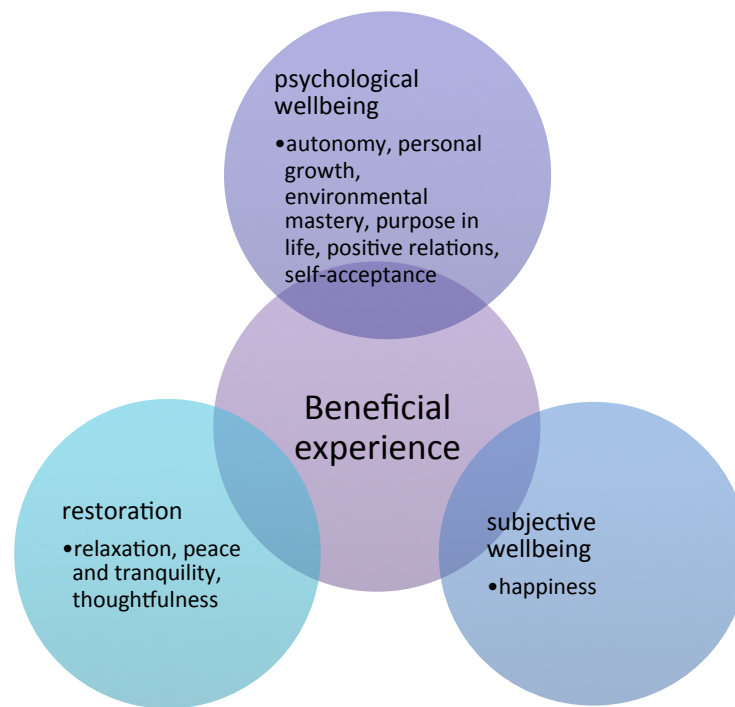
Figure 3-8 Beneficial museum experience (Packer 2008)

Adopting a deductive qualitative approach in data gathering and data analysis with 60 participants at the Queensland Museum in Australia, Packer's findings further reveal the restorative value of museum by identifying the restorative elements of visitors' museum experience; visitors describe their experience with elements such as 'being unhurried', 'being away', and 'fascination' (by object). In addition, she draws a link between satisfying experiences, i.e. object, cognitive and introspective experiences, and the restorative value and benefit of museum visiting (2008:50). It can be understood that Packer's work further explains the benefits visitors derive from satisfying experiences, and stresses the restorative nature of

museum visits. Discussion on the restorative value of museum visiting (i.e. being unhurried, being away, senses of relaxation, tranquility or peace etc.) is supported by art enthusiasts' accounts in my research, and therefore, helps me create the motivation category 'restoration'.

A similar category is addressed in the study of Slater (2007). She focuses on art gallery visitors, and finds that 'escapism', a core motivation referring to people enjoying a different environment from home or work where they feel at ease and comfortable in their surroundings, is more prominent than learning as a motivation domain in the setting of art gallery. In Slater's (2007) study, escapism is conceptualized by descriptors including: 'escape the hustle and bustle of daily activities', 'make a nice change of my daily routine', and 'relax mentally', some of which resonate with the restorative nature of museum experience discussed in Packer's study. However, an emphasis on the separation from the monotony of daily routines seems to be stressed in the discussion of escapism, whereas elements such as sense of tranquility, peace, being hurried characterized the category of restoration. This discussion, again, is supported by art enthusiasts' accounts in my research, and therefore, helps create the motivation category 'escapism'.

In brief, the above studies elaborate museum and museum visiting as a special experience, and identify specific elements that give rise to a given experience. This helps explain art enthusiasts' perceptions of museums in my research, which informs some of my motivation categories.

3.4.4 Object-centered experience

In this section, I focus on object-centered experience in the museum setting, which is first discussed in the study of Pekarik, Doering and Karn (1999). In Section 3.4.3, I point out that the motivation category 'place' can be examined under the influence of object, and that visitors perceiving museums as cultural destination may often associate museums with objects. 'Object experience' is found to be an important type of satisfying experience, more than often taking place in art galleries;

object is also found to be associated with cognitive and introspective experiences (Pekarik, Doering and Karn 1999), and elicits fascination (defined as effortless attention or engagement), which leads to a restorative experience (Packer 2008). Hence, I further review studies that stress the role objects play in mediating museum experience in this section, which help elaborate the category 'place' that I use as a major motivation category in data analysis.

A parallel discussion to object experience is termed as 'numinous experience', which also engages with the role museum object plays in mediating museum experience. Cameron and Gatewood (2003:55) explore 'numinous experiences' in museums and heritage sites, which refers to visitors' quest for 'a deeper experience' and 'a desire to make a personal connection with the people and spirit of earlier times' through visiting original historical sites and objects. Seeking for such experience derives from 'numen desire', which is characterized by visitors' association of sites and objects with feelings including 'going back in time', 'escape', 'authenticity', or gaining personal and deeper insights (ibid:62). This finding supports Pekarik, Doering and Karn's (1999) finding that the object is linked with cognitive and introspective experiences, as addressed in Section 3.4.3. Moreover, Cameron and Gatewood (2003) also make links with the study of flow, noting that such deep engagement with the site or object simulates to flow as in being mentally transported by the activity.

The power of objects to evoke numinous experience is also confirmed by Latham (2013:3), who elaborates that the essence of a numinous encounter 'is comprised of a holistic uniting of intellect and affect, with a direct link to the tangible and symbolic nature of the object, a feeling of being transported, and intensely profound connection with the past, self and spirit'. The above two studies support Pekarik, Doering and Karn's discussion of object experiences, in which visitors gain satisfaction by seeing the real/uncommon/valuable things and being moved by them. Moreover, the studies address the transcendental, reverence-evoking nature of such experience, where the self, the object and the derived meanings of the object intersect in a museum visit, which in part echoes Falk's (2006) characterization of

'spiritual pilgrim'.

Central to the discussion of object or numinous experiences is the key element supporting these experiences: authenticity. The central role of authentic object/place for museum and heritage site visitors is pointed out by Prentice (2001). Prentice (ibid:6) elaborates museum's value in offering authentic experiences through 'creating access and understanding via relics of the past or items of wonder, and by so doing, conferring value on these relics and items as rare and worthy of attention, conservation and celebration'. He further links this object-centered appreciation with contemporary cultural tourism, which is experiential in nature and is defined as tourism constructed explicitly or implicitly as cultural appreciation (ibid:8). Leary and Sholes (2000:50) reinforce this point, suggesting that (industrial) museums provide visitors with an authentic experience by linking the past and present through contact with artifacts and lives, and the 'authenticity of place and voice' may determine the place of industrial museums within cultural institutions. Hampp and Schwan (2014:17-18) also confirm that seeing original/authentic objects is considered important for science museum visitors, as it connects visitors with history, delivers senses of 'rarity' and 'charisma (aura)' (which are imbued in authentic objects), and in some cases, generates insights for the materiality of an object in a given time. It can be understood that encountering authentic objects in museums leads to a deep, insightful, and transportative experience, which, as the discussion on object experience points out, can be inherently satisfying.

In brief, the above studies further elaborate visitors' perception of museum as cultural destination (the category 'place') in relation to the mediation of the object. Such perceptions can be understood as an object-centered appreciation carried out by visitors seeking numinous or authentic encounters with museum objects. This understanding is also supported by art enthusiasts' accounts in my research.

3.4.5 Implication

Two implications are generated from the studies reviewed in the preceding four

subsections. On a theoretical level, these studies generate insights for the way motivation is conceptualized and studied in the setting of museum. My understanding of motivation is informed by the approach of Macdonald (1995) and Moussouri and Roussos (2013) (Section 3.4.1), which engage with the roles museum play in visitors' sociocultural pattern. Hence, I understand motivation for visiting museums as the perceived roles or values museums stand for, and I tend to address my research question by pursuing a set of motivation-related inquiries – how art enthusiasts perceive the value of the museum.

On a conceptual level, the studies reviewed in Section 3.4 throw light on my interpretation of data regarding how art enthusiasts perceive museums and museum visiting. In particular, relevant discussions on motivation categories including 'place' (Section 3.4.1), 'identity building' (Section 3.4.2), 'restoration' (Section 3.4.3), and 'escapism' (Section 3.4.3) inform the categorization of data in my research. Other discussions derived from, for example, object experience, are also used to elaborate categories generated directly from data in my research.

3.5 Summary

In Chapter 3, I explore the existing literature of interest-driven engagement and practice, and issues derived from the development of interest. The four subsections presented in the chapter are essential to my research, and are reflected in both my methodological design and data analysis. Insights and findings generated from these studies enable me to address Research Question 1 by highlighting possible dynamics/influences that may contribute to the developing of an interest; they also help address Research Question 2 by forming thoughts on motivations for visiting museums.

In Section 3.1, I review two theoretical stances that foreground the study of interest-driven pursuits, namely the sociocultural and ecological perspectives of learning. I conclude that these perspectives propose a broader view of learning, considering learning across different settings, associating learning with specific forms

and activities, and particularly taking into account of influences such as the social groups one interacts with, and one's prior experience in particular settings.

In Section 3.2, I look into a number of studies of interest-driven pursuits, which generate various impacts on my research. For example, they point out the need to investigate the developmental dynamics of interest (e.g. parental influence) in order to delineate pathways to art. I also draw links from some key findings and methodological implications with my research.

In Section 3.3, I clarify the relationship between identity and interest, and focus on learning identity. I conclude that interest-related identities (e.g. learning identity) develop with interest, and can be examined through personal narratives of beliefs and values, and situated roles in relation to a practice in a domain.

Finally, in Section 3.4, I review a number of studies of motivation in the museum setting. For the purpose of this research, I conceptualize the roles museums play by the generic motivations for museum visitation (cultural itineraries). I draw links between key findings and categories of motivations generated from these studies and the data generated in my research.

Chapter 4

Methodological approach

This chapter outlines the methodological approach I have adopted in this thesis to address the research questions. It provides an explanation of the research design, as well as the methods I used to collect data that aligned with the research questions. The chapter also gives details regarding the processes through which I recruited my research participants in Taipei and London, and the rationales for selecting certain participants as case studies. A scheme of data analysis and a brief discussion of research ethics and reflexivity are also presented in this chapter.

4.1 Research questions

The methodological choice made in this thesis is based on the research questions. As discussed in Chapter 1, I consider the following research questions to address the concern regarding the process and formation of artistic interest, and the relationship between museum visitation and interest.

RQ1. How does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?

- What are the developmental dynamics influencing the development of artistic interest? How do these dynamics play out in the process of interest development?
- What does an individual's 'pathway to art' look like?

RQ2. What roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest?

- What motivates an art enthusiast to visit museums?
- How is the value of museums and galleries perceived in relation to interest in a pathway to art?

RQ3. How do processes of interest development differ or converge between art enthusiasts in Taipei and London?

4.2 Qualitative approach

The methodological approach I adopted in this research is a qualitative one. Qualitative methodology, according to Silverman (2006:56), is thought to be a methodological approach, which provides 'a deeper understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from a pure quantitative methodology'. Despite of the variations that exist between different sorts of qualitative research, qualitative researchers share common beliefs. As Mason (2002) summarizes, research taking on qualitative strategies: (1) is grounded in the 'interpretivist' school that concerns with how the social world in interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted by focusing on social meanings, interpretations, practices, discourses, processes, or constructions; (2) is based on methods of data generation that are more flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data is produced; (3) emphasizes 'holistic' forms of analysis and explanation, and aims to produce rounded and contextual understanding on the basis of rich, nuanced and detailed data.

Based on the above understanding, I adopted a qualitative approach in this thesis to take account of the following considerations. First, since this thesis sets out to understand a particular social phenomenon by looking into the action, meaning and subjective experience of pursuing an interest among a selected group of social actors (i.e. art enthusiasts), my methodological stance is best aligned with the interpretivist position, because it enables me to develop an in-depth and extensive exploration of the perceptions and behaviors of art enthusiasts. In other words, taking an interpretivist stance will help me reconstruct individuals' pathways to art by studying how they perceive their past experiences relating to art, which enables me to address the research questions. Furthermore, a qualitative approach allows flexibility in gathering and analyzing situated and naturally occurring data, hence, it

encourages collection of rich and context dependent data, which is an advantage when dealing with data composed of individuals' subjective experience of engaging in art in multiple settings and at different life stages. Finally, a qualitative approach facilitates a holistic, deeper and contextual understanding and theorizing of the developmental process of artistic interest and participants' perception of museums in relation to interest, which enables me, again, to address my research questions. Therefore, the qualitative methodology this thesis is based on will ensure that I achieve better understanding and theorizing of art enthusiasts' experiences.

However, a major challenge for taking an interpretivist stance is the issue of trustworthiness, namely, the challenge to ensure that research participants' perspectives are fully represented (Mason 2002). To ensure the trustworthiness of qualitative research, it is important to scrutinize the research process through the criterion of credibility (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Credibility signifies that the interpretation of data and finding are embedded in and reflect researchers', participants', and readers' experience of a phenomenon (Lincoln and Guba 1985). One of the means to enhance credibility is triangulation, e.g. using the 'learning ecology map' (see Section 4.3.3.2) to confirm my representation of participants' perspectives (via an interview) with the participant during data collection.

Furthermore, reflexivity is also an important issue related with trustworthiness. Reflexivity entails the researcher recognizing his or her own knowing and practice as 'implicated in the production of knowledge' (Mason 2002:179), and being aware of his or her inherent biases (Corbin and Strauss 2008:203). As a member of museum education profession and museum studies community, I may have developed certain way of thinking towards museum and research practice when pursuing an inquiry, but my membership also enhanced my sensitivity for certain topics, which facilitated my interaction with research participants, and encouraged participants to express opinion with a view to influencing the museum community. My identity as a female Taiwanese may also be seen as a cultural bias, which may prevent me from examining Taiwanese participants' experience critically as an 'insider' (Greenfield 2000); however, my identity also made it easier for me to gain trust from Taiwanese

participants, who found resonance with me rather easily, and were more likely to share their personal stories with me. These concerns and awareness were addressed throughout the research process through keeping field notes, and they were reflected in data analysis. To minimize the risk of making biased interpretation, I also sent selected interview transcripts that would be used in this thesis to every research participant for feedback.

4.3 Research design and methods

This research was undertaken in three stages. Stage one set out to identify the target of the research, the art enthusiasts, by means of a scoping exercise to identify potential recruitment points, and followed by actual recruitment. Stage two and three were the main fieldwork components of this research.

The design of this research, in particular that of the last two stages, was influenced by the other qualitative studies of museum visitors, particularly the application of ethnographic techniques in museum studies. Ethnography is often described as an inscription practice about a given culture and an attempt 'to place specific encounters, events, and understanding into a fuller and more meaningful context' (Tedlock 2011:455). Ellenbogen's research into a frequent museum-going family is an example of the application of ethnographic techniques 'in an effort to describe the role of museums in the larger context of the family culture' (2002:81). Her research is designed to be carried out over an extended period of time with a focus on planned museum visits and observation at home and other leisure sites using various methods, including semi-structured interview and participant observation. Her work proves that ethnographic techniques enable museum researchers to achieve a more contextual, in-depth, and comprehensive understanding of the culture of learning environments such as in a museum. Ellenbogen's work informed the design of this research in several ways. On the one hand, multiple methods were employed during the fieldwork, including semi-structured and conversational interviews, and participant observation of gallery

visits; this ensures that I capture both the retrospective experiences and on-site experiences of art enthusiasts. On the other hand, this research was carried out over an extended period of time (between November 2013 and January 2015), and data collection spread across two stages; this ensures that I obtained in-depth and extensive insights on participants' experiences, and kept myself updated with participants' recent interest-related pursuits and engagements, and should time permitted, confirmed my interpretation of participants' account with them in person.

In the following three sections I present the research design in three stages. I also highlight the methods used in each stage, including methods used for identifying and recruiting art enthusiasts in stage one, and methods used to gather data regarding interest development in stages two and three. In brief, a mixture of methods was used to generate data in the stages two and three, including online questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, participant observation of gallery visits, conversational interviews in follow up meetings, and the 'learning ecology map' for the purpose of triangulation.

4.3.1 Stage one: Identifying art enthusiasts

The purpose of stage one was to identify art enthusiasts from the population, beginning with the definition of 'art enthusiasts'. As this research sets out to investigate the experience of adult art enthusiasts, theses are understood in this thesis as people who take a hobbyist interest in art and humanity topics (to address RQ1) (see Section 2.3), visit museums and galleries (to address RQ2), and most importantly, are passionate about art. As I noted in Chapter 1, by 'art' I only referred to visual art, namely, paintings, drawing, photography, sculpture, printmaking, craft, ceramics, architecture, and video. Within this definition, a link between interest in visual arts and museum going is established, however, without excluding the other visual-art-related practices. This strategic approach to select suitable participants from a 'specified relevant range' in relation to a wider population, as noted by

Mason (2002:124), will increase correspondence between research questions and the selected group. In the following subsections, I present the selection criteria used to screen participants, and explain the recruitment processes and methods.

4.3.1.1 Recruiting art enthusiasts

Similar PhD studies taking a qualitative approach to investigating adult museum visitors' learning experiences – in-depth and for an extended period of time – have involved five to 40 participants in total (Chen 2008; Kelly 2007; Yang 2009). Hence, I aimed to recruit 10 to 15 participants in Taipei and in London respectively, forming two distinct groups of participants, Group Taipei (GT) and Group London (GL). This enabled me to compare the experience of interest development in two different cultural contexts (to address RQ3). The final number of participants in each group, however, was determined by the recruitment process.

I first developed a set of criteria, and applied it when selecting participants from a pool of potential participants (see Table 4-1 below). The first criterion identifies the participant as an individual having an interest in art instead of making a living in art or museum. This meets the need to define the targeted population for RQ1. Criterion 2 distinguishes the participant as a frequent museum visitor, based on the parameter of visiting 'three or more times per year' (Merriman 1989:151). This meets the need to define the targeted population for RQ2. Criterion 3 meets the aim to study the process of interest development with an emphasis on the use of museums and galleries, which meets the need for RQ2, and increases the variations (in terms of having access to art-related resources) between participants for RQ1. Criterion 4 accommodates the need to recruit people with different degrees of involvement in visual art, for the purpose of increasing variations of interest-driven pursuits and different developmental phases of interest between art enthusiasts meeting the needs for RQ1.

Table 4-1 Criteria for selecting participants

Criterion 1	The participant has self-defined interest(s) in art, and is not an art or museum professional.
Criterion 2	The participant goes to museums and galleries frequently.
Criterion 3	The participant has access to art in addition to museums and galleries.
Criterion 4	The participant demonstrates a specific level of engagement in art.

To facilitate criterion 4, two theoretical categories, 'central participant' and 'peripheral participant', were borrowed from Lave and Wenger (1991), which were originally used to describe different levels of participation in a community of practice. In museum studies, these concepts have been used to describe levels of participation and involvement in the museum community (Abu-Shumays and Leinhardt 2002). Hence, in this research, a distinction between central and peripheral participants was drawn to operationalize criterion 4. Central participants refer to those who involve more deeply in museums, having a dual role as a museum visitor and as a museum volunteer/course participant. Peripheral participants refer to those who take part in museums mainly as visitors. The intention was to recruit similar number of art enthusiasts representing the central participants and peripheral participants in both groups.

4.3.1.2 Recruiting methods

A few methods were used to recruit participants with the above criteria in mind. First, I conducted a scoping exercise, aiming to recruit central participants, e.g. museum volunteers, members, or museum course participants from museums, by means of making a list of potential museums. Then I made contact with the museums, and developed recruiting plans to accommodate both the needs of the institution and my research. Secondly, to cast a broader net to reach peripheral participants, I used the technique of snowballing.

4.3.1.2.1 Scoping exercise

Before the scoping exercise, I developed a set of criteria to determine which museums and galleries to reach out for participants (see Table 4-2). Criterion 1 ensures that the museum or gallery is located within an urban area, which is easy to access for the purpose of recruiting. Criterion 2 ensures that the museum or gallery holds collections relevant to any themes defined as visual arts; or presents exhibitions relevant to visual arts themes. Finally, criterion 3 ensures that the museum or gallery does not only reflect the locality.

Table 4-2 Criteria for selecting museums to recruit participants

Criterion 1	The museum is in urban area.
Criterion 2	The museum's collections or exhibition themes encompass visual arts, i.e. decorative and fine art, paintings, drawing, prints, sculpture, videos, photography, architecture.
Criterion 3	The museum serves both domestic and international visitors.

Based on these criteria, I created a list of potential museums and galleries to recruit in Taipei and London. My list of potential museums was compiled using the 'find a museum' search page developed by Taiwan's Chinese Association of Museums[1] (CAM) and UK's Museums Association (MA). In my initial search, there was an extremely unequal number of museums found (those in Taipei too few, whereas those in London, too many), therefore, I excluded university museums/collections, and house museums for the sake of shortening the list of potential museums in London, and for the purpose of increasing the comparability of museum types between the two recruiting locations. I then narrowed down the list to five museums in Taipei, and 12 museums in London (see Appendix 1). I then began contacting the museums via email or phone calls between August and December

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[1] Chinese Association of Museums (CAM), an equivalent to the Museums Association (MA), is a semi-governmental organization for the development of Taiwanese museums. Information about CAM can be retrieved at: http://www.cam.org.tw/big5/museum01.asp

2013. During this period, four museums in total responded to my request: two museums in Taipei, the National Palace Museum (NPM) (Figure 4-1) and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) (Figure 4-2), and two museums in London, the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) (Figure 4-3), and the Tate Modern (Tate) (Figure 4-4). Opportunity to recruit through these institutions therefore emerged. Table 4-3 presents brief information of the four candidate museums.

Table 4-3 Selected museums to recruit

National Palace Museum	Museum of Contemporary Art	Victoria and Albert Museum	Tate Modern
National museum of Chinese art	Municipal museum of contemporary art	National museum of fine art, decorative art and design	National museum of British art and International modern and contemporary art
Chinese fine art; historical archives; International art	No permanent collection; exhibiting Asian and International art e.g. new media, installation, photography, and design	Historical and contemporary art and design e.g. architecture, performance art, furniture, jewelry, textile etc.	International modern and contemporary art

Figure 4-1 National Palace Museum (Photo by Carol Chung)

Figure 4-2 Museum of Contemporary Art (Photo by Carol Chung)

Figure 4-3 'Victoria and Albert Museum' by David Illif is licensed under CC BY SA 3.0

Figure 4-4 'Tate Modern' by Christine Matthews is licensed under CC BY SA 2.0

There was, however, a concern of comparability between the candidate museums. Both museums in London, whose staff responded my email/phone call, the V&A and the Tate, are national and internationally recognized museums, whose collections cover a broad range of art. Ideally, it would be easily justified to recruit participants from equivalent national museums of art in Taiwan. In addition to National Palace Museum, whose volunteer coordinator responded to my email, the National Taiwan Museum of Arts (NTMA) in Taichung City (central Taiwan) would be the other equivalent. However, considering that NTMA is located hours away from Taipei city, and that initial contact with its coordinator was unsuccessful, I decided at an early stage to drop NTMA, and turned to alternative museums located in Taipei City, which also met the criteria. Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) and Taipei Fine Art Museum (TFAM) were considered potential alternatives. These are municipal museums, and either holds collection of modern and contemporary art (TFAM), or organizes contemporary art exhibitions on regular bases (MOCA). They both attempt to reach domestic and international visitors through curating large-scale Biennale, or launching exhibitions of internationally renowned artists. Hence, I reached out to members of staff at MOCA and TFAM, and eventually received a response from MOCA.

After further deliberation, the concern of comparability was minimized since this research focuses on people – how people are driven by interest to participate in art and in a specific institution, through their experiences and values placed on museums – rather than on the institutions themselves. It is also sensible to believe that people recruited from a certain museum would not solely participate in this museum throughout his/her life. However, it is considered discrete to be mindful of an institution's impact on a person. Since participants were selected according to the selection criteria, they are expected to have access not only to museums, but also to other resources at their disposal to support the interest, rather than relying solely on a particular museum from which they are recruited. Hence, recruiting participants from alternative, non-national art museums can be justified.

4.3.1.2.2 Recruit via email, exit survey, face-to-face interaction

The recruitment process (via museums) took place between August 2013 and January 2014. Three methods, emails, exit surveys, and face-to-face interaction, were used after I was given access to recruit in the four candidate museums. On the one hand, I used emails to recruit participants from NPM, MOCA, and Tate Modern. As I defined my targeted groups (i.e. volunteers, course participants) and explained to museum staff, museum staff from NPM, MOCA and Tate offered to disseminate my recruitment advertisement to their volunteers via email, and post ads on newsletters circulated within the volunteer community. I further approached individuals who responded to the recruitment email.

On the other hand, I used exit surveys and face-to-face interaction to recruit at the V&A. When I contacted the museum, I was first directed to visitor research officer, who gave me access to conduct exit survey (to screen suitable visitors), which, after two days of trial and error I deemed infeasible because of low success rate[2]. However, I managed to recruit one participant (who happened to be a member of British Museum and Tate, but sadly not V&A) out of 35 exit surveys. I was then contacted by V&A's adult learning officer, who gave me access to two V&A courses where I presented my project during the course, and gave out printed recruitment advertisement to course attendees. I then talked to those who came to me after the courses.

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[2] Within the two days (two week days in January, 2014), I conducted 35 exit surveys on visitors, among which only one-third fit my selection criteria. However, among those who fit, only three gave consent to participate, but only one fulfilled the consent. Since this method was more time consuming than I expected, and that I came across with a large number of international visitors at the V&A, whom I could not recruit, I deemed the method as infeasible.

4.3.1.2.3 Snowballing

To broaden the selection of participants, I included art enthusiasts who are not directly associated with candidate museums as volunteers or course attendees (central participants). I applied the snowballing technique to recruit people from existing participants I recruited via museums, and from my personal acquaintances and my own social networks, rather than recruiting them from random museum visitors. I followed a similar protocol adopted when recruiting via candidate museums: I reached potential participants via the referral of existing participants through disseminating recruitment emails, social media messages, or phoning potential peripheral participants, and I waited for response. Unlike the previous recruiting process, which took place as soon as I exchanged contacts with members of museum staff, the snowballing process took place throughout the entire data collection, from November 2013 to January 2015, until I received a suitable number of participants.

An important reason to recruit through snowballing is that it is a common practice of qualitative research sampling, and it is a more efficient way to target at potential participants, compared with fishing out potential participants from a pool of random visitors with many different visiting agendas. Furthermore, reaching out to people through existing participants reduces the likelihood of attracting higher refusal rate among random visitors, which I learned from my previous experience of recruiting through exit survey at the V&A. Since the research focuses on the forming process of interest, one has to delve into visitors' early experiences, personal stories, and socio-cultural backgrounds; such information is considered personal and private to share with others, and therefore requires the research to take place in a rather secure environment, with the researcher being trusted, and conducted through an in-depth conversation. With these concerns in mind, targeting at a group of people referred by others they trust will ensure higher success rate to engage them in an in-depth conversation. Therefore, I considered snowballing an effective and sensible method for recruitment. However, I was aware of the risk of attracting people who

fit the selection criteria but with a pattern of participation too similar to the existing participants through snowballing. Therefore, snowballing technique was selectively applied to recruit potential participants, having in mind to involve people of different degrees of involvement and diversified ways to engage with art.

In short, using different recruiting approaches and methods, I managed to recruit 14 participants from Taipei (seven central and seven peripheral), and 14 participants from greater London area (six central and eight peripheral). In total, 28 participants involved in this research. Appendix 4 presents the composition of two participant groups categorized by the recruiting methods and the level of participation for the purpose of comparison. The decision to include 14 participants in each group was contingent on the number of participants I was able to reach and worked with within the given timeframe and resources, as well as on whether each group was represented by participants demonstrating different levels of participation. Hence, 14 participants were considered as a manageable number of participants for each group for data collection and analysis.

There were, however, limitations derived from my recruitment plan. The number and profile of central participant were not entirely consistent between Group Taipei (GT) and Group London (GL). All central participants (7 out of 14 participants) in GT are museum volunteers, whereas four of the central participants (6 out of 14 participants) in GL are volunteers, and two of them are course attendees. This was due to the way a candidate museum accommodated my need to recruit participants. However, this minor difference of participant profile is taken into account when comparing the two groups later in this thesis.

4.3.2 Stage two: Mapping interest and engagement with art

In stage two, where the main fieldwork took place, I approached my research participants by various means, including online questionnaires, multiple sessions of semi-structured interviews, observed gallery visits in which I acted as participating observer. In the following subsections, I explain each method I used to collect data.

4.3.2.1 Online questionnaire

Online questionnaires are considered a convenient means of gathering demographic information and information deemed to shed lights on 'consumer behaviors' – in my case, museum visitor's visiting habits. Because I was not physically in Taipei to meet potential participants during my first recruitment for central participants, I used an online questionnaire to gather basic information of participants prior to my first fieldwork in Taipei, from November to December 2013. Once potential participants responded to my recruitment email, they were prompted with an online questionnaire, which I designed using Survey Monkey, to complete. The purpose was to ensure that I familiarize myself with participants' areas of interest, basic information, e.g. age group, occupation, educational background, and initially, their museum visiting habits prior to scheduled interviews in Taipei. The responses I obtained via the online questionnaire also informed the development of the interview guideline. The set of questions used to collect basic information in the questionnaire is presented in Appendix 2.

Conversely, the online questionnaire was less important for my London participants, because I was able to talk (in person or via phone) to potential participants during parts of the recruitment process, and therefore, it was considered unnecessary. In addition, the online questionnaire was less effective, when participants failed to check emails (to which a link to the online questionnaire was attached) on a regular basis, or simply preferred face-to-face contact. In these circumstances, I chose to skip the online questionnaire, and talked to them briefly on the phone to obtain basic information prior to meeting the participant.

4.3.2.2 Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interviews, which are a commonly recognized form of qualitative research methods, were used as a primary data collection method to

elicit in-depth response directly for particular topics. Qualitative interviewing is considered more than a neutral data gathering tool, but an active interaction between people that leads to 'negotiated, contextually based results' (Fontana and Frey 2000:646); or as Mason (2002:62) notes, qualitative interviewing is 'the interactional exchange of dialogue', 'a relatively informal style of face-to-face interaction of a conversation or discussion', or 'a thematic, topic-centered, biographical or narrative approach'. To ensure semi-structured interviews serve the purpose of eliciting contextualized, topic centered responses and discussion, an interview guideline (see Appendix 3) was used to facilitate the process. The guideline was developed from a pilot study conducted in London, from September to October 2013, featuring five art enthusiasts I recruited from my acquaintances; it was also informed by the responses I obtained via the online questionnaires (see Section 4.3.2.1). The guideline contained sets of questions highlighting the topics in questions and suggested prompts informed by online questionnaire. This guideline was, however, used for general guidance, as the manner in which I worked with the interviewee was adjusted to accommodate the interviewee. Hence, I did not necessarily follow the questions listed on the guideline in certain order, or use the same wording when asking questions.

One or two sessions of semi-structured interviews were carried out per participant, and these sessions were audio recorded and transcribed afterwards. During the interview session, participants were asked to talk about how they became interested in art, providing more details according to the responses they provided in the online questionnaire, or during the recruit meeting. The technique of mind mapping was applied at the beginning of the interview to help participants connect art to interest, starting with the question 'what comes to your mind when you think about art?' More ideas and concepts were then added to the concept of art, e.g. color, photography, Monet, the feeling of pleasure etc. These then became prompts to encourage participants to talk more about their interest.

4.3.2.3 Participant observation

The other method applied in stage two was participant observations, which took the form of an accompanied visit to a mutually agreed exhibition or museum. Participant observation, as Mason notes (2002:84), involves 'the researcher immersing himself or herself in a research setting so that they can experience and observe at first hand a range of dimensions in and of the setting'; these may include behavior, interactions, relationships, events, and spatial and temporal dimensions, as well as experiential, emotional and bodily dimensions. It is assumed that naturalistic observation does not interfere with the people or the activities under observation (Angrosino and Mays de Pérez 2000:674). Hence, an accompanied gallery visit will provide me an opportunity to experience the reality as participants do, and to capture participants' experience of undertaking a specific activity (i.e. developing interest) in specific physical setting (i.e. gallery), facilitating an understanding of the perceived roles and values of museums in a natural setting. It should be noted that in undertaking participant observation in this manner, I also played the role of a visitor, engaging in the visit with the participant.

In most cases, at the end of the interview session, the participant and I jointly chose a museum or exhibition that suited the participant's interest, and chose a preferable date to visit. In some cases, if the participant already suggested visiting a particular gallery in our email correspondence, I would arrange the interview to take place at the gallery (e.g. at the gallery's café), and conduct the observed visit after the interview. During and after the visit, I took field notes that highlighted the visit; most of the field notes were consisted of my observation of participants' reactions and comments made during the visit, and general facts about the visit, e.g. the duration and route. The purpose of a gallery observation is to provide a general picture of a museum visit, and to make links with participants' interest, rather than recording moment-to-moment interaction in the gallery. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to record only the highlight of the visit in the field note. Field notes were transcribed afterwards and analyzed. There were, however, two participants from

Taipei, who failed to find time for a gallery visit. In these cases, triangulation was needed to enhance and balance the information acquired from participants.

Table 4-4 below summarizes the methods used to carry out the main fieldwork in stages two and three, and shows the hierarchy of data generated from different methods and how each method contributes to unveiling the phenomenon under investigation. In stage two, as explained in Section 4.3.2, semi-structured interviews were used as a primary data collection method, whereas the online questionnaire and gallery observations were considered secondary, and data collected through these means supported the accounts of participants gathered through interviews.

Table 4-4 Hierarchy of data and its usage

Methods	Hierarchy	Usage
Semi-structured interview	Primary	o Identify significant dynamics of interest development o Identify perceived values and roles of museums and galleries o Reconstruct developmental processes one experiences in a pathway to art
Online questionnaire	Secondary	o Use basic information (demographic) to build participant profiles
Gallery observation	Secondary	o Capture how one experiences and perceives the museums and galleries o Confirm the uses and roles of museums expressed in interviews
Learning ecology map	Secondary	o Confirm significant dynamics of interest development
Informal follow-up meetings	Secondary	o Confirm information o Add to the perspective of everyday life
Social media	Secondary	o Confirm information o Add to the perspective of everyday life

4.3.3 Stage three: Triangulating and tracking interest

In Stage three, triangulation is carried out to confirm information obtained in stage two. Triangulation involves corroborating data generated from different

sources and with different methods (Mason 2002). In this research, several measures were taken to ensure triangulation takes place, including having informal, follow-up meetings; using a simplified diagram (learning ecology map) to summarize the information gathered from interviews and to confirm with participants; and tracking and updating participants' recent activities via social media.

4.3.3.1 Follow-up meetings

Informal meetings took place over an extended period of time, and took different forms. As participants became more familiar with talking with me, they felt more comfortable to share extensive information regarding their interest, providing more depth to the data collected in previous stages. In most cases, follow-up meetings were initiated by me, and took the form of conversations over lunch, a short chat in a café, or a visit to a new exhibition after stage two. One particular example was during data collection in Taipei, a GT participant, who has strong interest in Chinese calligraphy, invited me to a social event among museum volunteers, and showed me some of his collection of Chinese calligraphy catalogues (see Figure 4-5). These informal meetings kept me up to date with participants' recent activities relating to interest, and sometime, clarified the data if necessary. In some cases, participants were unable to show up in a follow-up meeting in person, and I then attempted to reach them via email. The timing for arranging an informal meeting was set between three and six months after the previous contact; the number of informal meetings I had with each participant varied according to the availability of the participant. In general, I had at least one or up to four meetings with each participant. After each informal meeting, I completed a field note recording the highlights of the meeting.
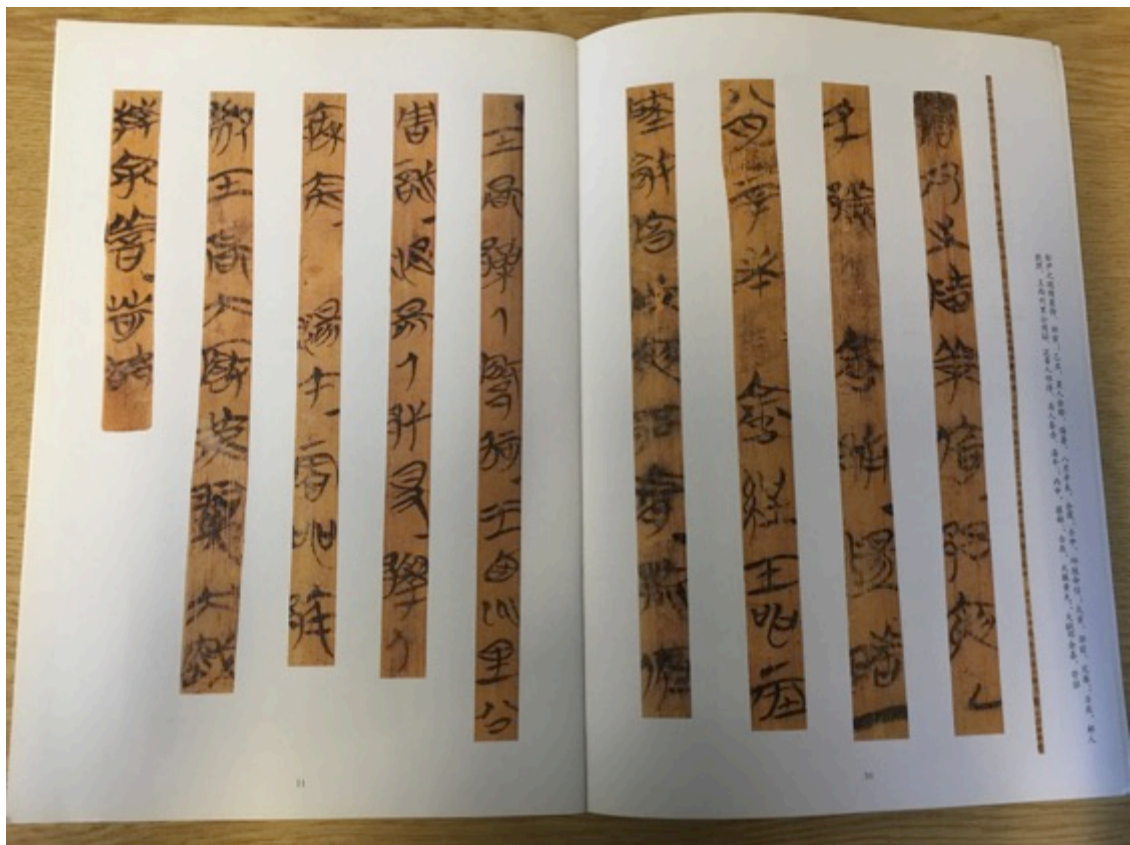
Figure 4-5 A participant's collection of calligraphy catalogues shown to me during a follow-up meeting (Photo by Carol Chung)

4.3.3.2 Learning ecology map

As part of this process I developed the learning ecology map for the purpose of confirming information with participants and increasing reflexivity. The learning ecology map (see Figure 4-6) illustrates participants' path of developing interest in art. The term 'learning ecology' originally refers to one's learning path as consisting of a set of contexts in physical or virtual spaces that provide opportunities for learning (Barron 2006). I borrowed the idea of learning ecology, and developed learning ecology of art based on the data I gathered from each participant's first interview session.
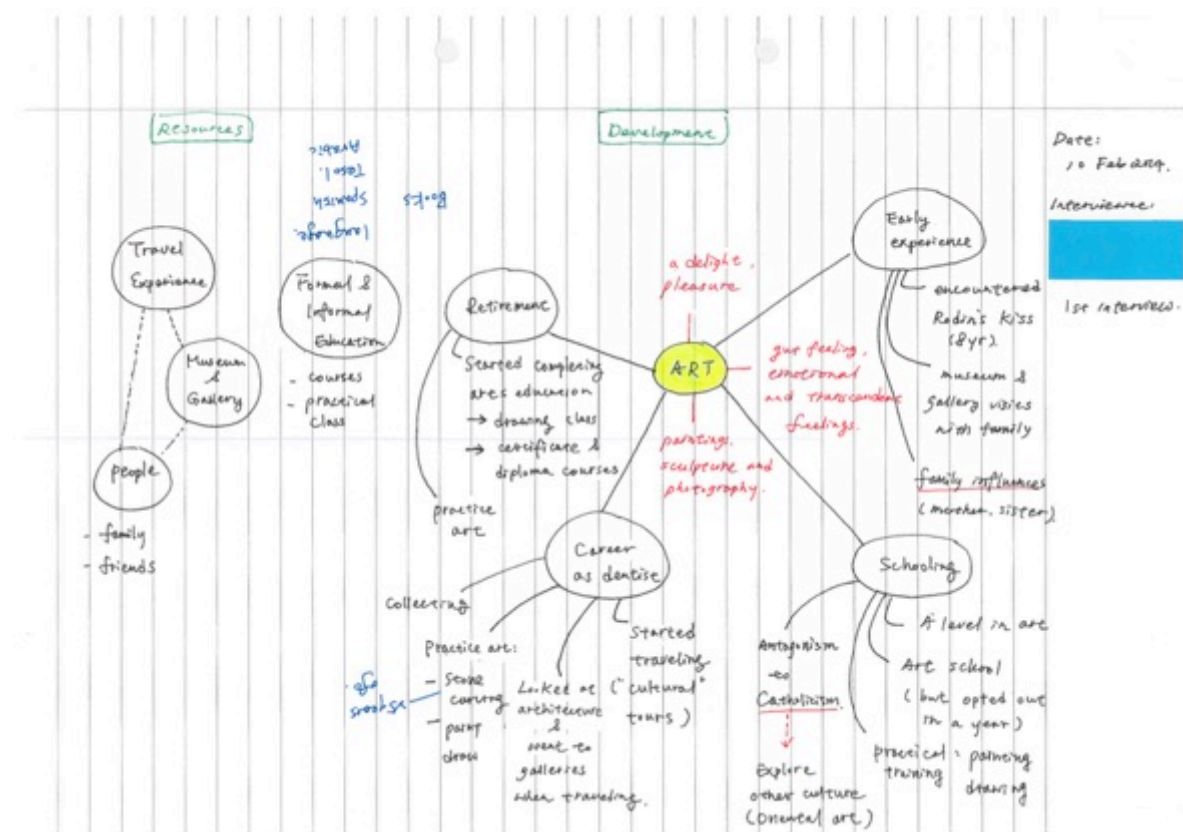
Figure 4-6 A learning ecology map shown to a participant and edited (blue marks) based on the participant's feedback

By creating a diagram that presents significant contexts and settings that contributed to an interest, as well as the resources participants had access to based on participants' account, one can see clear links between specific context, resources, and interest in a glance. Participants were then presented with these maps in a subsequent meeting (a second interview, a gallery visit, or a catch up meeting) and were encouraged to comment on it. The writing in blue in Figure 4-6 were comments made by a GL participant when she was presented with her learning ecology map in a follow-up meeting. See Appendix 5 for more examples of learning ecology maps.

4.3.3.3 Social media

Access to information via social media (e.g. Facebook) was used as an additional measure for triangulation. I attempted to obtain access to participants who have been using Facebook, blog, or website as virtual interface to share personal interest with others. This provided an additional angle of how art penetrated in participants' personal life – how participants interacted with people who share mutual interest in art through social media. However, only 12 out of 28 participants have been active on social media, so, information retrieved via social media was treated as a secondary but complementary, and was mainly used to corroborate data obtained by other means.

In short, a mixture of methods were used in stages two and three to gather and triangulate data. Data generated from interviews are primary, and provides access to participants' accounts of interest development. Gallery observations are secondary and specifically contribute to understanding the experience of art in museums and galleries, mirroring participants' accounts of museum visiting experiences. Online questionnaires are used to generate initial data for building participant profiles. Learning ecology map is secondary and is used to corroborate information elicited from interviews. Both informal meetings and social media are secondary and are used to corroborate information elicited from other sources, and provide access to additional perspectives.

4.4 Data collection and analysis

As discussed in Section 4.3, data collection took place mainly in stages two and three in the following periods of time/places: November to December 2013 in Taipei; January to March 2014 in London; October to November 2014 in London; and December 2014 to January 2015 in Taipei (Figure 4-7). During the above periods of time, interviews and observed gallery visits were conducted, while some follow-up meetings, especially with GL participants, were arranged between these periods. For

GT participants whose data I collected in the first fieldwork trip, follow-up meetings were arranged in the second fieldwork trip. Fourteen participants were recruited in each group, whose data were collected, analyzed, compared, and presented in this thesis.

Collection in Taipei (Nov. – Dec.)   Collection in London (Jan. – Mar.)   Collection in London (Oct. – Nov.)   Collection in Taipei (Dec. – Jan.)

2013   2014   2015
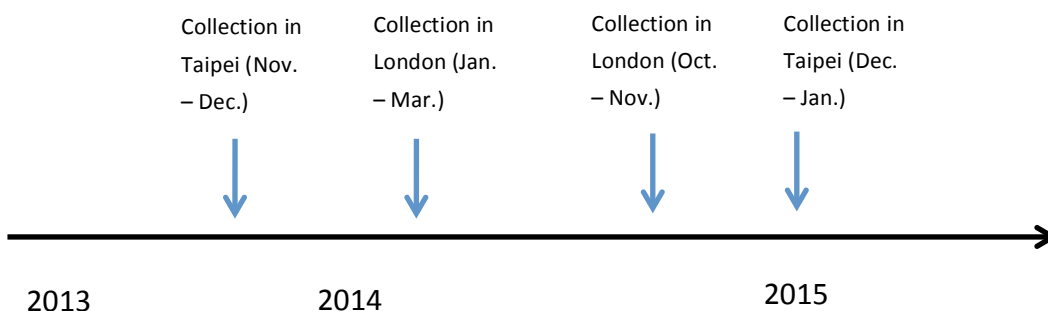
Figure 4-7 Data collection timeline

4.4.1 Process of data analysis

Data analysis in this research is generally informed by grounded theory, which emphasizes the cyclical process between data collection and analysis, and allows data analysis to be refined and redeveloped by data collection and vice versa (Charmaz 2011). Data analysis began with 'coding'. Coding is a dynamic process of raising raw material to a conceptual level, and is the first step of analysis and theory building (Corbin and Strauss 2008). At an early stage of coding process, I began with examining and breaking down individual data, creating codes/categories from the phrase used by participants. For example, participants used phrase such as 'feel relaxed' to describe the experience of visiting museums. Therefore, 'relaxation' was considered a specific perception of museums and museum visiting. The next stage of analysis involved comparing data across individuals to develop and refining categories that describe a concept or idea. Phrases that participants articulated in an interview were examined and compared between participants to identify similar patterns and themes, which were lifted to an abstract and conceptual level. As mentioned, the category 'relaxation' emerged as a common theme among

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participants who described visiting museums and galleries as a way to relax, and hence, it was considered a motivation category to explain the perceived values and roles of museums.

Moreover, I also conducted axial coding during data analysis. Axial coding is a process of elaborating the relationships between major thematic category and subcategory (Corbin and Strauss 2008). For example, seven categories were identified in relation to the thematic category 'perceived values and roles of museums' from analyzing interview transcriptions, including: 'learning/participation', 'social interaction', 'entertainment', 'relaxation', 'restoration', 'place', and 'identity building'. These categories elaborated how art enthusiasts perceived the value and role of museums in relation to their social life and their interest. In this thesis, seven thematic categories were generated; each of them was connected to several subcategories.

In general, I created major thematic categories based on research questions; some were driven by theories reviewed in this thesis. Three of the thematic categories, namely 'influences', 'resources', 'perceived values and roles of museums', were partly informed by studies of interest-driven pursuits (e.g. Crowley et al. 2015) and motivation studies (e.g. Macdonald 1995). Subcategories, on the other hand, were generated in two manners. Some subcategories were directly synthesized from data and built in a bottom-up manner, whereas others I drew from theories, notably the categories used to elaborate perceived values and roles of museums. For example, the category 'restoration', a subcategory of 'perceived values and roles of museums', was informed by existing literature of visitor studies (e.g. Packer 2008). Examples of categories influenced by theories include 'place' (see Section 3.4.2), or 'restoration' (see Section 3.4.3); examples of categories generated from data include: 'trip-over' (see Section 7.2). See Appendix 6 for a full list of thematic categories and subcategories created for the purpose of data analysis.

4.4.2 Use of NVivo

In this research, categories were refined and reshaped several times during data collection and data analysis. This process was made possible with the help of NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, which supports grounded theorizing and was an invaluable help to synthesize data into interconnected categories. NVivo also enables me to store data, and to create a hierarchical structure of 'nodes' (categories), facilitating data analysis smoothly.

4.4.3 Organization of data analysis

The organization of data analysis is multi-leveled. On the one hand, common themes were developed by synthesizing data across individuals in a given group, and were discussed separately as two case studies, Group Taipei (in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6) and Group London (in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8). On the other hand, comparisons between GT and GL (in Chapter 9), or comparisons between central participants and peripheral participants within a given group were made. This allows a holistic view of general patterns across groups, and at the same time, preserves the distinctiveness of each case study.

4.5 Ethical concerns

Ethical concerns emerge in every research. From a utilitarian perspective, the fundamental principles are: to obtain informed consent during recruitment, to avoid harm during fieldwork, and to address confidentiality during reporting (Miles and Huberman 1994:289). In this research, I followed UCL protocols. Since the research involves adults with full capacity to consent, UCL Institute of Archaeology's Research Ethics Committee waived the need for ethical review on condition of all participants providing informed consent. Therefore, I followed ethics committee's guidelines when designing the information sheet (see Appendix 7) and consent form (see

Appendix 8); in the first meeting, participants were presented a copy of information sheet outlining the research protocol and a consent form, and I gave them time to read through both documents; I then explained to them what the research require them to cooperate and what their rights are, allowing time for questions before giving consent. All participants signed the consent form. To meet the criterion of doing no harm, I made sure that no participants felt forced to take part in any part of the research; for example, I avoided making direct suggestion for gallery visit locations, but instead I asked participants to propose possible locations, and accommodated their need.

Since this research involves participants from Taipei and London, I was expected to cope with the issue of translation. I personally translated the information sheet and the consent form from English to Chinese for my Taipei participants, including an additional explanation for the Data Protection Act 1998, which they are not familiar with. Throughout data collection, I used English and Chinese accordingly – for Taipei participants I used Chinese, for most London participants I used English (with two individuals who are originally from Taiwan, I used Chinese). In terms of presenting data, for the sake of saving time, I did not translate all Chinese transcriptions into English, but only the parts used in this thesis. As Section 4.2 suggested, for the purpose of increasing trustworthiness, I sent my representations of participants' accounts to participants for review and comment before use, although retaining full control of the final text. However, these accounts are presented in English only. To minimize language barrier for Taipei participants, I provided additional help to keep this dialogue going; I wrote detailed emails explaining the context in which these accounts are being used, provided original quotes (in Chinese), and extending the explanation of professional terms (if any).

In terms of confidentiality, I made sure participants' personal information, i.e. name, address, would not be disclosed, which I stated clearly in the consent form. However, to ensure the flow of text in writing up this thesis, I decided on partial anonymity, and I used pseudonyms in addressing each participant in this thesis. Participants were also informed of this decision during the data collection process.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, the methodological approach that this research undertakes was explained, as well as the manner in which the research was designed. The multiple-staged design ensures the generation of deeper and context-sensitive data. The methods used to collect data reflect the research questions and the aim of this research, all of which facilitate the investigation of the developmental process of interest, and the perceived values and roles of museums from an art enthusiast's perspective. The multiple methods used to approach various dimensions of interest development also allow the dataset to be well rounded. Data analysis is conducted through grounded theorizing approach, and is organized on different levels to allow drawing comparisons from within and across case studies.

Chapter 5

Pathways to art: Close examination of four art enthusiasts in Group Taipei

In this chapter, I present vignettes of four art enthusiasts' stories to give flavor to my illustration of the developmental processes of artistic interest. The data I analyzed in this chapter are primarily generated from semi-structured interviews; subsidiary data sources include participant observations, learning ecology maps, and observations of participants' social media activity. The four participants, Lisa, Rachel, Mike, and Howard (pseudonyms), have been selected from the 14 participants from Group Taipei for two reasons: each of them represents a specific 'pathway to art' – a developmental process of artistic interest – characterized by different features; these individuals provide richer data than the others do. Participants are addressed using pseudonyms throughout this chapter and this thesis for the purpose of convenience and ethical concern.

From Section 5.1 to Section 5.4, I delineate four pathways to art based on the stories art enthusiasts shared with me. In Section 5.5, I highlight the developmental dynamics of interest, namely, the influences, the resources, and the perceived values and roles of museums, which characterize the four pathways presented in the preceding sections. This will help address my research questions, 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) and 'what roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest?' (RQ2), which I further engage in answering in Chapter 6. By examining the four pathways comparatively and drawing on data from the rest of participants, I delineate the phases of interest development in Section 5.6. This chapter concludes in Section 5.7, with a summary, which provides an outline for Chapter 6 where I analyze data across all 14 participants.

5.1 Lisa: lifelong interest expanded through traveling

Earlier in my life I often visited the history museum because I was interested in historical artifacts. I learned about paintings in university, and two years after I graduated, I began to travel in Europe, where I visited museums and galleries, and actually engaged with the artworks. (Lisa, GT)

Lisa is a freelance translator, working mainly in translating books about art, culture, and history. Her interest in art derives from her passion for history developed early in life. As a teenager, Lisa pursued her interest in history in both school and out-of-school settings. She considered her interest in art to have first been sparked by a few catalogues of European museums, in particular a catalogue about the Versailles Palace in France, which was shared by her history teacher at secondary school. Reading these catalogues was an eye-opening experience for Lisa, who had hoped since then that she could visit the palaces and exquisite artworks depicted in the catalogues someday. This sowed the seeds for her future travels to Europe to encounter original works of art. Interested in history at school, Lisa started going to the National Museum of History near her school, where she had enjoyed seeing bronze ware and ceramics. She pursued this interest into university where she majored in history and became a history teacher after graduating. Lisa's academic training in history equipped her with the knowledge about artistic styles and representation of different historical periods, providing a robust grounding for her interest. She acknowledged that her academic training in history has forged her interest by saying: 'I used to teach history, (…) we need to have a deep understanding of the paintings and artworks of each historical period, so I also find them interesting.'

Lisa considered her traveling to Europe a pivotal experience that deepened her interest in art. She first visited Europe in her early twenties (see Lisa's quote above), and made curricular use of museum and gallery collections to establish her knowledge about art. Lisa described this particular way of using museum collections

as a 'systematic approach'; she would make photocopies of the paintings she intended to visit from museum catalogues, and read biographies about artists in preparation for her visits. In other words, Lisa made curricular use of museum collections to corroborate knowledge of a particular style in a given historical period, which she learned from her studies, with original and representative works of art. This has reflected the intellectual aspect of Lisa's interest and academic training. Traveling extensively and engaging with artworks at museums became the way Lisa pursued her interest. As she explored art from Roman times to contemporary Japanese art, her interest expanded and deepened. Her systematic engagement in cultural tourism consolidated her knowledge about art history, making her aware of her cognitive growth as she started to realize that 'when mentioning the Flanders school, artists and their representative works emerged in mind'. Museums, therefore, are tied with traveling and seeing original works of art, which Lisa considered essential for developing an interest in history and art.

Meanwhile, Lisa embarked on a new career path after three years of teaching history, and began to work as freelance translator for books about history, cultural theories, and visual arts. Working as a translator, Lisa reads extensively and gained broader insights into art in addition to her encounter with artworks in museums, which eventually deepened her interest. She stated: 'you wouldn't view an artwork from a single perspective. You would view it in a broader sociocultural context.' Her inclination to look into books is also reflected in her frequent visits to museum libraries for reference when visiting museums.

Continuously traveling, visiting museums, reading about and translating books about art, Lisa further pursued her interest in contemporary art through volunteering at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) for the past ten years. Although she did not engage in guiding as many volunteers do, she made extensive use of MOCA, going to exhibitions, attending lectures and events, and connecting herself with other volunteers. Working freelance, Lisa carries on with a different routine, working during weekends and taking two weekdays off to volunteer or to participate in art, e.g. the theatre and the cinema, which she has also been involved

with deeply. She is also active online, constantly writing about her journeys and sharing travel photos on Facebook, and subscribing to newsletters from galleries she regularly visits. Pivotal experiences that sustain Lisa' interest are summarized in Figure 5-1.
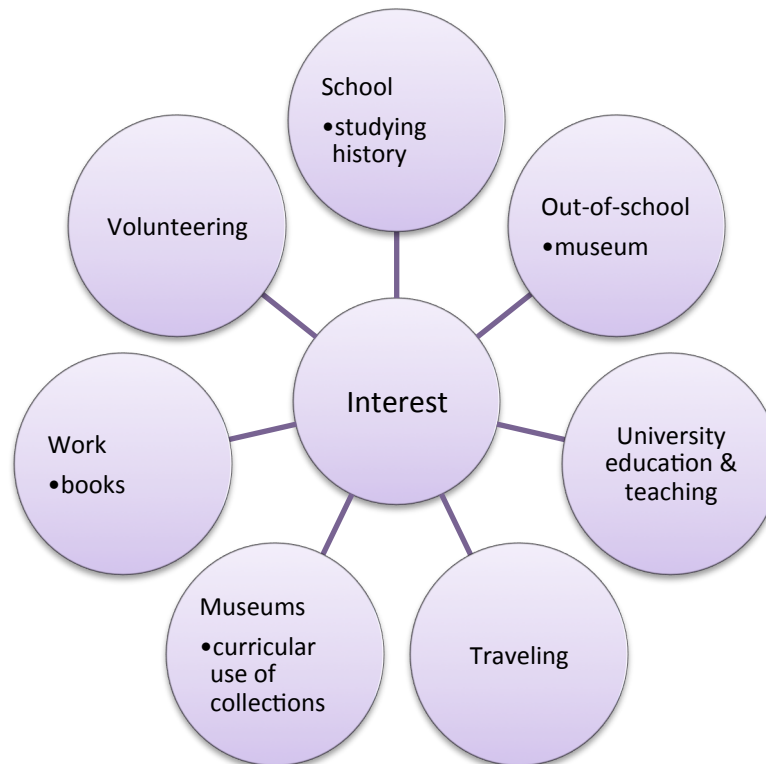
Figure 5-1 Pivotal experiences in Lisa's pathway

Lisa's pathway began with an early exposure to art, precisely an early interest in history. She demonstrates an early pathway, a pattern of an individual being influenced early in life (before entering into adulthood), and pursuing the interest throughout life. This pattern begins with, for example, early engagement in extra-curricular activities or art events (e.g. visiting art exhibitions with family), or emerging interest in art-related subjects at school. The individual then continues developing the interest by keeping participating in art during their free time, or further by pursuing a degree or career relevant to art.

5.2 Rachel: early interest in drawing developed through time

I've enjoyed drawing when I was very young. I drew everything I saw. (…) In the nursery, I drew and colored, and the teacher said to me, 'wow, you colored really well!' (…) I remember that I really enjoyed drawing as a child. (Rachel, GT)

Rachel works as sales representative for a company. As a child, Rachel enjoyed drawing and painting, and was often praised by teachers for her drawings (see Rachel's quote above). She recalled spending a great deal of time doodling on textbooks when she went to primary school. Rachel's parents supported her interest by paying for sketch lessons. Reaching adolescence, Rachel considered pursuing her interest further by applying to art-gifted program, but she later abandoned this idea because of a health issue. Her interest was suppressed during her secondary school years, which she depicted as spending most of her time studying in an exam-oriented environment, having few opportunities to carry on creating art.

Upon entering university, Rachel majored in languages, and found time to re-engaged with her artistic interest. She joined the university art club, to which she felt a strong sense of belonging. Acting as president of the club for one year, Rachel engaged deeply in the affairs of the club by spending time participating in painting lessons and working on school projects with other club members. During this period, she also started visiting art exhibitions with art club members. She initiated a virtual group on social networking site, through which members could exchange exhibition news, and arrange visits to exhibitions of mutual interest. Having visited many blockbuster exhibitions featuring a range of world-renowned artists, e.g. Monet, Millet, Van Gogh, and Picasso, Rachel became clear about what interested her, and what did not. Believing that 'art should bring tranquility' and enjoying 'reflecting on one's life and seeing oneself in the painting', museum visiting has been a relaxing and reflective experience for Rachel.

Rachel started working as sales representative after graduating. Due to work, she did not carry on her creative practice, but chose to continue to visit art

exhibitions that appeared 'not to be missed' to her. She made extensive use of informal learning opportunities to deepen her museum experience by hiring audio guide and participating in gallery talks. She recalled going to an expert introductory talk about Monet when she visited the Monet exhibition, and found it insightful for appreciating Monet. In the past two years, Rachel became more determined to pursue her interest further, and started preparing for an application for a postgraduate degree in culture management. With a view to exposing herself to art and culture and understanding the 'behind-the-scene' of art events, Rachel dedicated her weekends visiting more exhibitions, attending talks, following art news online, and volunteering for Taipei Art Festival for several weekends. Saying that she 'did not understand paintings', Rachel is certain that she has enjoyed the emotional and reflective experience, rather than the intellectual and cognitive experience that seeing art has brought her. She continuously searches for herself through looking at art and appreciates art that makes her feel tranquil and content. Pivotal experiences that sustain Rachel's interest are summarized in Figure 5-2.
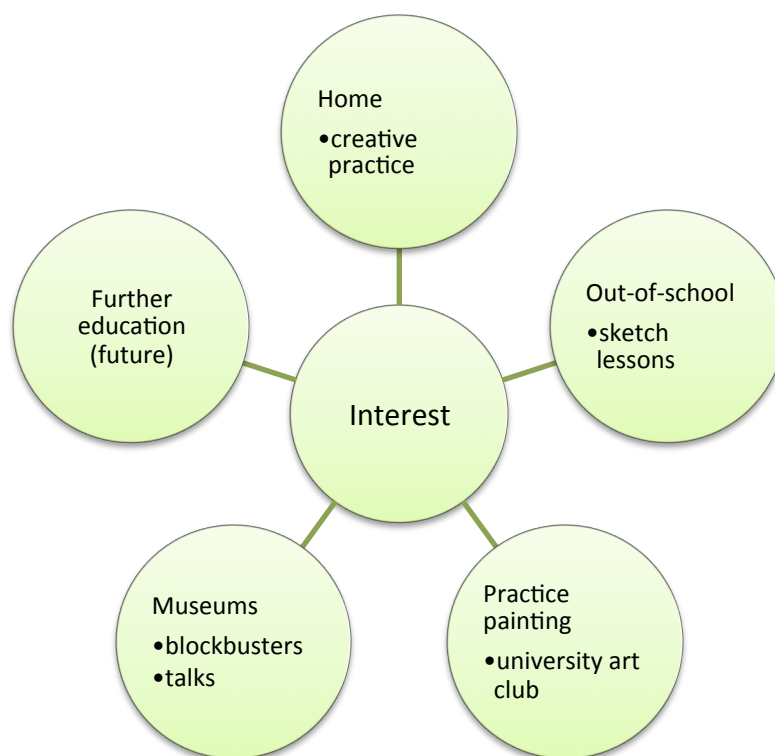
Figure 5-2 Pivotal experiences in Rachel's pathway

Rachel's pathway, like Lisa's, also began with early exposure to art. However, interest was germinated in a rather different setting (childhood drawing experience) compared to Lisa. Rachel's pathway demonstrates a pattern, in which an individual's interest is sparked by means of engaging in creative activity in childhood, and later pursues the interest further in another direction, e.g. visiting art exhibitions. Similar patterns are also found in the other participants in Group Taipei. Moreover, Rachel's pathway is distinctive in that there was an interruption; an individual may stop pursuing an interest for different reasons, e.g. time constraint, stress, health issues etc., and therefore, interest may become dormant and the individual becomes inactive in carrying out certain practice for a period of time. However, interest may be reignited, as Rachel's pathway demonstrates, and the individual resumes practicing or participating in art under particular circumstances, such as the elimination of given constraints, change of environment or social group.

5.3 Howard: interest sparked by museum visit and developed through volunteering

In Section 5.3 and Section 5.4, I introduce Howard and Mike's pathways, which, unlike Lisa and Rachel's pathways, started rather late in life. Howard and Mike both started to develop their artistic interest when they reached adulthood, before which they had not engaged passionately with art due to different reasons. The two individuals grew up from very different generations, and have distinct taste in art. However, they shared common ground in that their interests were stimulated by particular circumstances they came across in their adult life: for Howard, joining a guided tour by chance, and for Mike, buying a beautiful calligraphy piece at random. Their interests were then deepened by the museums they chose to volunteer at. In Section 5.3, I present Howard's story:

I thought art was something I didn't understand. I was curious, and tried to understand. (…) When I joined the guided tour at MOCA, I realized that I liked the issues presented

in the exhibition, and I started to anticipate forthcoming exhibitions. (Howard, GT)

Howard works as an administrator for a patent and trademark company. Now in his mid-twenties, this is his first job after graduating from university where he majored in business. Howard had never taken interest in art in his childhood and adolescence. As a student, he recalled visiting museums in school trips, and had art lessons at school, but he confessed to never finding art interesting. Howard was certain that he was not interested in art until he learned about the term 'contemporary art' during university, when he had more free time at his disposal. Out of curiosity, he started visiting the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), at first with a friend who was familiar with art. A pivotal experience that sparked Howard's interest was an exhibition he visited at MOCA, and he joined the guided tour by chance. He recalled, 'it wasn't my intention, but the guide just happened to be there talking to visitors when I began my visit, so I joined them.' He soon understood that the complex issues dealt in contemporary art got his attention (see Howard's quote above), and he paid subsequent visits to the museum after that. To pursue his new interest, Howard began volunteering at MOCA about two years ago, and worked his way up to become a guide.

Identifying himself as a novice but committed museum guide, Howard started learning eagerly about contemporary art after Joining MOCA. Focusing exclusively on contemporary art, Howard is determined to 'absorb continuously and engage with as much contemporary art as possible.' He spent most of his Saturdays volunteering; meanwhile he actively participated in workshops and talks organized by MOCA, observing other guides, and visited other art venues, e.g. Taipei Fine Arts Museum, or Taipei Digital Art Festival. In addition, he also started reading relevant theories of art to support his guiding, which he considered a new habit of his. Imparting his understanding of contemporary art, and making contemporary issues (represented in contemporary art) known to the public appear to be the main driving force for Howard to persist in his pursuit. He sees museums as educational and as an active agent for social change; through guiding, he believed he could help the museum

communicate ideas of social change to the public.

Embarking on his new journey to art after joining MOCA, Howard kept exploring his interest, and has been constantly looking for more opportunities to engage in art in his spare time. He has also volunteered for a couple of art festivals, such as Taipei Art Festival and Children's Art Festival. Recently, Howard made up his mind to take his interest further, and decided to pursue a degree related to art. Pivotal experiences that sustain Howard's interest are summarized in Figure 5-3.
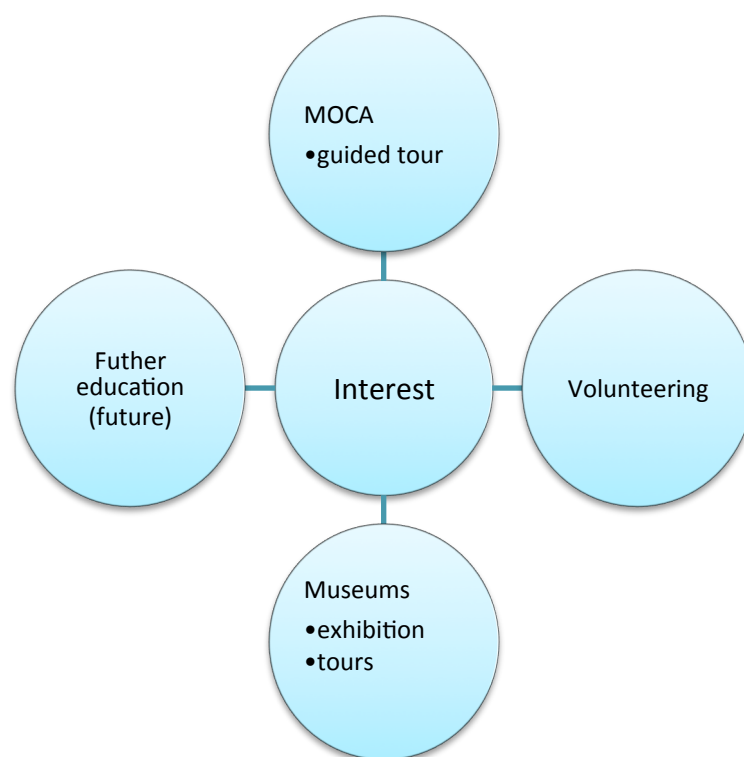
Figure 5-3 Pivotal experiences in Howard's pathway

5.4 Mike: interest explored through collecting

I didn't remember how this interest was initiated. I have collected some calligraphy replicas from Ming and Qing Dynasty. (…) It was eye pleasing to me, that's all. (…) And then I started to understand why I liked them after joining the museum. (Mike, GT)

Mike is a retired professional, who worked for a company as senior manager for more than 30 years. Growing up in the 1950s in a big family with limited resources, Mike had very little opportunity to engage with art. As a teenager, Mike accidentally found a chest of old books, which belonged to his late grandfather; many of the books were Chinese Classics, and he immediately plunged into them. Mike believed that his early exposure to Chinese aesthetics through literature inspired and paved the way, very subtly, for his interest in Chinese calligraphy and painting, which he discovered later in life. Since his teenage years, reading became Mike's lifelong hobby and books his best friends, and he took pleasure reciting poems and literary works he appreciated. A passion for reading and books was later reflected in his collecting practice and his inclination to exploit books when exploring a topic of interest. Although lacking access to art in his early days, Mike once recalled visiting a display room (the prototype of the National Palace Museum) full of Chinese art and artifact when he was a teenager. However, for Mike, this early encounter was not significant in sparking his interest, just a remote (and nice) memory of his adolescence.

Majoring in chemistry in university, Mike established a career in an air transport company in his thirties, during which he started to purchase replicas of calligraphy and catalogues that he found 'eye pleasing' from time to time. He bought replicas of calligraphy and catalogues at random without any view to compiling a collection, and was unaware of his interest in these art forms until he came to a pivotal moment. One day, Mike examined his collection accumulated over the years, and he suddenly realized and 'discovered' that he had an interest in calligraphy. As soon as he was made aware of his interest, Mike changed his attitude towards art; he began to review his collection systematically, occasionally buying more to complete his collection. Mike's collecting practice transformed (from buying random pieces to organizing them systematically), and led to his further engagement in Chinese art as a volunteer.

Mike joined the National Palace Museum (NPM) as a volunteer ten years ago, mainly using volunteering as a way to organize the abundant spare time he had after

retiring. Attending training sessions to guide for the public, Mike considered volunteering a period of time when his 'knowledge increased rapidly'. He was also aware of his change of approach towards calligraphy after joining NPM: he noticed himself starting to research rigorously on calligraphy, rather than just buying books he liked. Consequently, Mike's interest was deepened and he began to look for more opportunities. He not only appreciated calligraphy more deeply as his knowledge increased, but also he started pursuing his interest through various channels: he began visiting the museum's library, practicing calligraphy in a studio, sharing his interest with fellow volunteers through book reading, traveling abroad to visit exhibitions, and participating actively in lectures and seminars on a wider range of topics. Making extensive use of the museum and its related resources, Mike considered NPM a keystone that supported his interest and led him to explore the world of art. He perceived museums as a place for learning where people broaden horizons and cultivate an interest in culture.
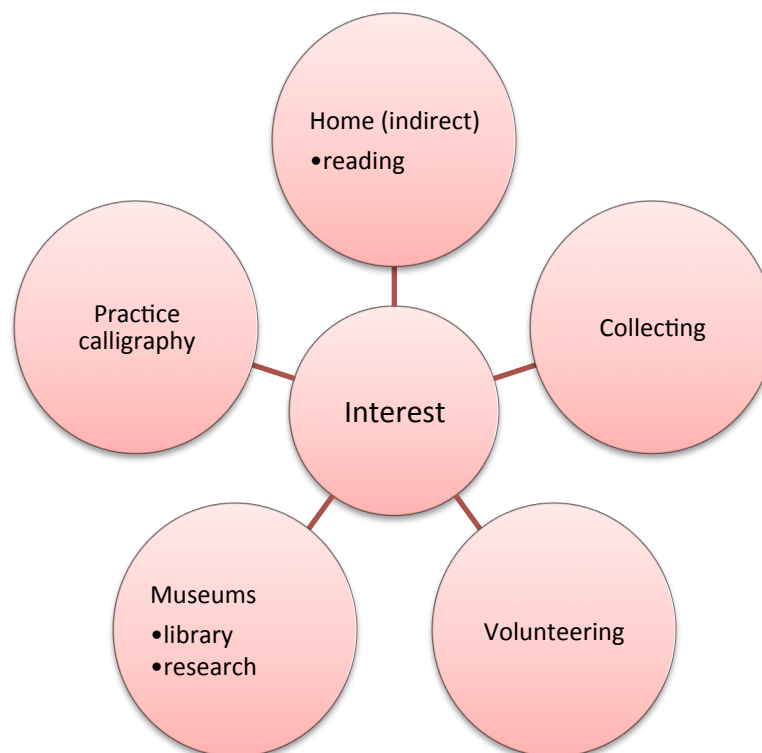
Figure 5-4 Pivotal experiences in Mike's pathway

Over the years Mike's interest in Chinese art has also expanded to other areas that he was not familiar with, e.g. watercolors, which he described himself as a novice, but held an open mind and actively looked for books to 'fill the gap'. Pleased and confident about his role as a guide, Mike has enjoyed interacting with visitors, in which he also found his early passion for Chinese literature became handy in connecting visitors with Chinese paintings. Pivotal experiences that sustain Mike's interest are summarized in Figure 5-4.

Howard and Mike's pathways demonstrate a different pattern in comparison with the two early pathways discussed in Section 5.1 and 5.2. Howard and Mike's pathways both began in adulthood, with comparatively later starting points, before which an individual either lacks the opportunity to develop an interest in art, or may have encountered a circumstance to develop an interest but lacks a trigger. These late pathways demonstrate a pattern, in which an individual lacks the opportunity or privilege to explore an interest, but when new opportunities emerges or resources become abundant, the individual's interest may be sparked, and he/she may pursue the interest through further engagement. Similar patterns are also found in the other participants in GT.

5.5 Developmental dynamics of interest

From Section 5.1 to 5.4, I discussed four different pathways illustrated by four participants' stories. These pathways demonstrate distinct processes through which artistic interest is sparked and developed. Although each pathway is unique, the pathways discussed in the preceding sections share common characteristics. In close examination, these pathways are first characterized by the appearance of an **influence or opportunity** that participants come across early or later in life, which sparks the interest. The pathways are also characterized by participants' access to particular **resources**, which support the interest. These influences and resources can be elaborated by the 'pivotal experiences' I summarize in Figures 5-1 to 5-4. Moreover, participants' **perceived values and roles** of museums can also be

discerned in these pathways. These key characteristics can be seen as 'developmental dynamics of interest' (Crowley et al. 2015), which play a role in the developmental process of interest, and distinguish one pathway from the other. Identifying the developmental dynamics will help address RQ1 (the factors that influence the processes of interest development) and RQ2 (the roles of museum in the development of interest). Hence, in Section 5.5, I briefly discuss the three developmental dynamics of interest, influences, resources, and perceived values and roles, which I summarized from the four selected participants. A full discussion of the developmental dynamics of the entire group of 14 participants will be presented in Chapter 6.

5.5.1 Influences

The first developmental dynamic of interest is influence. Among the pathways, influences can be drawn from: key persons (e.g. family, teacher, peers), institutions (e.g. museums, schools), or activities and practices (e.g. drawing, collecting, museum visiting). These influences provide a 'trigger' to an interest, as interest research has indicated (Hidi and Renninger 2006). In other words, an interest may be sparked by, for example, Lisa's history lessons at school, mediated by her teacher and some museum catalogues; or Howard's occasional visit to MOCA with a friend, mediated by a guided tour.

On the other hand, without a 'triggering moment' at present as Lisa and Howard have articulated, Rachel built an interest in art on early experiences of drawing and painting, which was supported by her family. Influences, therefore, may be, in nature, a long-term exposure rather than a momentary interaction. Mike's story showed that there was a lack of a specific triggering moment in his life, but his collecting practice paved the way for his engagement in art later in life. Similarly, Lisa's engagement in traveling is a way of constructing knowledge of art (through visiting galleries and encountering original artworks) that deepens her interest, and so is Rachel's engagement in visiting blockbuster exhibitions, and Howard's

volunteering practice.

5.5.2 Resources

The second developmental dynamic is interest-related resources that are accessible to participants. Among the pathways, a variety of resources are identified that range from formal education to informal learning resources, from printed media (e.g. books) to social media. For example, in Lisa's case, she began to make use of museums since she was a teenager and when she traveled in her adult life; she later worked as a freelance translator, and books are her most accessible resource; she also has access to other museum-related resources (e.g. lectures) at the museum she volunteered with. Resources that are mentioned in the preceding sections include: distributed contents, such as books, catalogues, magazines, online resources; institutions, such as museums, cultural foundations, universities; and interactions and relationships with key persons, such as fellow volunteers or members of an art club.

5.5.3 Perceived values and roles of museums

The third developmental dynamic involves an individual's perceived value and role towards museums, and this dynamic has not been discussed by Crowley et al. (2015) because of different research aims between their research and my research. To address RQ2, this research is particularly interested in specifying the perceived roles of museums in art enthusiasts' social life and in relation to interest development. Hence, a special focus is placed on how museums and galleries, a key interest-related resource, are perceived by participants. In the pathways presented before, participants' perceived value of museums and museum were drawn from past engagement in museums. For example, having traveled and visited museums all over the world, Lisa perceived museums as a place to appreciate genuine artworks that one does not encounter in everyday life. Mike, for example, perceived museums

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as educational particularly in terms of the knowledge and insights he gained from artworks and artifacts; he therefore considered the museum an important resource to deepen his understanding of Chinese art. Perceived values may also change as time passes by. Rachel, for example, who considered museums more of a place for leisure and relaxation when she was a student, has developed a new perception of museums since her interest developed and she began to seek a deeper museum experience. Hence she perceived museums as educational.

5.6 Phases of interest development

In this chapter I present four pathways demonstrating the distinct processes, through which four participants' interest was sparked and developed. From the four pathways I present, one can see, in a temporal sense, a distinction between an early pathway and a late pathway based on the time when an interest emerges, as illustrated by Figure 5-5. In early pathways, interest may be sparked early in life (e.g. Lisa's interest was sparked by history lessons at school; See Section 5.1) by means of having the opportunities to engage with art at young age (e.g. Rachel's interest was built on her childhood drawing experience and by attending sketch lessons; See Section 5.2). In late pathways, interest may be sparked as one matures, or when one encounters new opportunity to engage with art later in life (e.g. Howard's interest was sparked when he visited MOCA out of curiosity as a young adult; See Section 5.3).

However, common phases can be found between different pathways. Drawing from the pathways of all 14 participants, four developmental phases are found to characterize a pathway, which begins when: interest is first initiated by certain objects, people, places, or activities and practices (initiating phase); individuals become aware of their interest ('a-ha' moment); interest is emerging and maintained by individuals' seeking more opportunity to re-engage with art (maintaining phase); and interest becomes stable, and the individual is motivated to develop the interest (stabilizing phase). Figure 5-6 below shows the common phases of artistic interest in

a developmental sense. In Section 5.6, I discuss briefly the phases through which artistic interest is developed.
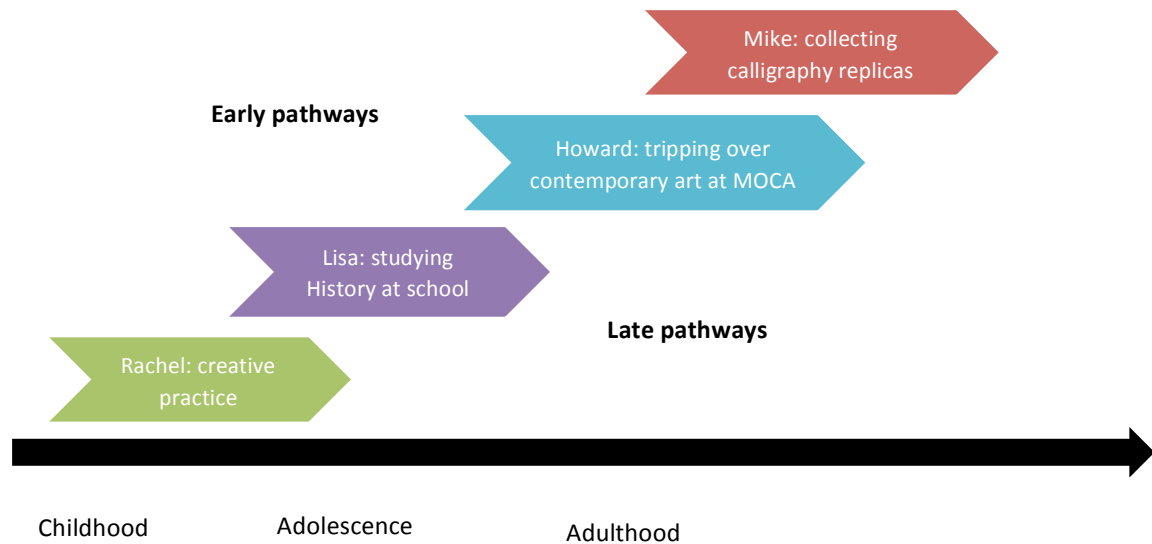
Figure 5-5 Early and late pathways to art

Figure 5-6 Phases of interest development

The initiating phase describes the initiation of artistic interest. This phase may appear in different settings where interest is triggered by a certain object, activity, or event with support provided by capable people. For example, Lisa's interest was triggered by her encounter with museum catalogues at school introduced by her history teacher; Howard's interest was sparked by his occasional visits to MOCA accompanied by a guide. However, the initiating phase may also appear without a specific stimulus, be it an object, event, or a person. For example, Rachel's interest was sparked by childhood drawing experience, which may have implied the role of

early exposure through learning and creative practice in interest development. In Mike's case, he unconsciously gravitated towards art through buying calligraphy replicas he liked randomly, and his collecting practice was what led him into his pursuit of interest in Chinese art. Moreover, early pathways and late pathways can be distinguished by the time the initiating phase takes place.

The 'a-ha moment' refers to a special moment when individuals come to realize their own interest, or develop a 'reflective awareness' (Renninger and Su 2012). It is characterized by a person being unaware of the fact that he or she has been attracted by certain things or engaging in certain activity out of interest for an extended period of time; the person later notices the effect and the meaning derived from his or her attraction, and then comes to realize the fact of having an interest. Mike provided a typical example (See Section 5.4). He was attracted by calligraphy, but was unaware of the fact that art interested him until the a-ha moment hit him when he examined his collection.

The maintaining phase describes the maintaining of an emerging interest, when participants begin to seek for more opportunity and resource to reengage with art. Hence, it is characterized by maintaining engagement and seeking cross-boundary resources (Barron 2006). For example, Howard sustained his interest by paying subsequent visits to MOCA, and by seeking opportunity to engage in contemporary art as a volunteer where he had more access to resources. Seeking resources and opportunity may appear across different settings. For example, Lisa began pursuing her interest in history in an out-of-school context by visiting the National Museum of History near her school. In other words, new resources or opportunities come into play in the maintaining phase. Moreover, in the maintaining phase, interruption may appear as Rachel's story showed (see Section 5.2). Rachel later reengaged in drawing and painting when she started university and pursued her interest further by visiting art exhibitions.

Finally, the stabilizing phase describes the developing of a stabilized interest. It appears when an interest is developed into a predisposition, and becomes part of one's identity. The individual is then motivated to and consciously invest more effort

in pursuing their interest. For example, Lisa pursued her interest further by majoring in history at university, and by making curricular use of museum collections (see Section 5.1). She took a systematic approach, and with a view of enhancing her level of mastery of knowledge regarding her interest. Similarly, Howard and Mike both began to develop their interest by investing their time in volunteering at museums, where their knowledge about contemporary art or Chinese art is consolidated. Rachel made it a habit to visit arts exhibitions with friends she met in her university art club, and began using other resources, e.g. audio guides to enhance her museum experience. Moreover, the use of museums and galleries as an instrument for interest development becomes more apparent in the stabilizing phase, and is supported by certain perceived values of museums. For example, Rachel acknowledged the educational value of museums as she began to enhance her experience by hiring audio guide or participating in talks (see Section 5.2).

The developmental phases of interest I summarized from the 14 participants seem to differ from Hidi and Renninger's (2006) four-phase model, which marks different phases by differentiating situational interest and individual interest. This approach seems to be difficult to execute in my research. Art enthusiasts like Rachel and Mike, for example, may have an initial interest (e.g. Mike's affinity for Chinese calligraphy or Rachel's interest in drawing) that develops into a more stable form later, but it did not seem appropriate to categorize this initial interest as a situational interest, because the environmental stimuli – or a triggering moment – cannot be identified by participants, owing to difficulties of illustrating an exact moment in a remote memory. However, an interest did emerge through building relationships (drawing or collecting) with art. In other words, identifying the initiation of an interest solely by specifying the environmental stimuli may not be appropriate in the study of artistic interest.

However, the characteristics of situational and individual interest illuminate the transition from a psychological state (characterized by positive feeling, for example) to enduring predisposition (characterized by repeated engagement or higher volume of stored value and knowledge, for example). As a result, the conceptions of

situational and individual interest inform this research in terms of identifying the common phases among different pathways by distinguishing key features such as maintaining engagement, seeking resources, and habitual engagement. The four examples discussed in this chapter illustrate a multiple-phased process featuring the changing ways of engaging with art as an individual's interest develops.

5.7 Summary

In this chapter, concrete examples of the development of artistic interest are presented drawing on the accounts of four art enthusiasts: Lisa, Rachel, Howard and Mike. Through examples I closely examine the developmental process of artistic interest, which generate insights for further analysis of the formation of artistic interest. Studying these pathways helps address RQ1, and also presents information relating to how museums and galleries are perceived by art enthusiasts, which helps address RQ2.

From Section 5.1 to 5.4, I present four different pathways illustrated by Lisa, Rachel, Howard and Mike's stories. Section 5.1 depicts Lisa's pathway, characterized by an early interest in history developed at school and expanded through traveling and visiting galleries. Section 5.2 depicts Rachel's pathway, characterized by an early influence from childhood drawing experience, and later development from participating in university art club. Section 5.3 depicts Howard's pathway, characterized by an occasional visit to the museum, and later development through volunteering. Section 5.4 depicts Mike's pathways, characterized by an exploration through collecting and later, volunteering. These pathways represent different processes through which an interest is sparked, maintained and developed into a predisposition.

In Section 5.5, I highlight key factors – known as the developmental dynamics of interest – that play important roles in and characterize these pathways. Three developmental dynamics are highlighted: the influences one draws from key persons, institutions, objects or activities in relation to interest; the resources one has access

to; and the perceived values one develops towards museums. They are found relevant to the development of interest, and help address my research questions. The three developmental dynamics not only characterize the development of artistic interest, but also differentiate one pathway from the other. The three developmental dynamics will be discussed again in full detail in Chapter 6.

Finally, in Section 5.6 I summarize four different phases art enthusiasts experienced in their pathways. This developmental model explains how artistic interest is developed through the initiating, 'a-ha moment', maintaining, and stabilizing phases, each of which is characterized by different ways of engaging with art. It is also noted this model does not build on the identification of situational interest and individual interest, therefore it differs from Hidi and Renninger's (2006) four-phase model. However, the conceptions of situational and individual interest inform the characterization of each phase in my model. In Chapter 6, I will examine the developmental processes of interest across 14 art enthusiasts using this model.

Chapter 6

Group Taipei: Cross-analysis of art enthusiasts

In this chapter, I present a cross-analysis of 14 art enthusiasts in Group Taipei (GT), building on the key themes I highlighted in Chapter 5. The data I analyzed in this chapter are primarily generated from semi-structured interviews; subsidiary data sources include participant observations, learning ecology maps, and observations on participants' social media activity. This chapter begins with an introduction of 14 participants' profiles in Section 6.1, where I analyze participants' demographic information and their areas of interest. I then move on to discuss significant themes I draw from the data in the following three sections, covering the three developmental dynamics of artistic interest (influences, resources, and perceived values), which help address my first research question: 'How does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) In Section 6.2, I focus on the key influences that contribute to an interest in art; in Section 6.3, I turn to interest-related resources; and in Section 6.4, I highlight one of the key resources, museums, and explore how museums are perceived by art enthusiasts throughout life and in relation to their interest, which helps address my second research question: 'What roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest?' (RQ2) In Section 6.5, I look at key phases of all participants' pathways, using the model I elaborated in Section 5.6; I also discuss the issue of identity development in Section 6.5. Finally, I summarize the findings in Section 6.6. As noted in Chapter 4, participants are partially anonymized for ethical reason, and pseudonyms are used throughout this chapter and in writing up this thesis for the purpose of convenience.

6.1 Introducing art enthusiasts

This section presents the demographic background about 14 art enthusiasts recruited from Taipei, including an analysis of participants' areas of interest. I first analyze the demographic features of Group Taipei (GT) in Section 6.1.1, and then I discuss the areas of interest in Section 6.1.2. Participants' profiles are analyzed by four demographic features: gender, age, level of education, and occupation (See Appendix 9 for detailed demographic features). It should be noted that art enthusiasts in this research, all of whom are frequent gallery visitors, are labeled with two categories, central and peripheral, which have an implication to levels of engagement and involvement in relationship with museums (see Section 4.3.1.1). This categorization serves two purposes. First, to address my research questions by building case studies of participants with distinct levels and forms of engaging with art; and secondly, to facilitate recruitment.

6.1.1 Demographic Features

Briefly speaking, art enthusiasts in Group Taipei (GT) are generally gallery visitors who are predominantly holders of an undergraduate university degree or above, female, young or middle-aged professionals with a relatively high socioeconomic status. In terms of ethnic background, all GT participants are descendants of Chinese/Taiwanese. I present the demographic features in the following four subsections.

6.1.1.1 Gender

In GT, females (11 out of 14) are the majority in comparison with males (3 out of 14) (see Figure 6-1 below). A similar trend is also found on the whole when combining the two groups of participants: females are overrepresented by 20 out of

28 participants, in comparison with males, which is represented by only 8 out of 28 participants.
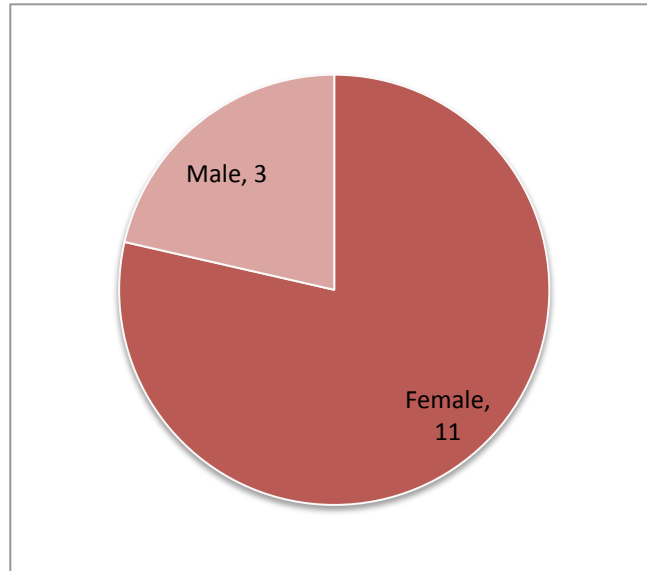
Figure 6-1 Gender distribution (GT)
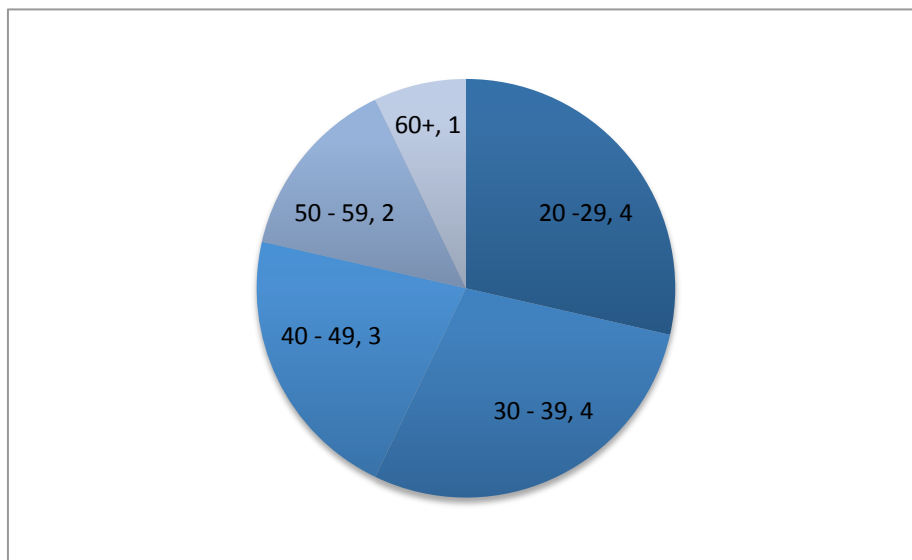
Figure 6-2 Age distribution (GT)

6.1.1.2 Age

In this research, participants are categorized by five age groups: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60 and above. In GT, majorities of 20-year-olds and 30-year-olds (8 out of 14) can be identified in contrast to the 40-year-olds and above (6 out of 14). The 20-year-olds (4 out of 14) and 30-year-olds (4 out of 14) both account for almost one-third of the participants in GT respectively. Together with those in 40s (3 out of 14), the majority of the art enthusiasts in GT are under 50. Participants who are in the 50s (2 out of 14), and 60s and above (1 out of 14) are the minority. It is fair to say that this group is rather 'young' in terms of the distribution of age range (see Figure 6-2 above).

6.1.1.3 Level of Education

Holders of university and postgraduate degree are overrepresented by 13 out of 14 participants in GT, meaning that almost all participants completed university-level education. Only one participant, who is a full-time university student, was on the path to completing her bachelor degree when she was interviewed. One-third of the participants are holders of postgraduate university degrees (4 out of 14). It is fair to say that the majority of participants in GT are well-educated, having received and completed higher education (see Figure 6-3).

Three focuses can be found among the most recent degrees GT participants held: five participants held degrees in humanities subjects, i.e. foreign languages, history, library studies, and one is expected to complete an undergraduate degree in Japanese; two participants held degrees in sciences, i.e. chemistry, engineering; and finally, six participants held degree in management, business or finance. None of the 14 participants in GT have held degrees in art. However, participants with degrees in humanities subject, for example Lisa and June, considered their university education relevant to art, in the sense that their education laid the foundation for understanding a specific culture.
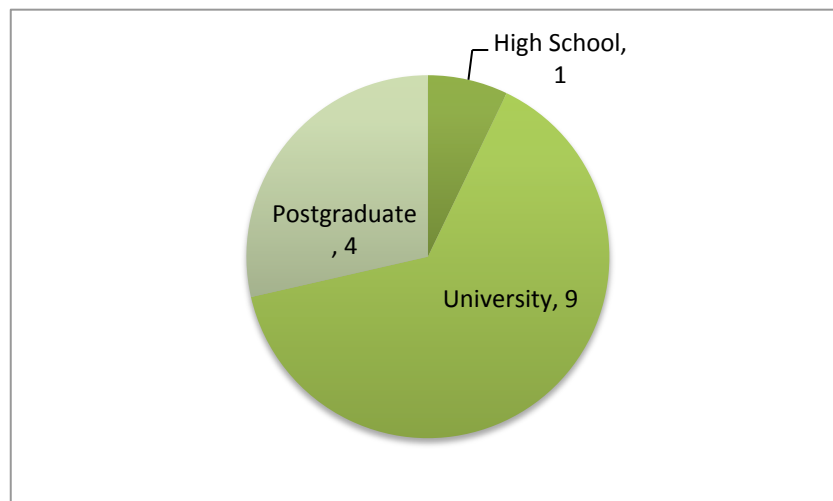
Figure 6-3 Level of education distribution (GT)

6.1.1.4 Socioeconomic background

Level of education and socioeconomic status are common indicators, which position individuals within the social map of a given society. A vast body of research in art and cultural sociology point out that socioeconomic status plays a key role in providing conditions for an individual to develop a predisposition to engage with art, and makes it possible to predict the social and cultural capital one is entitled to mobilize. Similarly, in Taiwan, the level of education and occupation are considered the most important contributive factors to social stratification. Occupation is commonly used to determine socioeconomic status in Taiwanese society (Hwang 2008).

In this research, I categorized GT participants' socioeconomic background according to the Five-Level Scale of Occupational Prestige and Socioeconomic Status developed by Hwang (2008), which classifies participants by their occupations (see Table 6-1). Among the employed participants (10 out of 14), the majority (7 out of 10) are placed at the top level (Level 5), accounting for half of the entire group. These participants hold managerial or professional positions, e.g. managers, engineers. The

minority of the employed (3 out of 10) sit at Level 3 and Level 4, together occupying one-fifth of the entire group. These participants hold non-managerial, semi-professional, or clerical occupations, e.g. sales representative. The unemployed, such as housewives and students, and the retired, together are represented by 4 out of 14 participants. These categories sit outside of the explanatory scope of Five-level Scale of Occupational Reputation and Socioeconomic Status. However, the former occupation of the two retired participants – one was a teacher and the other was a senior manager – would have placed them at Level 5 (see Figure 6-4). It is fair to say that participants in GT have relatively high socioeconomic status.

Table 6-1 Five-Level Scale of Occupational Prestige and Socioeconomic Status (Hwang 2008)

Level	Category
5	Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations
4	Administrative, semi-professional, higher technical occupations
3	Clerical occupations
2	Routine occupations (e.g. retail, catering, security, cosmetic); Lower technical, mechanical occupations
1	Agricultural, forestry, fishery and husbandry workers; Non-technical occupations
Not classified	Full-time students; Pensioners
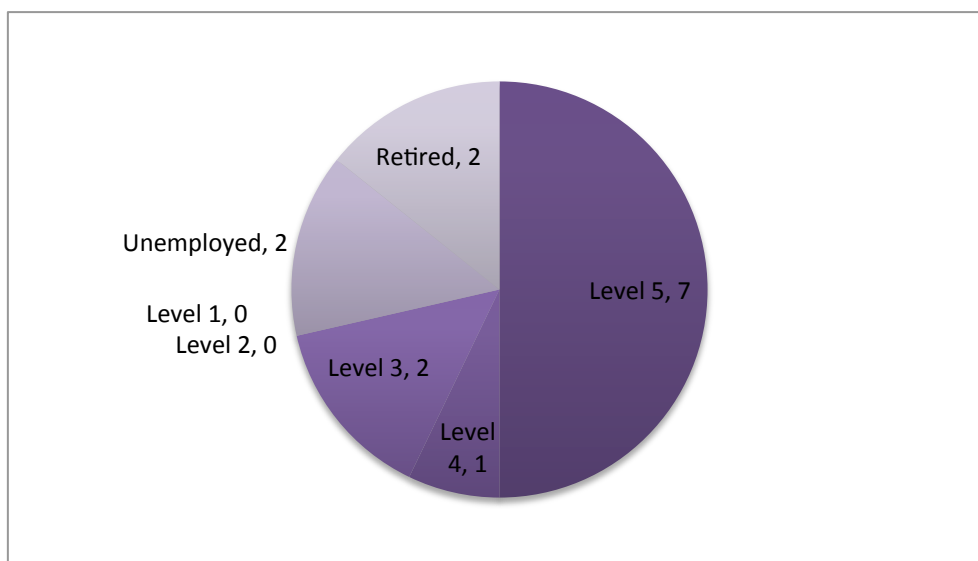
Figure 6-4 Socioeconomic background distribution (GT)

In short, art enthusiasts in this group are predominantly female, young or middle-aged professionals aged between 20 and 50 years old; they have relatively high socioeconomic status, and the majority of them have completed higher education.

6.1.2 Areas of Interest

In this section, I discuss, first, how interest is expressed, and then I look at interest in relationship with participants' art-related experiences and practices. Art enthusiasts in GT demonstrated diverse and eclectic areas of interest, which was captured through one open-ended question stated in the online questionnaire, and further confirmed in interviews. The question of areas of interest was phrased openly and in a less structured manner, e.g. 'what art are you interested in?' Hence, participants were given the freedom to use their own language to define interest. The following three subsections are dedicated to: presenting the ways interest are expressed (Section 6.1.2.1); uncovering how interest is linked to practices (Section

6.1.2.2), and how interest may be determined by relevant knowledge and experience in engaging with art (Section 6.1.2.3).

6.1.2.1 Items of interest

Participants defined interest by a diverse and eclectic selection of items; each art enthusiast demonstrated a distinctive set of 'items of interest', although some items were shared among participants. In addition to using items, some phrases were also used to express an area of interest, including: 'most of art', 'various styles that interest me', and 'special themes' (which implied the blockbusters in Taiwan). Figure 6-5 shows examples of items of interest (taken from an exhaustive list) mentioned by the participants in the online survey and/or interviews.
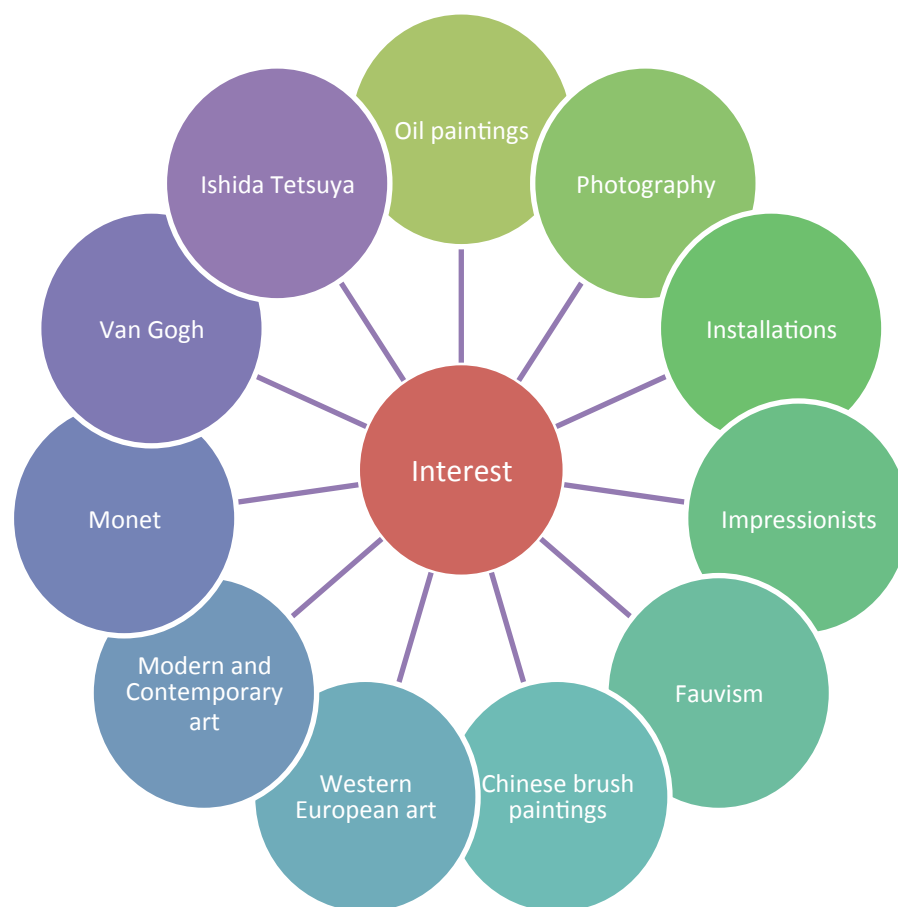
Figure 6-5 Items of interest (GT)

On a general level, some items demonstrated reference to art history; for example, art historically informed terms such as 'Impressionists', 'Fauvism', 'Modern and Contemporary art' showed familiarity with the domain of art history knowledge about specific schools, styles and time periods. However, more inclusive terms such as oil paintings were also used. Names of specific artist, in most cases, emerged during further elaboration in an interview, but in some cases specific names (e.g. Monet, Ishida Tetsuya), were mentioned in the online questionnaire at an early stage.

'Contemporary art' and 'Chinese brush paintings' were the most frequently mentioned two items, each mentioned by 3 out of 14 participants. 'Architecture', 'Design', 'Installation', and 'Oil paintings' came second, each mentioned by two participants. These numbers represented few participants, however, this was because a variety of items that appeared different but in fact referred to similar things. Five participants used painting-related items, including 'Classical school paintings', 'New-classical school paintings', 'Western European paintings' to describe their area of interest. These items appeared different but referred to paintings in different styles and in a specific culture (as opposed to Chinese brush paintings). Hence, paintings of Chinese or European traditions were found the most frequently mentioned item of interest (8 out of 14) within the group.

Participants tended to use a mix of items to define interest; no individual shared the same set of items with others. However, two trends were found: central participants (those with dual roles as museum volunteers and frequent visitors) were predominantly interested in art represented by the museums or galleries they volunteer at. Peripheral participants (frequent visitors), although sharing a common interest in paintings, showed relatively less interest in Chinese brush paintings. These two trends are reported in the following two subsections.

6.1.2.2 Links between interest, identity and engagement

Among the seven central participants, two general focuses of interest were found, and they were a focus on Chinese art, and a focus on Modern and Contemporary art. These focuses, not surprisingly, corresponded with the collection features of the museums that central participants chose to volunteer. Hence, central participants' interest was aligned with the museum (and its collection) they engaged the most. This can also be understood from the perspective of volunteer management, as expressing an interest in the museum collection is usually a selection criterion when recruiting volunteer. Interest in the collection is an essential characteristic among museum volunteers (Stebbins 2001, 2011).

Three central participants (Mike, Amy, and Sonya), who are volunteers at the National Palace Museum (NPM), whose collection has a special emphasis on Chinese art, shared common interest in Chinese art in general. This was expressed by two items: Chinese brush paintings, and Chinese calligraphy. Mike was a typical example. In the quote below, Mike traced his interest to his hobby of reading Chinese literature classics as a teenager; he showed more interest in Chinese art, in which he considered himself better grounded in comparison with Western art.

(...) Because these [Chinese literature classics] are directly related to calligraphy and painting, I have been more interested in this [Chinese art], and therefore I read more [about it]. Contrastingly, I don't have that much background in Western art – not that I don't enjoy it, but I don't know much about it – so I don't spend as much time delving into it. (Mike, GT)

A general focus on modern and contemporary art was found in the description of interest of the other four central participants (Lisa, Iris, Howard and Lynn). Lisa, Howard and Lynn have been volunteering at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), and Iris at Taipei Fine Art Museum (TFAM). Both museums regularly exhibit modern and contemporary art, or hold collection of modern and contemporary art.

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Although their listed items of interest appeared quite diverse rather than unanimous, there was in fact a common focus of art developed in the modern and contemporary periods, specifically extending from the second half of 19th century to present time (e.g. New Media art, Surrealism, Contemporary art, Cubism), as do the items they used to describe their interest. Hence, there was in fact more commonality than disparity. This again, confirmed the connection between museum collection/exhibition themes and participants' areas of interest.

Howard was a typical example of an art enthusiast showing strong interest in contemporary approach towards art. In the quote below, Howard said that his interest in contemporary art came from his exposure to modern and contemporary art, and his fascination for the issues and concepts artworks address. The areas he listed in his description (new media art, installations, and conceptual art) reflected the 'approach' adopted by modern artists nowadays as he stated in the quote.

(…) Perhaps I see more contemporary art, so I notice that modern artists have changed their approach to creating art. Now they tend to create artworks that deliver a concept or meaning. (…) The reason I'm so interested in art is that I really enjoy the concept an artwork communicates – the thought process and observation of a particular issue. (Howard, GT)

Apparently, volunteering not only thrived on a personal interest, but it also implied more opportunity and additional access to engage with the art in the museum, which further supported interest. As Amy addressed in her quote below, volunteering gave her more access to art, and the more she saw the more she knew about Chinese art. Hence, the relationship between an interest on museums and collections and the volunteering practice can be two-fold.

I visit the collection every time I have a shift. Not just the permanent collection, we can also see special exhibitions for free, so I visit a lot of times. Of course, the more you see, the more you engage, and the more you know. Therefore, you become more interested.

(Amy, GT)

To summarize, central participants may be motivated to volunteer by a specific interest in a particular museum and its collection (but this was not the only reason to volunteer; see also Mike's case in Section 5.4); meanwhile, volunteering opened the door to further develop the interest where more access to the collection and an increase of knowledge about art were expected. This finding is aligned with the central argument of interest development (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006, Renninger and Su 2012): interest moves from an early phase (e.g. situational interest) to a more developed later phase (e.g. individual interest) as learner develops stored knowledge and value for the content of interest. The role of volunteering as an influence on interest, and as a source of resources will be further discussed in Section 6.2 and Section 6.3.

6.1.2.3 Lack of interest in Chinese brush painting

Turning to seven peripheral participants, there seemed to be a common interest in paintings, although several different items were used to indicate their interests. For example, Elisa, Eric and Jane listed their interest using items of 'Paintings' or 'Oil paintings', whereas Rachel, June and Olivia used terms with reference to styles and schools, e.g. 'Classical', 'Neo-Classical Paintings', 'Impressionists' (also to specific painters such as Monet and Van Gogh, in Olivia's case) to describe their interest in paintings. Annie, who adopted a broad term ('Western European art'), later elaborated that she was referring to music, paintings and sculptures in her interview.

Interestingly, this shared interest in paintings excluded Chinese brush paintings, which three of the central participants (see Section 6.1.2.2) found the most interesting. I further discussed this contrast in taste with the participants in interviews, and asked them to elaborate their perception of Chinese paintings. It was

found that Chinese brush paintings were perceived as 'rather boring', 'lack of color', and 'less interesting'. For example, in the following quotes, Olivia and Jane made similar comments about them lacking interest in Chinese art because it was fairly accessible in life, so Chinese art did not appear to be special. In other words, negative values were attached to Chinese brush paintings, making it less interesting and not to the taste for certain participants.

(…) I seldom visit places like the National Palace Museum. (…) Say, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I may have a look in the Chinese gallery. The more familiar [I am] with the culture, the less interesting it is to me. (Olivia, GT)

(…) Don't know why, but I feel that to me Western art is more appealing than Eastern art, maybe because it's [Western art] not something we have access to in our daily routine. It appeals to me more. (Jane, GT)

On further inquiry, two participants touched on the issue of interpretation. Eric, for example, had little experience in looking at Chinese brush paintings, and he believed that one 'needed to have sufficient knowledge and experience to appreciate a Chinese brush painting.' Similarly, Annie supported Eric's statement by commenting:

Actually when I went to see these [Chinese] paintings at the National Palace Museum, I didn't feel anything. Whether it's good or bad, I think it's difficult to make a judgment. (Annie, GT)

Eric and Annie's comments suggested that lacking interest in Chinese brush paintings could be accounted for by the lack of prior knowledge and experience, which led to incapacity to interpret and appreciate. As addressed in Section 6.1.2.2, the three central participants have had more experience and knowledge in Chinese art as dedicated volunteers over the years. Therefore, prior knowledge and

experience may have an impact on interest development, and this again was supported by interest research (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006). Similarly, lacking competence in Chinese art would make it less captivating to appreciate Chinese art, as addressed by Self Determination Theory (Krapp 2005), which highlights the fact that an activity (appreciating Chinese art) failed to satisfy the innate need of competence.

In brief, lack of interest, on the one hand, was understood as a matter of personal taste and certain values assigned to a particular type of art. This was also found among central participants. For example, Howard found art installations or multimedia art more creative and more interesting compared to paintings. On the other hand, one's lack of interest was often the results of one's incompetence in understanding the artwork.

Although unanimous focuses of interest were found among participants, particularly among central participants whose interest was found to align with the museum, each participant in GT presented diverse items of interest. It should be noted that the majority of participants demonstrated very mixed interest, which sprang across art of different art forms, schools, styles, and time periods. More importantly, items were found (in later data collection process) to associate with different sources of influence, e.g. an event one attended, a friend who shared the same interest, a museum one visited as a child, a curious object one saw at different point throughout one's life, as much as interest was influenced by museums and volunteering practices. A typical example was Iris, whose area of interest was mixed with ceramics and jade to avant-garde and classical paintings. Having been influenced by elder members of her family, Iris has always appreciated Chinese ceramics and jade. However, after retirement, she attended a course about Western art and began to find European art intriguing. Since then she started signing up for courses on several topics ranging from Contemporary art to Chinese art, and her interest was expanded over time. Iris' story pointed out that the dynamic process of interest development could shape an individual's interest.

To further explore the diversity of interest and the dynamic process through

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which an interest evolves, I pursue the question 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' by taking a retrospective examination of the processes through which art enthusiasts engaged with art. The following sections are dedicated to answer this question by identifying and exploring the developmental dynamics of artistic interest, including the influences that spark and sustain the interest, the resources that make the pursuit possible, and the role of particular key resources – museums and galleries.

6.2 Influences on artistic interest

In this section, I engage with my research question 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) by elaborating on one of the three developmental dynamics of artistic interest – influences. In this research, participants were asked to delve retrospectively into how they were influenced in terms of developing an interest in art. I then deduced three categories from the data, which framed 'influences' with particular people, which I discuss in Section 6.2.1; places, which I discuss in Section 6.2.2; activities and practices, which I discuss in Section 6.2.3. These categories highlight specific elements of an influence on interest; altogether, they helped elaborate the context in which artistic interest was formed.

Figure 6-6 shows the three categories of influences, which I characterized as the first dynamic of interest development. Under each category, items are listed as examples representing the category; for example, family, mentor and peer were identified as three key influences associated with the category 'people'. The three circles overlap, because an influence categorized as in one circle may also have an impact on another circle; for example, parents as a 'people' influence, may also play a role in 'activity & practice' influence in that parents were often characterized as supporting figures that actively encouraged participants' out-of-school activity.
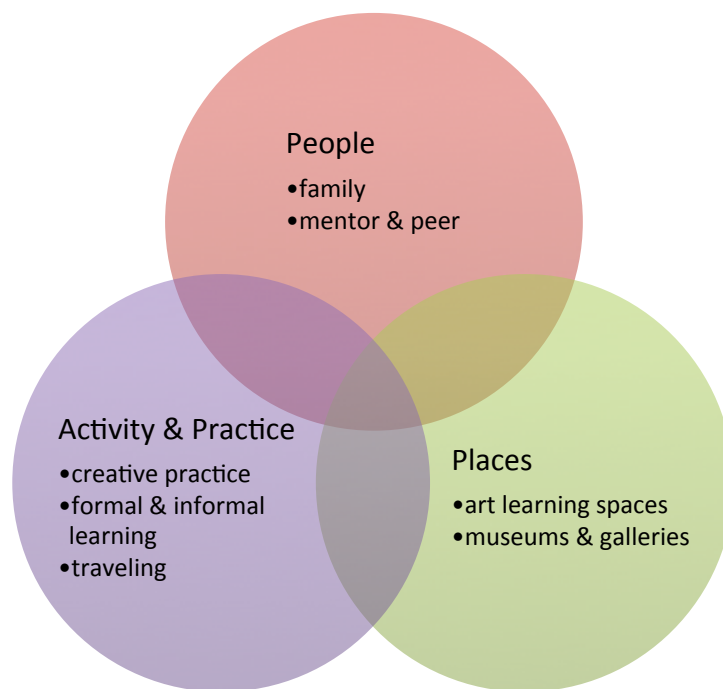
Figure 6-6 Categories of influences on artistic interest (GT)

In the following three subsections, I report in detail the three categories of influences that were found to play a role – sparked and deepened an interest – in the developing of artistic interest.

6.2.1 People

In this section, I present the first category of influence – people. This category was further divided into three subcategories: family (e.g. parents, partners), mentors (e.g. teachers) and peers (e.g. friends, fellow volunteers). Key figures one came across throughout one's life, such as parents, friends and teachers, had a considerable impact on one's interest. In the case of artistic interest, family members, peers, and mentors, were frequently mentioned by GT participants to have cast enormous influence on their interest in different manners throughout life. For example, in the quote below, Annie addressed the role of family in learning and cultivating an interest.

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I think to some extent, family can be a significant influence in cultivating interest in art. If your family doesn't support you to develop, or urge you to learn this and that in early years, you wouldn't have developed an interest. (Annie, GT)

The above-mentioned point generally resonated with the argument of sociocultural theories (e.g. Ireson 2008), which pointed out that adults or a capable peer play significant roles in the development of a child. The effect of social interactions on learning within family (or parental mediation) was also proven by researchers working from sociocultural perspectives (e.g. Crowley and Jacobs 2002).

6.2.1.1 Family

Family referred to members of the participant's family, as well as the intimate setting where interactions with family members took place. Seven out of 14 participants mentioned family members when talking about their interest. Family members mentioned by participants included parents, siblings, children (adult children), partners, and close relatives. The way in which family members influenced participants' interest varied from planned interactions that lasted for an extended period of time (e.g. traveling abroad, visiting galleries) to daily interactions and socializing (e.g. exchanging conversation or gift). Family members also influenced participants implicitly such as passing down similar likings (e.g. a liking for Chinese ceramic and jade, as in Iris' statement. See Section 6.1.2.4).

A typical example of influence from family member was found in June, whose mother and a family friend Lisa (whom June refers to as 'auntie', and is also a participant to this research) played significant roles in guiding and helping her develop an interest in art. June attributed her interest in art to having traveled around the world and visited galleries with her family and Lisa since childhood. Traveling and visiting galleries together seemed to be a 'family thing' in June's case.

She depicted many occasions when she traveled with her mother and Lisa in Europe. In one occasion, June related that her father went to New York for business and took the family with him, and she stated: 'I was very excited because there were many galleries. Mom and I then discussed and planned which gallery to visit.' June described her mother as a parent who shared her passion for traveling and visiting museums and galleries, and Lisa as a knowledgeable auntie who led her into the world of art. She commented:

My mom sort of prompted me, but auntie Lisa is the person who brought me into the art world. Mum is very interested in art, but neither of us knows much, whereas Lisa knows a lot, and she studied history, so she would tell me lots of stories. (June, GT)

June's example was a strong case of family influence, particularly a family of abundant cultural resources and cultural capital. She began to engage with art because her family had not only interest but also competence in art, and actively invested in her cultural education, and prompted her into this direction by taking her to travel and explaining the backgrounds of artwork to her. Her case echoed well the works that addressed parental influence and home resources in interest-driven pursuits (e.g. Crowley et al. 2015, and Pitts 2009).

Family members, especially parents, were also found to encourage participants to pick up an interest by arranging extra-curricular activities. Four out of 14 participants reported being prompted by parents, relatives or adult children to engage with art through taking lessons. Relating their interest in visual art to an initial interest in music, Annie and Elisa were both encouraged by parents or relatives to learn music. Elisa, for example, was a typical example. At young age, Elisa studied violin at young age with one of her aunts who taught music. She then joined with the other aunt, who painted and volunteered at NPM, in an art studio. 'She [the aunt] shared these things [painting and exhibitions] with me in recent years, and because she told me about these, I also find them very interesting', Elisa stated.

In addition, family influence was found to have a two-fold impact. Olivia, for

example, engaged with music because of his son. She said, '(…) my son studied clarinet, and because of him, we went into music a bit. We like to go to concerts.' Hence, the influence from family members was two-way, and was subject to the social role one played within a family group: children explored and developed an interest under parents' guidance, and parents also got engaged with what interested the children. Experience as a parent seemed to have an impact on interest (Pitts 2009).

Family members were also found to support participants' interest rather indirectly and implicitly, and this was mentioned by 3 out of 14 participants. Mike, for example, who is particularly interested in Chinese calligraphy, mentioned being given catalogues of calligraphy frequently by relatives who knew well of his interest. Sonya reported that she always enjoyed conversation about art with her brother, whom she described as having a good taste in art and had given her a decorative antique as a gift. As addressed in Section 6.1.4, Iris mentioned that her mother and the elders in her family owned pieces of jade and ceramics, and had influenced her liking for these.

6.2.1.2 Mentors

Mentors and peers were categories referring to mentoring figures, i.e. teachers, instructors, or senior members of a group; and friends with similar interest, fellow students or volunteers. These categories revealed the link between artistic interest and engagement in art in various settings, such as learning at school, or volunteering at museums. Ten out of 14 participants mentioned peers or mentors when talking about their interest. Among these participants, four specified mentors, i.e. schoolteachers and senior volunteers as an influence, whereas seven mentioned peers, i.e. members of art club or studio, fellow volunteers, friends from schools, or those who share the same interest with participants as an influence.

Mentors, as described by participants, were inspiring figures (teachers or instructors) who played a role in initiating and supporting the participants' interest.

They were found to influence participants by introducing topics of interest, and by offering guidance and suggestions from the viewpoint of more experienced and capable individuals. These figures, in particular in school setting, were considered a prominent influence on early interest (Pitts 2009).

A typical example demonstrating influences from schoolteachers was found in Amy, who was praised and considered gifted by her art teachers at school, and stated that she was encouraged by teachers to pursue a career in art at school. Sonya and Lisa also provided examples of being influenced by teachers who introduced them to the world of art. Sonya, for example was inspired to take an interest in European art when her schoolteacher took her to see a performance. As discussed in Section 5.1, Lisa was sparked interest in European art when she was introduced to catalogues in class. She stated:

My history teacher at junior high school used to buy lots of art catalogues and showed us in class. The Versailles Palace, that sort of thing. And I was very much fascinated by the catalogues, and hoped that one day I would go there and see the artworks myself. That is a great influence to me. (Lisa, GT)

Knowledgeable, experienced, and capable individuals also played the role of mentor. In particular, among central participants, senior volunteers were considered more of a mentoring figure than a fellow volunteer, and they helped deepen participants' interest. For example, Amy reported her interaction with senior volunteers piqued her interest, and encouraged her to delve deeper into art and to learn more from these volunteers. She explained:

(…) When you meet some senior volunteers who have very deep and broad knowledge and experience, you really have a strong desire to explore more and talk more with them. When they show you the collection, you learn the fact that their understanding and experience in appreciating the collection is so much above the level we're at. (Amy, GT)

6.2.1.3 Peers

Peers referred to people with whom participants practiced drawing, studied or volunteered. Peers were considered generating influence in terms of exchanging information and opinions about an object of interest, and exploring interest together in a particular group, e.g. in an art class, or in a social group of friends. Peers were noted by participants to help build an interest, and the value of peer influence on interest development was also addressed in the studies of interest-driven pursuits (e.g. Azevedo 2011). Connecting with other people who shared similar interest was also considered a social reward by the serious leisure perspective (Stebbins 2001). A typical example was Lynn, who explained that her interest was shaped by exploring different topics with fellow volunteers. She reported:

After I came to MOCA, I met with people. Volunteers at MOCA are people from diverse backgrounds, some of them like films, architecture, and some are artists themselves. So, I started to explore many different areas, and realized what really interests me. (Lynn, GT)

Six more participants confirmed that peers were an important influence. The ways in which participants interacted with peers were various; typically the ways involved building interest together through certain activities. For example, participants formed book clubs and discussed books of shared interest with fellow volunteers; participants also visited exhibitions or participated in events with certain social groups (e.g. friends sharing the interest). In other words, participants also learned from peers by sharing information, discussing, and exchanging opinions in groups, through which the interest was shaped and deepened.

6.2.2 Places

In this section, I present the second category, places which referred to physical spaces, institutions or environment that had an impact on participants' interest. As

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discussed in Section 6.2.1, supportive figures were highlighted as playing a role in sparking or expanding participants interest, and many of them – teachers, schoolmates, senior volunteers or fellow volunteers – were associated with particular physical settings, such as schools, museums, or the other art learning spaces. The category was further specified by three subcategories: art learning spaces, i.e. schools, studios where participants took lessons and practiced art; museums and galleries where participants engaged with works of art; and the neighborhood where participants used to live.

6.2.2.1 Schools, art studios and other art learning spaces

This subcategory referred to learning spaces such as schools, art studios, community colleges, and further education center at universities; the experience of learning about art in different settings can also be linked to these spaces. The majority of (12 out of 14) participants mentioned or implied these learning- and art-related spaces when talking about how they became interested in art. School was first mentioned as an influence that sparked interest in terms of providing participant initial access to knowledge about art and creative skills. Five out of 14 participants associated their interest with certain subjects they studied at school i.e. art and history. For example, talented in art making, both Amy and Annie mentioned that they had enjoyed studying art at school, which was mandatory in Taiwanese primary and secondary schools. Similarly, Lisa and Jane mentioned that they were inspired by history classes, which further led to a fascination for art. Positive experience of receiving education at school was considered an important factor for sustaining an interest (Pitts 2009), and this point also resonated with studies of interest-driven learning where interest in a subject at school was argued to lead to self-initiated learning (Barron 2006). However, a counter example was found in one of the GT participants. Eric found mandatory art classes at school 'uninteresting' and 'stressful', but his interest in art was sparked by school assignments that required

him to visit galleries.

Furthermore, as Crowley et al. (2015) and Crowley and Jacobs (2002) noted, formal education was not necessarily the beginning of an interest (in science); they argued that out-of-school learning (Crowley et al. 2015) or pre-school learning (Crowley and Jacobs 2002) might contribute to the building of an interest (or an island of expertise). Six out of 14 participants developed their interest in art through art making in an out-of-school setting; these participants attended art studios or art clubs regularly to practice drawing, painting or calligraphy. On the one hand, some of them spent time in out-of-school learning spaces, e.g. art studios where artistic interest initially emerged; Rachel, for example, enjoyed drawing as a child as discussed in Section 5.2. She resumed her pursuit of interest by participating in art club at university, and worked on a few art projects for the university. On the other hand, others visited these spaces as an attempt to deepen an interest; Mike for example went to a calligraphy studio a few years ago because he intended to deepen his interest in Chinese calligraphy. These art learning spaces beyond formal education were closely linked to creative practice and out-of-school learning, which are discussed later in Section 6.2.3.

Other art learning spaces (but not limited to art making) mentioned by participants also included community colleges, further education centers at universities, and learning centers affiliated with museums. Five participants reported benefiting from the above-mentioned learning spaces in developing their interest. For example, Elisa enrolled in an introductory course about contemporary art at the further education center of a university to develop her emerging interest in contemporary art. Sonya enrolled in a few art courses at an art university to pursue her interest in Christianity and Medieval art. Pursuing further education could also be understood as a self-initiated learning strategy (Barron 2006).

6.2.2.2 Museums and galleries

Museums and galleries were considered an influence for different reasons. Museums provided a unique setting for interaction between a person and an object of interest, where a triggering moment may take place. Such interaction between object and person has traditionally been the main focus of interest research (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006; Krapp 2007). Six out of 14 participants described their interest being sparked when they 'tripped over' art in a museum setting. The expression of 'tripping over' art was originally used by Helen (see Section 7.2), an art enthusiast in Group London, which I borrowed to conceptualize art enthusiasts' articulation of an encounter with art that sparks an interest. For example, as discussed in Section 5.3, Howard, who did not engage with art in his early years, mentioned that his interest was sparked by an occasional visit to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Taipei. He reported:

I didn't know what contemporary art is, it's something new to me, so I went to see an exhibition. (…) I went to an exhibition about Australia with someone at MOCA, and started going more. (…) It made an impression on me when I first joined the guided tour at MOCA, and realized that I'm interested in what it was about. (…) I started to anticipate forthcoming exhibitions. (Howard, GT)

It was clear that Howard's interest was sparked by this particular visit, which further led to subsequent visits. Museums therefore became a place to explore interest for Howard. Similar examples were also found in the other participants.

Although museums and galleries were, undoubtedly, considered places of interest for participants at the current moment, they did not always appear to be so for the majority of participants. Rather, the meaning of museum visits varied as time went by, and as did the value participants placed upon museums, because museums and galleries came into participants' life under different circumstances; for example an early encounter with the museum could be a school visit, or a nice day-out with

friends/family.

To explore how museums are perceived as influences on interest, I specifically looked at participants' early encounters with museums, and I found that early encounters were not necessarily perceived as a positive influence on interest. Mike provided a typical example. Mike's first encounter with museums was in 1959, at a display room – a prototype of National Palace Museum, which was established in 1965 in Taipei. Although the visit left him a good impression, this early memory did not contribute to Mike's perception of museums due to lack of personal relevance (Anderson, Storksdieck and Spock 2007); instead it remained dormant for decades until he became interested in art (found personal relevance) and resumed visiting museums as his career matured. He reported his early encounter with the old NPM:

We were a bunch of kids, and we spent the weekend – a Saturday as far as I remember – riding bikes for an hour to this place. This was my first encounter with museums (...) we were the only visitors that afternoon, and an old man who was very pleased that we were interested, came to us, gathered us up, and introduced the collection. I didn't remember anything he said, but I felt that his job was very meaningful. I didn't expect that one day I would be doing the same thing! (Mike, GT)

Taking an overview of these early encounters, those mentioned by participants were usually associated with elements of school, family and friends. Five out of 14 participants described early encounters with museum with school groups, or for school projects. However, most of them expressed that these visits did not leave much impression. Eric was an exception. He was very positive about one of his early museum visits for school assignment, and described the exhibition he visited 'very interesting'. In Eric's case, his visits to museums for school assignment made a good impression on him, and contributed to some extent to his willingness to visit more art exhibitions; he reported that he was happy visit art exhibitions – for himself, rather than for school – since then.

Four out of 14 participants described early encounters with museums with

family members, but only some encounters were considered positive. For example, June (see Section 6.2.1) and Rachel both described their visits using positive terms. Rachel, who visited a local gallery full of oil paintings at a young age, described herself 'feeling very comfortable, relaxed and wanting to stare into space'. Iris portrayed a contrasting example of a family visit where she played the role of a parent. She described her visit as an educational one for the children, and she did not find the exhibition intriguing at all. It can be said that Iris' situated identity as a parent/facilitator (Falk 2009) influenced her early perception of museum experience, which made it difficult to connect with her interest. However, museums could become a place of interest when one considered museums relevant on a personal level, or when a visit was enhanced by a subsequent experience (Anderson, Storksdieck and Spock 2007).

Three out of 14 participants described their early encounters with museums with friends, and Mike's example described above was one of them. Contrasting to Mike's experience, Howard's visit with a friend resulted in a lasting and good impression (see Section 5.3), and eventually led him to pursue an interest in contemporary art. This is explained in detail in the next subsection.

Finally, 2 out of 14 participants described early encounters with museums on their own as adolescents. Interestingly, the two participants highlighted the fact that they had been geographically close to certain museums, and they were found to have encountered museums as place of interest comparatively earlier in life than the others. This point is further discussed in the next section.

In addition, an interesting link was found between early memories of museum visits and participants from similar generation. Olivia, for example, commented, 'in my generation we grew up within a much more rigid education system. We didn't have opportunities to learn about this [art]'; Mike and Iris (who also grew up in the 1950s and 60s), shared similar experience. Younger participants, especially those under 40, were more likely to have opportunities in their early years to visit museums with school groups, for school projects, or with family, possibly due to a more open social milieu, where the artistic and creative dimensions of education

were emphasized.

6.2.2.3 Neighborhoods

As addressed in the preceding section, two participants had early encounters with museums as adolescent because museums were in proximity to their neighborhood. Lisa and Sonya reported that visiting museums was part of their routines since they were teenagers, and they had formed a habit of visiting museums at young age. Lisa, for example, showed interest in history at school and went to Taipei First Girls High School located near the National History Museum. She then started visiting the museum and developing her interest in artifacts as indicated in the quote below:

The National History Museum is very close to Taipei First Girls High School, so I used to go there. I like bronze ware, and they have many of them from different periods. So I also like artifacts, like statues of Buddha, and three-color glazed pottery figurines. (Lisa, GT)

Similarly, Sonya lived in a neighborhood with easy access to commercial galleries and Taipei Fine Art Museum. She also mentioned going to a high school near Shi-Lin District where both Taipei Fine Art Museum and National Palace Museum sit in. Hence, she reported that she formed a habit of visiting NPM since young.

(…) The entire Section 4 of Zhong-Xiao East Road was full of galleries, and I also went to Taipei Fine Art Museum. (…) When I started high school, every time Traveler Among Mountains and Streams[3] was on display, every autumn I would go to National Palace Museum to see things. (Sonya, GT)

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[3] A Chinese brush painting by Kuan Fang, North Song Dynasty, 10~11th Century.

Being geographically convenient to museums may be understood as an advantage that leads to more opportunities for learning. This particular advantage could be considered part of the interdependent contexts of a learning ecology (Barron 2006), and as were the other learning spaces (e.g. schools, art studios, museums, universities) I mentioned in this section. A link can be made between living in a culturally rich neighborhood and the habit of frequenting museums. To some extent, living in culturally rich neighborhood and gaining access to culture can be understood as habitus at work (Shwarts 1997). Clearly, Lisa and Sonya would have fewer opportunities to develop their interest, if museums had not been easily accessible in their past experiences.

6.2.3 Activities and practices

In this section, I present the third category, activities and practices. A range of activities and practices that participants used to engage in doing was already referred in the preceding two sections. For example, art learning spaces were closely linked with creative practices; creative practices were found to spring across several settings, e.g. art making at school, or extra-curricular activities. The activities and practices discussed throughout this section were understood as engagement in art-related pursuits, which, as both Azevedo (2011) and Crowley et al. (2015) noted, were practice-based pursuits of a domain of interest. Some of the activities and practices were considered to initiate an emerging interest (e.g. creative practice), whereas the other activities were interest-driven pursuits that deepened an existing interest. This category was further specified by six subcategories: creative practices in and out-of-school; participation in formal or informal learning; activities participants engaged at leisure; practices at work; traveling; and volunteering at museums.

6.2.3.1 Creative practice

Creative practice, as discussed in Section 6.2.2.1, was characterized as an influence that took place in schools, art studios and art clubs, and it was again confirmed by 9 out of 14 participants as an art-related practice. Among these participants, six of them have mentioned having gone to art studios (e.g. Lang Yang Studio, see Figure 6-7) and art clubs to draw, paint, or practice calligraphy, and four had engaged in creative activity, i.e. photography on their own. Among the six participants who practiced art at an art studio or an art club, two of them also reported that they had engaged in art making at school. A typical example was Rachel, who had enjoyed drawing since her childhood (see Section 5.2). Although she reported herself drifting away from her interest during secondary school because there was neither time nor opportunity to spend time on art in class or out-of-school, she was able to reconnect with art in university when she participated and managed an art club as a committed member. In Rachel's case, art making as an extra-curricular activity was the very means to carry on developing artistic interest.

Engagement in creative and artistic practice in early years, in particular, was linked to the initiation of artistic pathway. This finding echoed similar studies of scientific interest and pathway to science (e.g. Crowley et al. 2015). Amy, who described painting as an experience of total immersion, was a typical example. Having her interest in art making sparked at school, she still kept her practice of drawing and painting, which remained as her lifelong interest. She commented:

(…) I still enjoy painting the most. Painting is, to me a way to release the stress. I'm totally and wholeheartedly immersed in the creative process, and if time permitted, I'd definitely do more. (Amy, GT)

Amy's example was also an illustration of flow (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi 2002). Similarly, Lynn and Jane, both engaging in photography, addressed the property of the activity of taking photographs (a fun activity to do) as the main

attraction for them. Clearly, creative practice offered participants certain benefits, which motivated them to engage with. However, creative practice was not only considered an interest-related practice for the benefit of the activity itself that appealed, but it also generated a certain impact beyond the creative activity itself. Mike, for example, practiced Chinese calligraphy, and he considered that this creative activity gave him a different perspective to experience art, which was helpful for his appreciation of Chinese calligraphy.

Figure 6-7 A glimpse of Lang Yang Studio where Annie and Elisa practice art (Photo by Carol Chung)

Furthermore, among those who engaged in creative practice, 4 out of 14 participants mentioned having an aspiration for careers in art when they were young. However, these participants then commented that as they grew older they gave way to other career paths considering the difficulties in making a living as an artist, or owing to other practical issues, such as health.

6.2.3.2 Formal and informal learning settings

Activities participants partook in formal learning setting such as learning at school, as addressed in Section 6.2.1.2 (mentors) and Section 6.2.2.1 (art learning spaces), appeared to have an impact on interest. Five out of 14 participants mentioned that their interest was sparked or driven by the activities they engaged in formal learning settings, such as secondary school or university. These activities were specified as studying supplementary materials, e.g. museum catalogues, in history class, making art in art class, visiting art exhibitions for school assignments, which gave participants the opportunity to develop knowledge and practical skill as part of mandatory education. Lisa (see Section 5.1) and Jane, for example, both mentioned that they were interested in history since secondary school, and reported their artistic interest as being sparked by history lessons. Lisa spoke of her interest being triggered by the pictures in museum catalogues brought by the teacher to class, whereas Jane mentioned being fascinated by ancient Greek and Roman sculptures she learned from history class.

Art making in school setting also motivated an interest, but as noted in Section 6.2.2.1 (art learning spaces), it was also undertaken in out-of-school settings such as in studios and art clubs as an extra-curricular activity. Section 6.2.3.1 (creative practice) also confirmed that 6 out of 14 participants carried out creative practice in out-of-school setting, and it also pointed out that two participants engaged in art making in both school and out-of school settings. Hence, a close link can be found between art making and cross-setting learning. It can be observed that the two settings (school and out-of-school), as noted by the ecological perspective of learning (e.g. Barron 2006), were interdependent and both provided opportunities for an individual to pursue an interest.

Some participants, particularly those who grew up in the 1950s and 60s, reported that they engaged in self-initiated learning after they left school. It was found that opportunities to be exposed to art at school age seemed to be rare for these participants. Similar discussion was presented in Section 6.2.2.2: having school

trips to museums was found to be more difficult among those who came from a generation before the Martial Law was lifted, stated Mike, Olivia and Iris, who did not experience an education system that encouraged artistic cultivation. However, these participants engaged in self-initiated learning to compensate what was missing in formal education in order to pursue their interest. Olivia, for example, was active in learning about art after she completed university, and took lessons in photography, craft, and museum studies at Taipei Fine Art Museum. Similarly, Iris spoke of her interest being sparked by attending art courses at a community college after retiring, and she became an enthusiastic art learner since then. She commented:

If you ask when I truly enjoy art, start going to galleries, and taking courses, I'd say after retiring. (…) I attended a course on Western Art after retiring, and the instructor took us to see some exhibitions, so I started to enjoy it. I've signed up with all the art courses since then. (Iris, GT)

Similar finding was reported in Section 6.2.2.1 (art learning spaces): five participants in total reported benefiting from learning in informal learning spaces (nine, including those who engaged in art making at informal settings). These learning experiences were found to be particularly effective in deepening the interest.

6.2.3.3 Volunteering

Volunteering practice was described as an influence closely linked with access to resources in the museum setting, and the community of practice (Wenger 1998b) formed by museum volunteers. Volunteering was characterized by participants as drawing in a great deal of cultural resources and input. As discussed in Sections 6.2.1.2 (mentors) and 6.2.1.3 (peers), participants also benefited from connecting with members of the volunteer community, i.e. fellow volunteers and senior

volunteers, who played a role in building interest with the participants. Seven out of 14 participants, all of whom central participants, confirmed that volunteering gave them access to more cultural resources to deepen and expand an interest, and provided opportunities to connect with and learn from other people who shared similar interest, which was also considered a benefit. A typical example was Amy, who began volunteering with a specific interest in paintings, and expanded her interest to other parts of the museum collection, as she understood more about the collection. Meanwhile, Amy also mentioned that she developed deeper interest and learned from senior members of NPM volunteers (see Amy's quote in Section 6.2.1.2).

Another example was Mike. Devoting his time in volunteering after retiring, Mike discovered new perspectives of Chinese calligraphy. He stated:

It was until I joined in National Palace Museum that I learned to analyze why I like it (calligraphy). (…) Perhaps it was the way the brush was held, or the emotion of the calligrapher…before this, I responded to calligraphy by intuition. (Mike, GT)

It was clear that Mike interest was deepened by volunteering practice, which gave him a dual lens – that of a central member (museum volunteer) and the other of a peripheral member of the NPM community – when he encountered a piece of artwork (Abu-Shumays and Leinhardt 2002).

In addition, although participants volunteered for many different reasons, those mentioned included: to escape from routines, to make better use of time after retirement, and to have access to museum collection of interest, it was confirmed by participants that volunteering marked a new phase of interest development. As a practice, which required a greater extent of commitment, i.e. time, effort, and even money, engaging in volunteering can be understood as an indicator of a more developed interest.

6.2.3.4 Other art-related hobbies

Art-related hobbies referred to hobbies other than the already-mentioned subcategories in relationship with activities and practices. As mentioned in Sections 6.2.3.1 (creative practice) and 6.2.2.2 (museums and galleries), art making and museum visiting was already reported to have a direct impact on the developing of interest in art. It was found that 3 out of 14 participants spent their leisure time visiting museums when they were young students; and nine participants engaged in creative activities in their free time at art studios or on their own. Other art-related hobbies mentioned included reading, going to music performances and theaters (See Figure 6-8), watching films, and collecting.

Four out of 14 participants related reading to their interest. A strong relevance was found between the topics they read about and the type of art that interested them. For example, Sonya and Mike took pleasure reading Chinese classical literature (e.g. *The Peony Pavilion*), which they linked to Chinese aesthetics. June linked her interest with books about ancient cultures, i.e. Greek and Egyptian. The majority of the participants (11 out of 14) mentioned that they had engaged in broader fields of art, including literature, music, films, and theatre. Some of these art-related hobbies were also reflected in some of the items of interest listed by the participants. For example, both Elisa and Annie, who were concert goers and played music instruments, included music in their list of items of interest, and drew links with a general interest in European culture. Further inquiry needed to be made to clarify the relationship between interest in visual arts (the explanatory scope of my research) and interest in other art forms including literature, film, music, dance, and theater. However, my initial observation suggested that the majority of participants consumed or participated in broader forms of art in addition to visual arts.

Figure 6-8 A program of Taipei Art Festival contributed by Howard who has been active in taking part in performance art events (Photo by Carol Chung)

Collecting as a hobby was mentioned by Mike in Section 5.4. In Mike's case, collecting Chinese calligraphy pieces was an initiation of an interest in Chinese art, and led to further interest-driven engagement, such as studying calligraphy through self-initiated learning, and volunteering at NPM.

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6.2.3.5 Traveling

Traveling was an activity closely linked with museum visiting and the interest in art. Ten out of 14 participants mentioned traveling as an influence on interest. As studies of authentic experience suggested, traveling and museum visiting became intertwined and inseparable (Prentice 2001), and many participants mentioned that they had visited museums and galleries when traveling. Hence, traveling became a channel to access art and to develop an interest. A few participants confirmed their interest was sparked by museums or exhibitions when they traveled with family or on their own. A typical example was discussed in Section 6.2.1.1 (family), in which June, who traveled with her art-loving family since childhood, mentioned that her travel experiences opened the door to art for her. Similarly, Jane provided an example of engaging in cultural tourism. She reported that she developed a habit of including museum visits in her itinerary, particularly the renowned ones, when traveling abroad. She gave examples of visiting the Musée de l'Orangerie and the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. Traveling, in Jane's case, was an interest-driven pursuit that built her interest in European art.

Engagement in cultural tourism, according to Stebbins' (1996) discussion of serious leisure, was also seen as a form of liberal arts hobby within the framework of serious leisure, because of the enormous amount of effort and resources one had to invested in doing so. A typical example was found in Lisa's account, in which she mentioned that she developed her interest in contemporary art and architecture through several trips to Europe and Japan, where she almost followed a curriculum-like itinerary to construct her knowledge about art via seeing original artworks and buildings. Lisa's account also revealed a specific motivation/perceived value of museum visiting, which will be discussed in Section 6.4.

6.2.3.6 Work Practice

The majority of participants' occupations are irrelevant to art. Only 3 out of 14 participants touched upon their work practice when they were asked to elaborate the influence on interest. Lisa, for example, works as a freelance translator, and she confirmed that her work helped her develop knowledge about art through translating books about culture, history, and sometimes, art. Hence, Lisa considered her work having a positive impact on building her interest, giving her access and capacity that she believed essential to appreciate art. Mike and Sonya, however, gave examples of rather peripheral influence drawn from work practice. They both mentioned that they had traveled abroad for business and took advantage of these opportunities to visit museums and galleries. It can be inferred from the above examples that participants' occupation had relatively limited impact on interest in comparison with the other influences discussed in this section.

6.3 Resources

In this section, I continue to engage with my research question 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) by elaborating the second developmental dynamics of artistic interest – the resources. Resources are very relevant to the influences participants believed to have an impact on the developing of an interest. As the ecological perspective of learning pointed out that every context/setting identified as significant to the development of a given skill or knowledge (i.e. in a learning ecology) comprised of a unique configuration of resources, activities, and relationships (Barron 2006). Home setting, for example, could be understood as an intimate setting that provided both tangible and intangible resources such as an access to cultural goods, or a family learning culture that took place early in one's life. Hence, the resources in relationship with the context/setting that sustained participants' interest played a key role in understanding the pathway to art. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 5, the changing dynamics of accessing

resources, for example, an individual's seeking for cross-boundary resources, was also an important behavioral indicator for the study of a developing interest (Hidi and Renninger 2006). In the interviews and the online questionnaire, participants were asked to elaborate what they mobilized to sustain the interest in art, including the channel through which they obtained information, and the habits they developed when they accessed certain key resources as well.

Figure 6-9 shows the three categories of interest-related resources, which I characterized as the second dynamic of interest development. Under each category, items are listed as examples representing the category; for example, the category 'venue-based resources' can be further discussed by subcategories including museums, museum services, e.g. audio guide, talks and lectures, and structured courses associated with certain venue. The resources participants mentioned were categorized by: venue-based resources (Section 6.3.1), people as resources (Section 6.3.2), and distributed resources (Section 6.3.3).
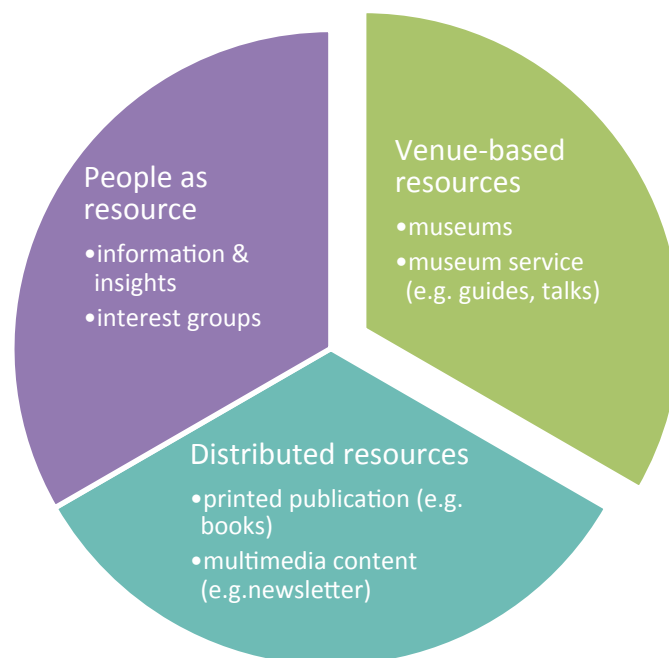
Figure 6-9 Categories of interest-related resources (GT)

6.3.1 Venue-based resources

In this section, I present the first category of resources, venue-based resources. Participants specified museums, museum-related services and facilities (e.g. affiliated libraries and guided tours), and courses and lectures provided by cultural and educational institutions (e.g. community college, and cultural foundation) as venue-based resources that were relevant to their interest and that they had access to.

6.3.1.1 Museums and galleries

Museums and galleries were mentioned as a key interest-related resource, and were highly appreciated by all 14 participants. This finding was not surprising since Section 6.2.2 pointed out that museums were considered an influence that supported the interest in various ways by several participants, and similarly, an obvious link was found between interests in museum collections and volunteering practice among central participants. Most participants also considered museums as an interest-related resource, and they confirmed that they used museum as an important channel for information about art and as an initial contact point for accessing artworks and artifacts that interested them.

Participants identified a number of museums and galleries in Taiwan that they considered a resource relevant to their interest. Those included National Palace Museum, National Museum of History, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, Ying-ge Ceramic Museum, and National Taiwan Museum of Art. In addition to that, a variety of international museums that aligned with participants' interest were also mentioned since many participants engaged in museum visiting while traveling (see Section 6.2.3). For example, Sonya and Jane stated in the following quotes that they saw museums as a resource to access specific artifacts and paintings they were interested in.

As student, I often went to National Palace Museum to see the snuff bottles and curio boxes because I had an affinity for these things. They were lovely and very easy to appreciate. (Sonya, GT)

I was certain that I went to Musée de l'Orangerie to see Monet when I went to Paris. Needless to say, I went to Musée d'Orsay too, and then Giverny where Monet completed many of his paintings. (Jane, GT)

These quotes also indicated a certain way of perceiving the value of museums among participants, which will be discussed in Section 6.4.

6.3.1.2 Museum-related service and facility

Museum libraries were considered a resource through which participants sought for knowledge about art to deepen an interest, and this was particularly found among the accounts of central participants. Five out of seven central participants mentioned that they considered access to libraries as essential to researching on the museum collection. Amy, for example, was a regular library user. She described the NPM library as 'containing all books about artifacts and art (…) specializing in the discipline of the arts'.

In addition to research purpose, participants also reported that they used the library to stay informed. For example, Lisa and Iris got into the habit of going to museum libraries to read for pleasure, and to be informed of the current art world. Both of them stated that they visited libraries affiliated with museums, e.g. library of Taipei Fine Arts Museum, and considered libraries places they visited to explore new artists or new topics in art either when they took a break from volunteer shift or when they visited an exhibition.

Eight out of 14 participants mentioned guided tour or audio guide as a museum-related resource they used when visiting museums. Among those who

tended to use these services, Eric, for example, considered guided tour and audio guide as means that served the purpose of orientation; they were informative and 'telling more stories about the artwork'. Rachel was a typical example. She regarded hiring audio guide as a way to gain more insights and to save time finding her way through the exhibition.

At the beginning I didn't think I need the audio guide (…) I started using them because I realized time past so fast when I wasn't listening to the guide. So, I listen to the guide if I can't spend too much time in an exhibition. (Rachel, GT)

Although audio guides were considered a resource that provided insights and background information by some participants, some considered audio guides interfering and 'directive', as Lisa pointed out, so they tended to avoid using these services. For central participants, audio guide and guided tour were also seen as a learning resource, and they used it to enhance guiding skills. Amy and Howard, for example, gave guided tours when they volunteered, and they both mentioned that they joined other volunteers' guided tours to enhance guiding practices.

6.3.1.3 Courses and lectures

Courses and lectures provided by institutions such as museums, cultural foundations, community colleges and universities, were considered a venue-based resource that enhanced participants' interest. Courses and lectures may vary in forms; those mentioned by participants included structured courses, lectures and talks, and practical workshops.

Five out of seven participants reported that structured courses at universities and community colleges were considered a learning resource they used to deepen the knowledge about particular topics of interest. Structured courses were often seen as a support in addition to volunteer training at the museum. Amy was a typical

example. She explained in the quote below that she attended a Chinese art course at a university to support her volunteering practice.

I wouldn't miss the lectures at National Palace Museum. But, you want to learn more, so you're motivated to attend courses at universities. It's quite common among us volunteers, especially things about Chinese art. We would go to National Taiwan Normal University. (Amy, GT)

Similar examples were also found in peripheral participants' accounts; for example, as discussed in Section 6.2.3.2 (formal and informal learning settings), peripheral participants such as Olivia and Elisa reported that they engaged in courses to develop their interest.

Lectures and talks provided by museums or cultural foundations were considered less structured and catered for a more diverse public. Seven out of 14 participants, both central and peripheral, reported going to lectures organized by cultural foundations or museums and are open to general public. For example, Iris mentioned that she regularly attended lectures at the Fubon Art Foundation, a non-profit cultural foundation affiliated with the Fubon Group (a financial holding company), which had organized series of lecture open to general public and free of charge. In addition, central participants mentioned lectures that were designed exclusively for volunteers before launching an exhibition as part of volunteer training, and these were highly appreciated (see Amy's quote above) and reported as a significant source of information. The lectures were also considered an opportunity to see the behind-the-scene processes through meeting curators and artists, so as to better understand key themes and artworks, as noted by Lisa and Howard.

Finally, two participants, Olivia and June, reported having attended practical workshops organized by museums, e.g. Taipei Fine Art Museum and Museum of Contemporary Art. These workshops were dedicated to crafts, which can be considered analogous to drawing and painting lessons that some participants undertook at art studios.

6.3.2 People as resources

In this section, I present the second category, people as resources, which is based on the relationships and connections participants build with certain people they came across in their pathway to art, e.g. fellow volunteers, capable friends, and fellow students, as I already discussed in Section 6.2.1. Making use of these relationships and connections were considered to help gather information about a topic of interest, to gain insights and opinions, or to build up an interest.

As discussed in Section 6.2.1, peers were reported as an important influence on the development of interest. In a similar way, 11 out of 14 participants valued their interaction with these people, and considered these interactions an important resource for the information, insights and opinions they gained. For example, participants reported that they benefited from information shared by words of mouth from trusted peers. Mike was a typical example. He gathered information about the quality of books that he intended to read by exchanging opinions with fellow volunteers. Furthermore, with the help of web technology, circulating interest-related information among peers had moved onto virtual platforms.

Six out of 14 participants confirmed their memberships of online interest groups, e.g. a closed group on Facebook where opinions and information about events and exhibitions were circulated and exchanged. Amy, for example, ran a group on Facebook (See Figure 6-10). She and the other members, most of whom were young professionals working in software industry, shared posts about exhibitions, lecture, talks, and volunteer recruits on this group page. Interactions around the posts had been active; the post shown in Figure 6-10 elicited 11 responses relevant to the talk or the exhibition. Another example was found in Iris' account, in which she reported that she was a member of a self-motivated interest group called 'the art appreciation club'. The club consisted of fellow students with whom Iris attended art courses at a community college, and its members regularly visited exhibitions together. She considered the club a resource, because she learned from knowledgeable peers when they exchanged opinions in exhibitions. Hence, interest groups were

understood as a resource, through which interest was built and deepened by engaging in certain activities (book reading and exhibition visiting) and by interactions among members.

Figure 6-10 Amy's interest group ('Exhibitions are fun') on Facebook; top post was an advertisement for a talk: the Rise and Fall of Qin Dynasty', which was part of the Terra Cotta Warrior Special Exhibition held at the National Palace Museum in between May and August 2016 (Photo by Carol Chung)

6.3.3 Distributed resources

In this section, I present the third category, distributed resources, which referred to contents delivered through various media, for example, through publication in print, the multimedia, and the Internet. Those mentioned by participants included print publications (e.g. books, magazine, newspaper), online contents (e.g. websites, newsletters), and the multimedia (e.g. TV and radio

programs).

6.3.3.1 Print publications

Twelve out of 14 participants reported that they used print publications as a resource for acquiring information about art, and for events and exhibitions. In close examination, 10 out of 14 participants reported books as a resource; books that were mentioned included art books about styles (see Figure 6-11), biographies of artists, and exhibition catalogues (See Figure 6-12). Five out of 14 participants reported magazines, e.g. *Ceramic Art (陶藝雜誌), Cultural Express* (文化快遞) and newspapers, e.g. Post (破報) as a resource; however, magazines and newspapers were considered leisure reading material or as a sourcing tool for art news and events. For example, *Cultural Express* and the *Post* were specified by participants as common sources of information about art and cultural events, and they were highly accessible. Journals were considered a more specialized type among the print publications participants mentioned, and they were only mentioned by central participants who used journals mainly for research purpose, e.g. *National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art* (故宮文物月刊).

Furthermore, participants' identity as central or peripheral participants seemed to reflect their choices of printed publications of different nature. It was found that peripheral participants used books or journals less often to explore a topic of interest, whereas all central participants mentioned reading books or journals as a prioritized channel when they wanted to find out about art. The ways participants prioritized certain resources are discussed in later sections.
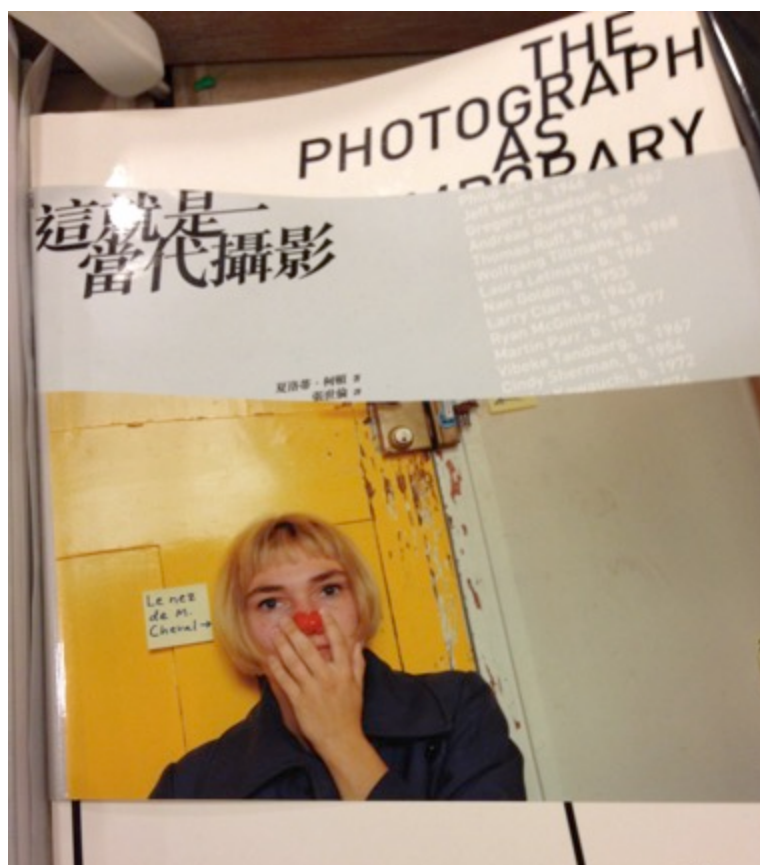
Figure 6-11 Lynn's copy of a reference book about contemporary photography (Photo by Carol Chung)
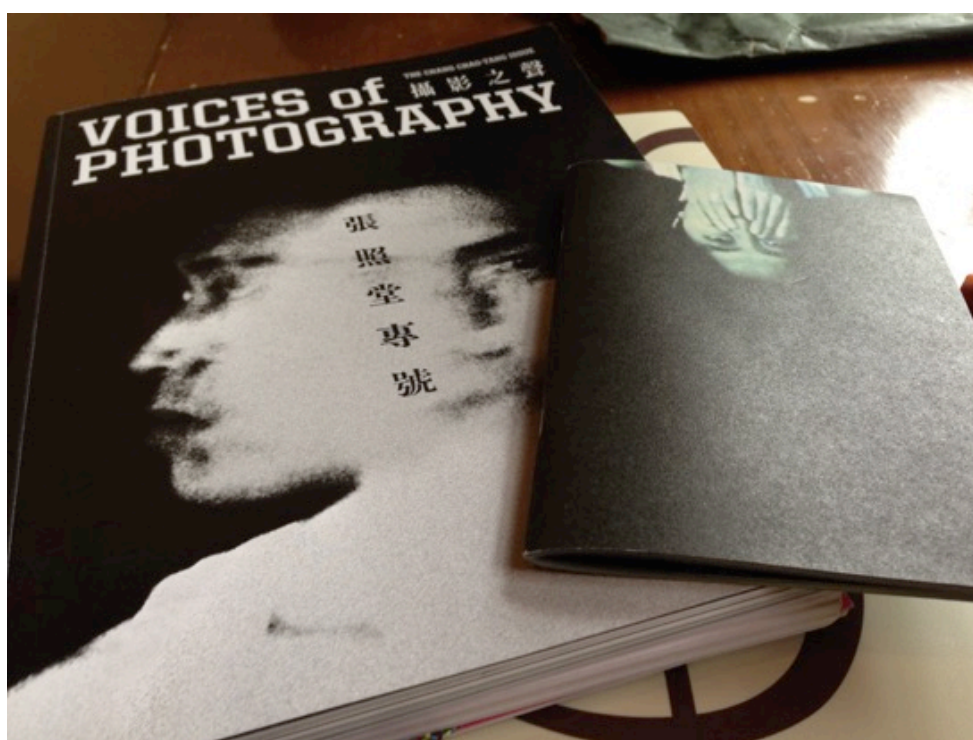
Figure 6-12 Lisa's copy of an exhibition catalogue (Photo by Carol Chung)

An interesting link was found, in Mike's account, between the use of print publications and collecting practice. Mike owned an extensive collection of catalogues of Chinese calligraphy and brush paintings by different dynasties and by different artists. He considered these catalogues not only the collectibles in his collecting practice, but also a significant resource for understanding Chinese calligraphy systematically. Elisa, who took up an interest in the art market recently, also commented that buying books at museum shops was part of the museum experience. In this sense, books and catalogues acquired a new meaning as a souvenir of the visit, and it was no longer remained simply a source of information.

6.3.3.2 Online contents

Online contents referred to the content that participants accessed via the Internet. The Internet was unanimously reported as an important and convenient tool to access such content by all of the 14 participants, although not all of them considered themselves adept in exploiting internet-based tools. The most frequently mentioned Internet-based tool was the search engine, e.g. Google, which was used to check practical information. Four out of 14 participants reported that they subscribed to newsletters of museums, or received newsfeeds and updates from fans pages on the Internet. Three central participants also used online database and online encyclopedia, e.g. Wikipedia to look for information. However, although participants were found to make extensive use of online contents, they also addressed the issue of credibility. For example, Sonya pointed out that one should only use the web to check general knowledge (e.g. how Chinese characters are pronounced), and should always verify the information before using. It can be inferred that some participants, especially central participants, showed concern for the accuracy of online contents.

As discussed in Section 6.3.2, social media sites were widely used as a virtual platform to facilitate interest groups. Six out of 14 participants reported using social

media to, for example, share and gather information.

With the help of advancing technology, distance learning via computer network was made possible and gained popularity in recent years. One participant, in particular, mentioned that she became a user of 'Coursera', an online course platform, which she used to learn history.

6.3.3.3 Multimedia

Four out of 14 participants reported that they watched art programs on TV, or listened to art programs on radio or podcast. Among them, two participants mentioned programs about architecture and Chinese ceramics on TV, and two mentioned radio programs about art. The majority participants did not consider TV or radio as a resource, but many reported that TV was channel of information about exhibitions, because they often saw advertisements of exhibitions on TV. Advertisements of exhibitions were often distributed through newspaper and magazines, banners on the street, and they appeared on people's daily essentials: the web and the TV. It seemed that advertisements had penetrated so many aspects of our life through multimedia that it had become impossible to miss the launching of a new blockbuster. This phenomenon was, in part, an effect caused by the intertwining relationship between blockbuster exhibitions and their sponsors, which predominantly were media companies in Taiwan.

6.3.4 Prioritizing resources

A broad range of resources that were found relevant to specific venues, people, and media was reported by the participants. Some links were found between the way participants prioritized certain resources and the characteristics of participants. Prioritizing resources can be understood as an interpretation of the value of certain resources, and this was found in 9 out of 14 participants' accounts. By placing more

value on one resource over the other, one reflected the role or learning identity in relation to art (Bell et al. 2009). For example, when seeking text-based resources, some participants, especially central participants, prioritized books over the other print publications. On the contrary, peripheral participants did the opposite. Rachel, for example, considered art books 'for professionals' and 'too deep' for her. It can be inferred that some participants tended to associate books with expertise, which they obviously considered themselves falling outside of this category. In other words, peripheral participants framed themselves as non-expert art enthusiasts by drawing a line to differentiate themselves from experts through their choice of interest-related resource. However, there were exceptions.

Museums, clearly, appeared to be prioritized by the majority of participants, and this was because of the participants were recruited as art enthusiasts who frequent museums and galleries. Particularly, among the four participants who engage in guiding, museums were prioritized and considered a resource center where they had access to most of the resources they deemed important. This, again, reflected participants' identity as museum guide, and drew a connection between resources and identity building. The other participants saw museums in a less integrated sense, and they tended not to stress the connection with a particular museum. It can be inferred that these participants framed themselves as avid explorers of museum rather than advocates of a specific one.

6.4 Values and motivations

In this section, I present findings regarding the third developmental dynamics of interest, the perceived values. I engage with the research question: and 'what is the role of museum in the development of interest?' (RQ2) by looking into the values participants developed towards museums and galleries. I have discussed the role of museum in relation to interest in the preceding sections, in which I examined museums through the lens of seeing museum visiting as an influence on interest development, and as an interest-related resource. As discussed in Section 6.2.2,

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museums were identified as places that had an influence on participants' interest under various circumstances and at different life stages. Similarly, as discussed in Section 6.3.1, museums were considered as rich resources, and were appreciated for their offerings, i.e. the libraries, guided tours, lecture programs etc. Hence, this section further explores the generic roles of museum, as in how museums are perceived (what values museums convey) and how that motivates participants to engage with art. This approach to motivation was informed by Macdonald (1995), whose notion of 'cultural itinerary', treated motivation as part of the sociocultural pattern of their life.
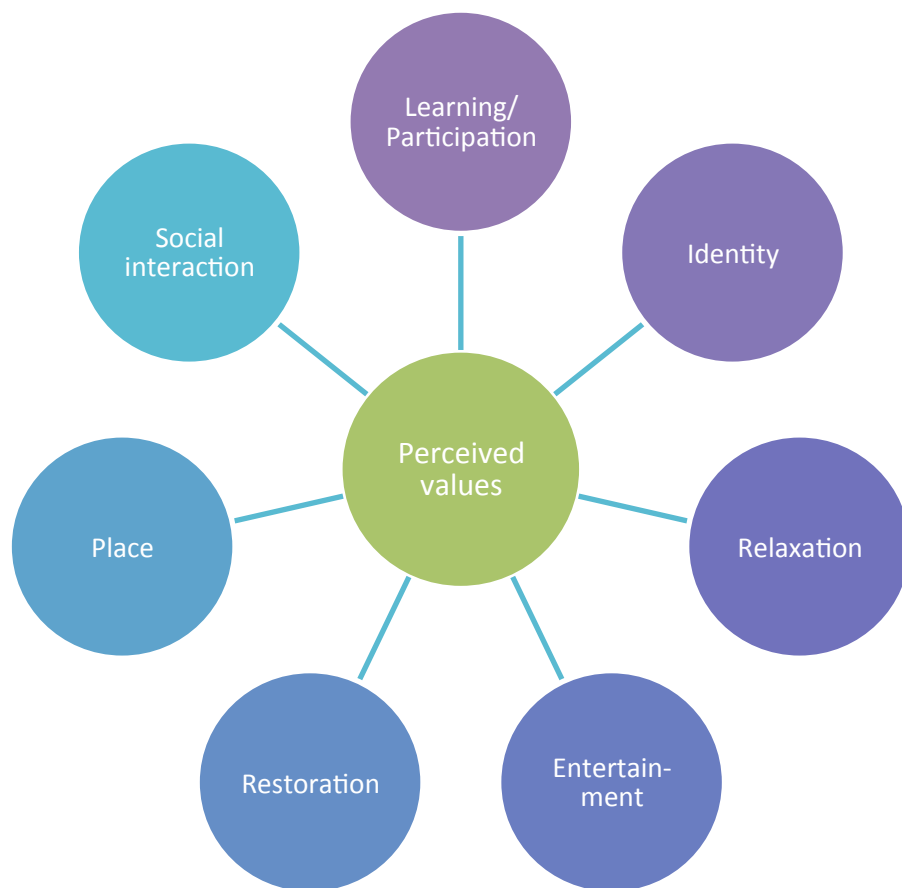
Figure 6-13 Categories of perceived values (GT)

Figure 6-13 shows seven categories relevant to the perceived values of museums. They are: learning/participation, relaxation, entertainment, restoration, place, social, and identity. Some of the categories are data-driven (e.g. learning,

relaxation, entertainment, social), and others are informed by motivation studies (e.g. place, identity, restoration) reviewed in Chapter 3. In the following five sections, Section 6.4.1 to Section 6.4.5, I discuss each category with examples.

6.4.1 Learning/participation

Learning was a major data-driven category found across 12 out of 14 participants. In this category, participants acknowledged museum's value for education and learning, and provided examples in which they visited museums to 'learn new things', to 'acquire knowledge', and to satisfy their desire to learn about a specific topic. Examples were found both among central and peripheral participants. Mike, for example, perceived the museum and its collection as a learning space. Knowing from a friend that the Academia Sinica[4] had a collection of oracle bones on display, Mike stated, 'I asked my friend to arrange two visits so I could see the oracle bones. It was a very special circumstance'. Similar statements that conveyed an emphasis on the specific content of exhibitions also revealed that participants perceived museums as educational spaces. Participants also made general comments on the educational value of museums. For example, Eric considered the museum a valuable place because of its educational value, and he said, 'I think it's a place where one can gain insights, and learn something. To me it's an important venue for learning'. This category was also found in Macdonald's (1995) work (as 'education'), and Moussouri and Roussos' (2013) work (as 'education/participation').

Moreover, motivation for learning provided the rationale that further explained participants' focus on exhibition, and their use of museum facilities and services, e.g. audio guide and guided tours. Howard, for example, often went to museums and participated in guided tours with a view to learning from the exhibition and guiding techniques. He stated, 'I can make reference to the way they [museum guides]

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[4] Academia Sinica is Taiwan's national academy supporting research in a wide variety of disciplines. The collection of Chinese oracle bones Mike mentioned belongs to the Museum of the Institute of History and Philology.

contextualized the issues and explained the techniques in the tours when I guide'. This finding aligned with Moussouri and Roussos (2013), whose work confirmed the link between visitor's education/participation motivation and visitor's visiting strategy.

The educational value of museums was also found to appear in social setting, providing a rationale that explained the consideration of peers as both an influence and a trusted resource, as discussed in the preceding sections. For example, Iris shared an experience of visiting the exhibition *Renoir and Painters of the Twentieth Century* with a knowledgeable friend. She said, 'she [the knowledgeable friend] would go into depth, so after listening to her introduction, I feel like I've been to an exhibition plus a lecture'. Iris' example not only confirmed her perception of museum as educational, but it was also an example of a satisfying 'cognitive experience' (Pekarik, Doering and Karn 1999).

Furthermore, 4 out of 14 participants identified the educational value of museums by actively participating in the museum as a volunteer to promote the educational value of museums. This was only found in four central participants who undertook guiding, and the value was strongly associated with participants' identity as museum guides. It was not found in the accounts of central participants who did not engage in guiding as part of their volunteering practice. Participants who demonstrated this motivation considered the museum an educational place where education took place, and they tended to engage visitors in the visit, with a view of enhancing the insights people gained from visiting the museum, or changing people's ideas about museums. In other words, they considered museum educational, and wanted to play an active part in communicating this value to the public.

On the one hand, as museum volunteers, Amy, Howard, Sonya and Mike wanted to bring in more people to appreciate the museum and to 'open a window for visitors' through guiding. Howard, for example, expressed that he intended 'to bring more people's attention to social issues' using his approach (as a guide). On the other hand, as visitors, these participants also enacted their dual role – a guide and a visitor – when they visited museums with friends or family, and they tended to

participate actively in the visit; for example, they engaged in activities such as joining in guided tours or going to a lecture in addition to visiting an exhibition. A typical example was found in Sonya's experience of visiting the museum with her niece. She said that they 'always hired the audio guide, and listened attentively'. Amy also gave example of visiting the museum with friends, and encouraging her friends to join the guided tour and attend a lecture about the exhibition after visiting.

6.4.2 Relaxation, entertainment, restoration

Three categories related with leisure were found across 9 out of 14 participants. Participants described situations when they visited the museum for various leisure-related reasons: to relax, to have fun in one's free time, or to feel recharged. Hence, these categories, 'relaxation', 'entertainment', and 'restoration', referred to the perception of museum visiting as leisure that relaxed, entertained or restored the participants from daily routines. What these situations had in common was that positive emotions were frequently mentioned in participants' statements; terms like 'pleasant', 'relaxing', and 'comfortable' were found characterizing the statements.

The first category, relaxation, was data-driven. Six out of 14 participants pointed out the museum as a relaxing space. For example, Jane described the museum as a space where one can relax. Specific terms that referred to the physical properties of the museum were found relevant to the category of relaxation. For example, Iris and Sonya both used 'having high ceilings' to describe museum space in which they felt relaxed and comfortable upon entering. Museums providing a comfortable environment seemed to an important factor contributing to the perception of museums as relaxing spaces, and this aligned with the work of Packer (2008) and Slater (2007).

The second category, entertainment, was data-driven as well. As discussed in Section 6.2.3, visiting museums was considered an activity some participants undertook in their spare time. Five out of 14 participants perceived the museum as a place to have fun in their spare time. Annie, for example, considered museum

visiting a leisure activity, and seeing artwork an activity to have fun and to feel great. She commented:

(…) Art, to me, is very subjective. When you see something appealing, it does something good to you, and you have fun and feel great about it. So, it's [visiting museums] a kind of leisure. (Annie, GT)

The third category, restoration, was informed by Packer's (2008) study. The category referred to the perception of museum visiting as restoring and recharging, and relieving workplace stress. Two out of 14 participants, Sonya and Amy, both dealing with long working hours and stress, described the museum as a place where they feel recharged and refreshed. Amy, for example, said, 'it's a space where I can breathe'; and Sonya stated that museums 'bring in fresh air', which took her mind away from the stress at work. These accounts were aligned with Packer's (2008) discussion on the restorative elements of museum experience, such as 'being unhurried' or 'being away'.

6.4.3 Place

The category, place, was informed by Macdonald's (1995) study, which also influenced Moussouri and Roussos' (2013) research. The category referred to the value of museum as an attraction or a destination where one visited in the following contexts: to experience a specific culture; to see something, e.g. specific collection of museum objects. Twelve out 14 participants considered museum's value as an attraction or cultural destination. This category was also closely linked with traveling, which was discussed in Section 6.2.3 as a significant influence on participants' interest.

Nine out of 14 participants considered museums as cultural destinations with cultural value, and they described situations when they visited the museum to gain insights about a particular culture represented by the museum. Museums as cultural

destinations were closely linked with cultural tourism and the practice of traveling, which many participants considered an interest-driven practice, as discussed in Section 6.2.3. For example, Lynn recently visited Tokyo and Kyoto several times, and she spent a great deal of time visiting museums about Japanese culture (e.g. Museum of Kyoto), and Ukiyo-e art[5] (e.g. Ukiyo-e Ōta Memorial Museum of Art), which she believed provided the background knowledge for understanding Japanese art. Eric provided another example. He reported that he would visit museums that represented the culture and history of a given city or country. He stated:

If I plan to travel to a place, I would look for galleries that are representative or special (…) for example, I went to Barcelona last year, and there was a special museum in a small town nearby, so I organized to spend a day there. (Eric, GT)

This perception of museums aligned with Stebbins' (1996) work, in which he argued that cultural tourism was considered a form of liberal arts hobby within the framework of serious leisure. Visiting museums as cultural destination was seen as a manifestation of hobbyist interest in cultural tourism, in which considerable effort was dedicated to planning and researching in order to appreciate the culture represented by museums.

Eight out of 14 participants further elaborated that they perceived museums as an attraction because museums provided the opportunity to access authentic museum objects. These participants mentioned that they visited museums to see something specific; for example, participants visited museums because they were attracted by specific works or art or artifacts in the collection, or they wished to have firsthand contact with the objects. This perception was linked with cultural tourism for its object-centered appreciation. June, for example, found seeing artifacts in museums fascinating. She valued the museum for providing an opportunity to 'understand the ways of living in the past by presenting the artifact they used, and their meanings', which was an example of addressing the 'numinous experience', an

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[5] Ukiyo-e refers to a traditional art form (woodblock painting) developed in Japan.

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experience of connecting to the past through museum objects, as discussed by Cameron and Gatewood (2003).

Furthermore, a clear focus on object appreciation was found in Lisa's account. Lisa, who traveled specifically to see museum collections, stressed that she was amazed by the quality of artwork when talking about her recent trip to Bilbao, Spain. In her trip, she visited the Guggenheim Museum and the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, and she stated, 'they [the museums] had very good collection and great exhibition, especially some important works of Spanish Modernism', and 'it's been quite long since I saw some very good Picassos'. As noted by Pekarik, Doering and Karn (1999), object played a central role in triggering a satisfying museum experience. Lisa's example illustrated well a fascination for specific museum objects, and a satisfying 'object experience' in the museum setting.

In addition, among the participants who perceived the museum as an attraction for seeing specific object, having first-hand experience of artworks and artifacts was in fact, the main attraction. As noted by Prentice (2001), visiting museum was a unique and authentic experience in which one could appreciate the true greatness of a piece of artwork. Amy was a typical example. She valued the museum for offering the opportunity to encounter original artworks, which she considered a unique experience much superior than seeing replicas. She commented:

(…) You can only understand how great some masterpieces are when you pay an actual visit. For example, Mona Lisa, the original work definitely excels any replica or prints. You can only see how outstanding it is in terms of the colors, layers and composition when you are in front of it. (Amy, GT)

The perception of the museum as a cultural destination and attraction put participants' use of museums as an interest-related resource in a wider context, in particular that of cultural tourism. The extent to which participants made an effort to engage in cultural tourism and to seek an experience of authentic objects can also be seen as an indication of a more developed interest.

6.4.4 Social interaction

The category, social interaction, was data-driven, and referred to the value of museum in terms of social interaction. Six out of 14 participants valued the museum for providing an environment to socialize with people. Lynn, for example, stated, 'it's [the museum] a place where I can spend time with friends sharing similar interest'. As addressed in Section 6.4.1, this value was found to co-exist with the other values, such as learning, and participants often engaged in learning with friends or family in museum, where they acted as a facilitator or as a member of a social group. For example, Sonya stated that she often took her niece to see exhibitions, and therefore, museum visiting was often a social event, in which she and her niece enjoyed learning together because they 'always hired the audio guide, and listened attentively'; learning while spending time with family did not appear to contradict each other in Sonya's case. Other studies also suggested that motivations did not exclude each other, and tended to co-exist (e.g. Moussouri and Roussos 2013). Museum's value for social interaction was also found in Pekarik, Doering and Karn's (1999) satisfying experience framework, in which they considered social experience a type of satisfying museum experience.

6.4.5 Identity building

The category, identity building, was a theory-informed category, and was established on the relationship between museums and identity; it referred to museum's value in terms of satisfying people's identity needs, which Falk (2008) and Rounds (2006) both discussed in their work. Two identity-related perceptions emerged in participants' accounts. First, museum visiting was considered a self-reflecting experience, and this was similar to what Moussouri and Roussos (2013) characterized as 'introspection' (the need to self-reflect), or what Pekarik, Doering and Karn (1999) described as 'introspective experience'. One participant reported her museum experience as self-reflection that was evoked by looking at art in the

museum. In the quote below, Rachel considered museum visiting relaxing, and she stated that visiting art museums, specifically, was also a self-reflecting experience in which she was invited to contemplate over her life through looking at art.

(…) A place where one can stare into space. And there are lots of beautiful things, usually interwoven with meanings. (…) Many artworks invite you to reflect on your life, so you see yourself in them, and easily you start contemplating. (Rachel, GT)

Rachel's account was an example of perceiving the museum as a place for 'identity work', a process, noted by Rounds (2006), through which one constructed, and maintained personal identity by browsing in the museum. A similar example was found in Amy's account. She stated that she and many of her friends engaged with art in order to 'find the missing piece in life', after which the self would be complete. Speaking for her group of friends working in the software and technology industry, Amy stressed the need to build an identity through pursuing something their career could not offer, and they found it in art and especially in visiting art exhibitions.

Two participants also perceived museum visiting as an identity-building opportunity. Sonya, whose job was to manage high-end customers, reported that her involvement in museum enhanced her identity as a capable manager. She stated that being associated with the museum gained her a reputation for being well-versed in art; this gave extra credit to her career in managing customer relationships. In other words, Sonya's perception of museums could be seen as a functionalist version of the value of social interaction discussed in Section 6.4.4.

Following this, museum visiting could be a means of developing social capital, and Amy provided another example in which she created a self-image through museum visiting, and associated herself with a certain social group. Amy had been running an interest group on Facebook, which was consisted of friends who enjoyed visiting art exhibitions. She confirmed the museum's value for social interaction, seeing museum as a place 'to spend good moments with friends (...) a way of extending interpersonal relationship'. Furthermore, Amy also considered museum

visiting a 'self-branding technique'. She commented:

(…) you create an image of yourself, giving people the impressions of being a student of arts and culture, and well-bred. Your immersing in this kind of environment [museums] gives you a higher social position. So, you're branding yourself. (Amy, GT)

Amy's statement pointed out museum's value in terms of helping her create self-images, and acquiring social capital through her extensive use of social media site (Facebook) as a tool to maintain this self-image. Amy's example was also an illustration of the flow between social and cultural capital in the sense that she made use of her cultural capital to acquire more social capital. Museums provided a channel for developing cultivated dispositions that facilitated social attraction through drawing clients of high socioeconomic status closer, or forging an image of arts and culture enthusiasts.

To summarize, this section presents participants' perceived values of museum. Be it to experience a specific culture, to enhance one's knowledge, to share the interest with people, to relax, to experience authentic objects, to self-reflect, or to participate actively in museum communication, these values also reflected museum's influence on artistic interest, and participants' use of museum as a resource to build an artistic interest.

6.5 Phases

In this section, I resume to engage with my research question: 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) and I attempt to reflect on what I have discussed in the preceding sections, namely, the influences on artistic interest, the interest-related resources, and the generic roles of museums in art enthusiasts' life, with a view to delineate the developmental phases of artistic interest. Initially, I have discussed the phases of interest development in Chapter 5, where I presented four unique pathways in detail, and together with the other ten participants' pathways I

created a model (see Section 5.6 and Figure 5-6) showing the processes through which artistic interest was initiated, maintained and deepened, and eventually stabilized. This model is again presented in Figure 6-14.

Figure 6-14 Developmental phases of artistic interest (GT)

Art enthusiasts experienced different pathways, where different influences, resources, and values intersected, making each pathway unique. However, these pathways were characterized by common phases, beginning with how interest was initiated, explored and maintained, and finally, developed into a stable form, as Figure 6-14 below depicts. From Section 6.5.1 to Section 6.5.4, I discuss the common phases of interest development, drawing from the accounts of 14 art enthusiasts in GT.

Furthermore, it was found that as participants went through different phases of interest development, they came to realize how central art was to them, and actively built and enhanced their identity as an art enthusiast; they were made aware of their own interest, and took initiative in developing the interest. Hence, upon reflecting on the pathways to art, the issue of identity and self-development emerged. I discuss the developing of identity, which was highlighted in the processes of interest development in Section 6.5.5.

6.5.1 Initiating phase

The initiating phase referred to the initiation of artistic interest. Three general observations were relevant to the initiating phase. First of all, the initiating phase could appear at different point of time in art enthusiasts' life. In some cases, the

initiating phase came as early as in participants' childhood or adolescence (early pathways, see Section 5.6), which was seen in Lisa (see Section 5.1) and Rachel's (see Section 5.2) cases. In other cases, this phase emerged in early adulthood, or as late as after retirement (late pathways, see Section 5.6). Mike's (see Section 5.4) case was, again, an example of interest initiated after his career matured and having the economic resource to collect (although not in grand scale).

Secondly, the initiating phase took place in different settings, where interest was sparked by certain object, activity, or event, and sometimes with the support from certain people such as parents or teachers. As discussed in Chapter 5, examples included an encounter with museum catalogues in history class at school (see Section 5.1), or an occasional visit to a gallery out of curiosity, and plus an unexpected opportunity to participate in a guided tour (see Section 5.3). Moreover, among the 14 participants, interest was found to be stimulated and built by influences in the context of homes (e.g. family activities), formal learning environment (e.g. schools) with guidance of schoolteachers, and in informal learning environment (e.g. art studios, museums, and community colleges) as well. Participants were found to engage in lessons and school assignments, to undertake creative practices (sometime encouraged by family at young age), or to come across an interesting exhibition in a museum. Some of these influences particularly derive from interactions with certain group of people, e.g. family members and mentors who contributed in shaping the interest by facilitating the activities mentioned above.

Taking a closer look, among the 14 art enthusiasts in this group about two-third (9 out of 14) had their initiating phase relatively early in life. Nine participants demonstrated relatively early pathways. These participants had opportunities to engage in art as youngsters. Some shared experiences engaging in creative practices or museum visiting as a child, usually supported by parents or other family members; others were sparked interest in school lessons or school projects, with the help of supportive teaching figures. Family activities, creative practice, school activities, and positive early museum experiences were found to be the common characteristics

among the pathways of these participants. This finding resonated with the studies of early pathways in science (Crowley et al. 2015), in which, similar developmental dynamics (the role of father, school and out-of-school activities, such as boy scout or museum club) were mentioned.

One-third of the group (5 out of 14) demonstrated relatively late pathways. These participants gave quite a variety of reasons why they went into art as a mature adult, or in some cases, after retirement. The initial opportunities that triggered the interest among these participants included inspiring art courses (as a way to organize one's time after retirement), interesting exhibitions (as a leisure, or social events with friends), and their own collecting practice. In these opportunities, key influences seemed to come from the activities and practices participants engaged in doing at leisure on their own or with social groups; and supportive figures that had an impact on interest tended to be peers rather than parents or teachers.

In addition, age seemed to play a role in the initiating phase. Older participants seemed to engage in their pursuit of interest later in their life; of the five participants who have late pathways, three of them were over 50, and they shared similar experience growing up in a social milieu in which educational system was more rigid and cultural participation was limited and under-valued (see Section 6.2). This explained why these participants did not tend to emphasize influences drawn from home, school, or engaging in museum visiting and creative practice when they talked about the initiation of interest.

Finally, the initiating phase could also appear lacking specific environmental stimuli, i.e. an object, an event, or a 'push' from certain people. As Rachel's example showed, early exposure to art through childhood creative practice forged an interest (see Section 5.2), and was what kept one on the path even though one had interrupted pursuing the interest for a few years. The triggering process discussed in interest research (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006) was in fact, very implicit in some participants' accounts, because, in many cases, interests were initiated by early but long-term exposure to art. This was not an issue of the triggering process being ephemeral and unexpected, as noted by Renninger and Bachrach (2015); rather, this

could be due to the difference of research aim and setting. The fact that artistic interest was found to build and take influence from across various contexts (e.g. homes, classrooms, art studios, museums) and developed over a rather long period of time made it futile to limit the discussion to environmental stimuli.

In brief, the initiating phase was mainly characterized by the emergence of artistic interest, which was found, in many cases, to appear in participants' childhood or adolescence, mediated by family or school activities; in other cases, participants interest was initiated when they matured and met with other people who may have as much influence as family or school did. It can be inferred from the above-mentioned examples that the key contexts that initiated artistic interest included: family, school, or other social settings, with the mediation of family members, mentors, and peers in forms of leisure activities, creative practices, formal or informal learning. The initiating phase was then followed by the maintaining phase, in which more effort is made to pursue the interest.

6.5.2 'A-ha' moment

The 'a-ha' moment, a specific moment when participants came to realize their own interest, was characterized as a key moment that appeared after the initiating phase, before participants moved onto maintaining an existing interest. The 'a-ha' moment was characterized by individuals being unaware of the fact that they had been attracted by certain things or activities out of interest for an extended period of time; the individuals later began to notice the effect and the meaning derived from what attracted them, and then came to realize that they had an interest. This finding aligned with Renninger and Su's (2012) work, in which they argued learners may be aware of the role of interest until later phases, and that what they characterized as 'reflective awareness' may or may not involve in the development of interest.

Looking across all of the pathways in GT, the 'a-ha' moment was only found in the accounts of two participants. A typical example demonstrating the moment was Mike. As discussed in Section 5.4, Mike stated that he did not remember vividly how

his interest in Chinese calligraphy was initiated, but he was certain that he began buying calligraphy replicas from time to time since his career matured. For Mike, these replicas were 'eye-pleasing, and that's all'. The 'a-ha' moment, according to Mike, took place when he noticed, and was surprised by the fact that he had accumulated a small collection over the years, which made him realize his interest in calligraphy. In other words, Mike's interest was initiated as he began buying replicas, but it was until he had a reflective awareness of his interest that his collecting practice gained new meaning as an interest-driven pursuit. Hence, as Mike depicted, his interest developed rather 'unknowingly' (in the initiating phase), and he only took his collecting practice further until he was aware of his strong interest in Chinese art.

A similar example was found in Olivia's case. Olivia found out about her interest in art after she started her career as a university graduate. What made Olivia's 'a-ha' moment emerge was that she started to have the freedom to explore things, and, according to Olivia, she was made aware that art and museums made her happy after a few attempts. As discussed earlier in Section 6.5.1, both Mike and Olivia grew up in the 1950s and 1960s, and they shared similar experience being educated in a more rigid system with limited opportunity to be exposed to art and culture. Hence, in Olivia's case, a contrast emerged between feeling restricted at school and being given freedom to explore what she really liked after leaving school, which, I argue, could be a prompt for the 'a-ha' moment.

6.5.3 Maintaining phase

The maintaining phase referred to the maintaining of an emerging interest, and was characterized by the participants beginning to build their interest in various ways. Three observations were found relevant to this phase. First, in the maintaining phase, participants began to seek for more opportunity to re-engage with art, and reached out for more resources. A typical example discussed in Chapter 5 was Howard's making subsequent visits to MOCA, and his seeking opportunity to reengage in contemporary art by joining in MOCA as volunteer where he was able to

find more resources related with contemporary art (see Section 5.3). Repeated engagement, as many interest researcher noted (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006 and Schiefele 2001), was the main characteristic of the maintaining phase of a situational interest. This also aligned with Barron's (2006) key finding that people developed and created learning opportunities for themselves once they became interested.

Secondly, in the maintaining phase, participants tended to seek for resources and opportunities across different settings, and Lisa was a typical example, as discussed in Section 5.1. Lisa's interest was sparked in history class, and after that she began exploring her interest in an out-of-school setting by visiting the National Museum of History near her school. Moreover, looking across the 14 art enthusiasts, the opportunities they sought after the initiating phase included a great deal of art-related activities and practices that were often found different from the original settings in which interest was initiated. To name a few, participants engaged in out-of-school learning, pursued formal education, attended art courses, paid more visits to museums, went traveling, and looked into books; all of these could be seen as interest-driven pursuits to sustain artistic interest. This observation, again, supported Barron's (2006) self-initiated knowledge acquisition strategies, in which she gave examples of cross-setting learning opportunities that students created to sustain their interest in computer.

Furthermore, participants were found to go after resources that were, in particular, associated with cultural institutions, i.e. museums, art studios, universities, community colleges, and distributed resources, i.e. books, as well. Hence, influences associated with cultural institutions, and art-related activities seemed to play key roles in this phase. These influences, rather than serving as triggers, were found to deepen the interest. For example, Iris, after being inspired by an art course at a community college, signed up for more art courses and actively participated in gallery visits to deepen her interest. Similarly, June, whose interest was nurtured by her childhood experience of traveling and visiting museums abroad with family, continued to deepen her interest through drawing lessons and reading extensively about art. A tendency of placing more value on systematic knowledge about art

could be deduced from participants' further access to distributed resources, especially books, and some venue-based resources, such as structured courses, in the maintaining phase. This echoed with Renninger and Su's (2012) discussion on the role of knowledge in later phases of interest development.

Relevant to the point above, cultural institutions as a major resource sought by participants in this phase, became more relevant to participants' interest, which was reflected by participants being more active and taking initiative in involving themselves in these institutions. For example, Eric, whose interest was sparked by a museum visit for a school project, began to visit exhibitions actively (for himself, rather than for school projects) to satisfy his interest in artifacts and paintings.

Finally, as some cases suggested, the maintaining phase was found to elapse for a rather long period of time, and in some cases, an interest could go into a dormant state. In other words, interest, as Renninger and Hidi (2011) noted, could fluctuate and, as some cases in GT pointed out, could fall off. This was comparatively more often found among young participants who were interested in art making since childhood (e.g. Rachel, Elisa, Annie, Amy). Rachel was typical example (see Section 5.2). In these cases, participants tended to build and maintain their initial interest by taking the creative practice further, for example, by engaging in extra-curricular art lessons, but in these cases participants stopped their creative practice as they moved to the next level in their education due to various reasons (e.g. health issues, change of priority in life, or exploring other interests). This could be understood as an example of a failure to attune to the conditions (constraints and affordance) of an interest-driven practice (Azevedo 2011); and the constraints in these cases often derived from pressure to advance academically. This observation, however, was less common between participants whose initial interest was not built on creative practice.

In brief, the maintaining phase was characterized by a greater degree of involvement in an interest. It referred to a period of time when art enthusiasts reengaged with their interest by drawing on a greater variety of resources and participating in a wider range of art-related activities. In this phase, a greater extent

of self-motivation and self-directness were also found. This phase was followed by the stabilizing phase in which artistic interest was stabilized into a tendency/predisposition, and art became part of participants' routine.

6.5.4 Stabilizing phase

The stabilizing phase referred to the developing of a stabilized interest, which appeared as a tendency or a predisposition to gravitate towards art and to involve art in one's life. Two main characteristics of the stabilizing phase were systematic engagement and habitual/regular involvement in art, and two observations were found in this phase deriving from the above characteristics. First, systematic engagement was best characterized by participants' pursuit of further, and most often structured education in art, and volunteering practice. In these pursuits, participants were found motivated to invest a great deal of effort in pursuing interest with a view to enhancing an interest-related skill or knowledge. As discussed in Section 5.1, Lisa was a typical example of pursuing a university degree in history, and taking trips to Europe in which she developed curriculum-like itinerary to visit museums with a view to enhancing her knowledge about art history (by seeing original artworks). This was also an illustration of a later phase interest, which was supported by cognitive-related indicators, e.g. stored knowledge and stored value (Renninger, Ewen, and Lasher 2002), and higher level of engagement as well (Hidi and Renninger 2006). Volunteering practice was another form of systematic engagement, which was shown in both Howard and Mike's stories (see Sections 5.3 and 5.4). Moreover, looking across the 14 art enthusiasts, examples of systematic engagement were found both in central participants and peripheral participants' accounts. Elisa and Annie, for example, were found to invest time in their art education (e.g. certificate course in contemporary art) to enhance their interest. Such interest-driven engagement revealed a close link with knowledge, and required strong motivation and self-discipline, and hence was considered a feature of the stabilizing phase. Similar links could be made with Barron's (2006) self-initiated

knowledge acquisition strategies.

Secondly, habitual/regular involvement in art was characterized by art enthusiasts making it a habit to involve art in their daily routines. Looking across the 14 participants, this was often reflected in participants' traveling habits, and leisure choices. As addressed in Section 6.2.3, traveling was seen as having considerable influence on interest, and participants considered traveling a channel to deepen their interest. Examples were found in which participants engaged in visiting art galleries in their recent travels; in some examples, visiting galleries was one of the main purposes of the trip, whereas in other examples visiting galleries was considered a usual thing to do when one traveled. Similarly, habitual involvement was also reflected in participants' leisure activities; many examples suggested that participants continued to engage in art making (drawing, painting and calligraphy), visiting museums, collecting, and participating in art events (literature, films, music or theater) in their spare time, which, as some participants pointed out, had been an old-time hobby. These involvements in art manifested well participants' lifestyle as art enthusiasts.

From the above observations, it was found that similar influences derived from art-related activities and practices were found to contribute to the most in terms of deepening an interest in the stabilizing phase. Art enthusiasts seemed to delve into their interest in greater depth, and more consciously in this phase through participating in interest-related activities on a regular basis, which formed part of their routine; in the meantime, they became experienced in some of their practices, which helped form their identity (see the following section). Needless to say, activities such as traveling, volunteering, and informal learning not only required a great deal of effort, i.e. time, money, prior planning and researching, but they also implied the working of independence, self-discipline, motivation and perseverance; and higher level of the above-mentioned learner characteristics also indicated a later and more developed phase interest, as noted by Hidi and Renninger (2006). However, influences from certain people, i.e. fellow volunteers, and peers who shared interest, were not to be neglected, as they played important roles for volunteers and course

attendees.

A great deal of references were also taken from participants accounts that I treated as evidence of the stabilizing phase to elaborate the roles museums played in participants' life. It was found that, in the stabilizing phase, participants tended to approach museums with particular agendas, e.g. volunteering, learning, as they considered museums relevant to their interest. Hence, in this phase, participants were found to access a wider variety of museum-related resources, e.g. curator talks, lectures, audio guide, and a link was found between these resources and participants' perceived values towards museums. Rachel was a typical example. She had perceived museum as a place to feel relaxed when she was a youngster, but as she picked up again her creative practice and made it a habit to visit art exhibitions regularly with friends from art club, she developed a new perception of museums, which was reflected by her actively enhancing her experience by hiring audio guide or participating in talks. Hence, the educational value of museums became more apparent to Rachel as her interest stabilized. In other words, in this phase, it became more evident that participants' perceived values of museums were closely linked with participants' engagement in museums, such as engagement in volunteering, cultural tourism, and museum visiting as a leisure activity. Specifically, some values such as 'learning/participation', 'places', and 'relaxation' were very relevant to participants' systematic engagement and habitual involvement associated with museums.

In brief, in the stabilizing phase a stabilized interest was formed characterized by art enthusiasts' systematic engagement and habitual involvement in art in a variety of ways. Interest was deepened by art-related activities participants took part in, and supported by certain cultural institutions and museum-related resources. In a similar way, participant' involvement in museums was also driven by their developed interest in art, and was reflected in their perceived values toward the museum.

6.5.5 Developing of art identity

As Barron (2006) pointed out, identity development goes hand in hand with interest development. It became clear that, as I showed in the preceding sections, participants took initiative in developing their interest as they went through the above-mentioned phases of interest development, and in the meantime, they actively built and enhanced their identity as art enthusiasts. In other words, identity as an art enthusiast was formed as artistic interest matured. In this section, I elaborate this point with two observations that I drew from examining the accounts of 14 participants in GT.

The first observation was based on 9 out 14 participants' statements regarding the building of competence as an art enthusiast. Competence, as self-determination theorists argued, was one of the innate needs that kept a person motivated in engaging in intrinsically rewarding activities (Krapp 2005), such as pursuing an interest in art; similarly, flow theorists (e.g. Nakamura and Csikszenmihalyi 2002) also noted that a sense of competence derived from balanced challenges and skills was key to maintaining the flow state. Azevedo (2011) further pointed out that the persistence of interest-driven practice is contingent with the building of identity, and in his case study, competence was one of the identities built around the practice. Among the 14 participants in GT, the building of identity as a competent art enthusiast was also found in participants' accounts.

During the course of building up an interest, participants developed more understanding about not only the content/topic/activity that interested them, but they also became more experienced as they engaged in activities and made use of resources, which eventually built up their competence in relationship with art. In other words, as interest developed, participants began to perceive themselves as competent art enthusiasts. June was a typical example. She reported that in order to deepen her understanding of contemporary art, she made an effort to see many exhibitions, and began to perceive herself a competent viewer. She commented:

(…) I focused on the issues, and slowly accumulate my experience of seeing contemporary art. A while ago environmental issue was hot, so I visited many exhibitions related to this issue, and I gradually got what they try to convey. (June, GT)

Similar accounts were found in the other participants, who were able to identify their growing competence to appreciate art as interest developed. Howard, for instance gained confidence after he began guiding, and he reported, 'I really applied what I learned before. For example, I know how to appreciate this installation from several perspectives.' It can be inferred that participants' competence came from confidence and self-sufficiency when they engaged with art. Similarly, Iris noted that she started developing her own ideas about art rather than relying on her instructor in an art course. Lisa was an example of demonstrating competence and self-initiation, in that she preferred to go with her own interpretation and tended not to rely on audio guide when she visited art exhibitions. Lisa's example also linked the perception of competence with the perception of autonomy (self-initiation), as noted in Krapp (2005).

Moreover, competence was found to develop from the accumulation of knowledge and repeated exposure to art. Among those who demonstrated competence as part of their identity, knowledge was a strong indication of competence. Five out of eight participants addressed knowledge accumulation in relation to their growing competence. Lisa, as discussed in Section 5.1, considered herself 'having grasped the entire history, especially familiar with artifacts and development from every historical period' because she studied European art history at university and traveled to see the original artwork. Perceiving a museum visit as a learning opportunity, Eric also noted that he built knowledge from previous experiences and became familiar with particular styles, which gave him confidence in appreciating art in the museum.

It should be noted as well that knowledge accumulation was an apparent result of volunteering among participants who undertook guiding, because guiding required them to absorb, construct, and impart knowledge systematically. For

example, Sonya and Amy both mentioned that they became more competent as a guide after they passed their guiding assessment[6]. Different from the other examples where the participants themselves determined whether knowledge was accumulated, the way knowledge was stored and imparted was determined by collectively defined criteria (i.e. museum's code of practice) in Amy and Sonya's examples. These criteria not only required guides to 'demonstrate sufficient knowledge', but also asked them to 'be able to express one fluently' and to deliver a 'well-referenced and elaborated' speech.

Competence not only developed from acquired knowledge to decode art, but it was also built from internalizing the 'schemes of appreciation and understanding (Swartz 1997:76)', which could be done by repeated exposure. Lynn, for example, stated that she became more competent in making judgment on art because of her repeated engagement in seeing art. She said, 'the more things you see, and the more extensively you explore, the more you know how to distinguish its value'. Competence, in this case, was considered a key to developing cultural disposition.

Competence was also reflected in participants' activeness. Four out of 14 participants reported that they became more active in seeking information and finding resources as interest developed. For example, Olivia stated that she began paying more attention to information about specific artists she was interested in, and actively prepared for her visits to exhibitions or relevant sites. Similarly, Iris not only noticed her cognitive growth in art ('knowing who did what and when'), but also she was aware of her behavior changing from passively receiving information from instructors to actively seeking for more information. She commented:

Now I'm more active, I would go online to check what's there, for example, I booked tickets in advance for the Monet show...I also checked if there's a lecture about the show that I can go to. (Iris, GT)

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[6] For guides at the National Palace Museum, assessment include five subjects in Sculpture, Bronze ware, Ceramics, Jade ware, Calligraphy and Paintings.

The examples presented above illustrated how people became resourceful and active at later phase of interest development. This again, confirmed Barron's (2006) work, in which she pointed out that people actively created learning opportunities once they became interested.

The second observation was built on 8 out of 14 participants' statements regarding the growing of self-understanding, which was characterized by participants gaining deeper insight into the self, and learning more about themselves in relationship with art. In other words, an 'art identity', similar to what Bell et al. (2009) and Crowley et al. (2015) both described as a science identity, was forged as interest developed. Participants were found to identify with the lifestyle they manifested, and centralize the role art played in life. For example, as discussed in Section 6.4.5, Amy considered participating in art (in various forms, e.g. volunteering, painting, socializing with her friends in exhibitions) an important part of her life, because her participation shaped her into a more cultivated and well-rounded person.

Moreover, participants discovered a different side of themselves as they built the interest. Rachel was an example of gaining new insight into herself as a creative person. As discussed in Section 5.2, Rachel became aware of the urge to express herself in words, as her interest-driven practice changed: she spent less time in drawing and painting, but more time in exhibitions and talks. Hence, she came to realize the change in her, and discovered the other creative side of herself, in addition to the side that made her eloquent in visual language (through her drawings). She commented:

Now I like to work on my words. I used to like illustrating things through imagination or my drawings. I thought it's very rewarding to put thoughts into a simple image, like illustration. (…) Words are different, (…) you need to express your points clearly. (Rachel, GT)

Finally, participants also saw themselves as art learner, forming what researchers characterized as interest-related identity (Barron 2006) or learning

identity (Bell et al. 2009). A learning identity, as Bell et al. (2009) noted, was forged through the learner's evaluation of his/her experiences of interacting with a subject matter, material resources, or other learners. Sonya, for example, more than once described herself as a 'newborn' in Chinese art, which reflected her role and membership in the volunteer community as a novice, meaning that she still had much to learn, and needed to stay humble in her pathway to art. This observation, however, was only found in central participants' accounts.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter, I presented findings regarding the development of interest of 14 art enthusiasts recruited in Taipei. Fourteen individuals' pathways were broken down by cross-analyzing participants' demographic background, the developmental dynamics of interest, i.e. influences, resources, and perceived values, and the temporal development of artistic interest, i.e. phases of interest development. In Section 6.1, I gave an overview of the art enthusiasts, which was found to be overrepresented by females, aged between 20 and 50, well educated, and of high socio-economic background. A brief discussion of participants' area of interest showed diversity; and among central participants, a strong link was found between area of interest and volunteering practice.

From Section 6.2 to 6.4, I analyzed the developmental dynamics of interest, elaborating how varieties of influences played out in the process of developing artistic interest, what resources were accessed, and in particular, how museums were perceived in such process and throughout participants' life. In Section 6.2, I identified key influences associating with people, i.e. family, peers, mentors; places, i.e. museums and galleries, other institutions, neighborhoods; and activities and events, e.g. creative practice, formal and informal learning, traveling. I elaborated how these influenced informed an interest: some provided opportunities to spark an interest, and others deepened an already emerged interest. In Section 6.3, I pointed out key resources related with the development of artistic interest, including:

venue-based resources, i.e. museum-related services, and services provided from other cultural institutions (e.g. lectures, talks, and courses); people as a resource, i.e. interactions with people as an informal way of gaining insights; distributed resources, i.e. interest-related contents via different media (e.g. books, magazines, the Internet, TV programs, newsletters). In Section 6.4, I pointed out how art enthusiasts' perceived the generic roles of museums, which contributes to understanding the rationales of exploiting the museum, and the roles museum plays in the process of interest development. Seven perceived values/motivations were identified in this section, including 'learning', 'social interaction', 'relaxation', 'entertainment', 'restoration', 'place', and 'identity building'.

Synthesizing the developmental dynamics of interest elaborated in previous sections, in Section 6.5, I analyzed the temporal development of artistic interest, and found that in Group Taipei, interest developed through the following key phases: the initiating, 'a-ha moment', maintaining, and stabilizing phase. I identified characterizing features of each phase, i.e. emergence of interest, reflective awareness of interest, seeking cross-boundary resources and repeated engagements, systematic engagement, and habitual involvement, and I pointed out how key influences, resources and perceived values of the museum interplayed in each phase. I also found that participants developed an identity as competent art learner as they built up their interest.

Chapter 7

Pathways to art: Close examination of four art enthusiasts in Group London

In this chapter, I present vignettes of four art enthusiasts' stories to give flavor to my illustration of the developmental processes of artistic interest. The data I analyzed in this chapter is primarily generated from semi-structured interviews; subsidiary data sources include participant observations, learning ecology maps, and observations of participants' social media activity. The four participants, Cathy, Helen, Jill, and Charlie (pseudonyms), have been selected from the 14 participants from Group London (GL) for two reasons: each of them represents a specific 'pathway to art' – a developmental process of artistic interest – characterized by different features; these individuals also provide richer data than the others do. Participants are addressed using pseudonyms throughout this chapter and this thesis for the purpose of convenience and ethical concern.

From Section 7.1 to Section 7.3, I delineate four pathways to art based on the stories art enthusiasts shared with me. In Section 7.4, I highlight the developmental dynamics of interest, namely, the influences, the resources, and the perceived values and roles of museums, which characterize the four pathways presented in the preceding sections. This will help address my research questions, which I further engage in answering in Chapter 8. By examining the four pathways comparatively and drawing on data from the rest of the participants, I delineate the phases of interest development in Section 7.5. This chapter concludes in Section 7.6, with a summary, which provides an outline for Chapter 8 where I analyze data across all 14 participants.

7.1 Cathy: early interest developed in family

As a child, I notice that, when I was 8, when I went to the gallery. I think it was Tate Britain, (…) Rodin's the Kiss, a large sculpture, and I remember that things sort of transported with delight, and thinking, "wow, that's…" (Cathy, GL)

Cathy is a retired dentist, who is very active in pursuing her lifelong passion for art. Since her retirement, she has been completing her arts education by attending drawing lessons at art studios, studying Islamic art, enrolling in yearly art courses at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and visiting art exhibitions. Cathy commits herself not only in learning about the world of art, but also in pursuing her artistic interests through various channels, such as creating stone carvings, engaging in cultural tourism, and collecting. Her interest in art can be traced back to her experience growing up in an art-loving family, and is discerned in a childhood memory where she described a pivotal moment encountering Rodin's sculpture in a museum visit with her mother (see Cathy's quote above).

'I had a very good grounding in art', said Cathy. Having spent her childhood visiting galleries and appreciating art with her family, Cathy was aware of her interest as a child, and had acknowledged her family's influence on her development of artistic interest. Growing up with a mother who drew and painted as her lifelong hobby, and a sister who attended art school, Cathy often watched her mother and sister paint and draw, and was expected to have a career in art. Naturally, she did an O-level and A-level in art at school, submitted a good portfolio, and was accepted into an art school. However, Cathy did not complete her first year at art school, and decided to leave because she wanted to pursue a career that provided a financially independent life. Having been a practical person, Cathy went into dentistry, and became a dentist.

Although Cathy's family was once disappointed by her changing career path and her 'going away from art', Cathy's transition never led her away from art. She believed that 'it (art) was always there. And also traveling and appreciating, always

looked at architecture, and went to galleries and churches to look at the art there'. In her 38-year career as a dentist, Cathy spent her free time traveling around the world, appreciating temple carvings and visiting galleries, which she described as 'cultural holidays' as opposed to 'beachy holidays' (which she never had). In addition to traveling, Cathy has been collecting small objects that 'delights the eye' (e.g. ivory and jade sculptures) she found in antique markets. On the practical side, she began creating sculptures, which she had wanted to try since she was young. She learned from a local stonemason and immediately found the sense of balance and design, and soon required no tuition.

Cathy's pursuit of an artist interest reached another level after retiring. Believing that 'education is not something you do at school, it's always a lifelong thing. Like the National Health Service, this should be from cradle to grave', she started completing her art education since she did not finish three years of art school. She made extensive use of both formal and informal learning resources around her to develop her interest. Cathy pursued her interest in Islamic art, which derived from her childhood fascination of 'Oriental art' (from watching the film *The King and I*, and reading *The Arabian Night*) and her traveling to Istanbul, leading to her completion of a Master degree in Islamic art at SOAS. Moreover, Cathy actively engaged in drawing and painting, and learning about the world of art in more depth. She attended courses at Prince's drawing school, and produced paintings regularly. Thinking that 'because there are extra seminars and handling sessions, you just go into it a little more deeply that way', Cathy also enrolled in several certificate courses (in which participants are required to write essays and do presentations on given topics in addition to attending weekly talks) at the V&A.

Cathy is used to gathering information she has or may have an interest in via various media. She reads the newspaper, listens to the radio and watches television on a regular basis. Specifically, Cathy visits museums regularly for the exhibitions and courses. Considering museum going a learning experience that 'develops self', Cathy sees it as a way of explaining things to herself, and to 'educate myself in order to answer what comes up in [my] mind or other people's'. This intellectual orientation

towards the museum not only applied to museums of science or history, but also art galleries, and it was reflected by Cathy's collection of catalogues and books for future reference after visiting an exhibition. Cathy also sees museum as a 'substitute for the cathedral' where one finds pleasure and 'visceral squirm' by looking at the beautiful. Her tendency to visit art galleries while traveling reflects such perceptions.

Pursuing her interest through various channels and keeping herself busy after retiring from work, Cathy directs her current path by the philosophy of 'going with the flow'. Believing that one idea leads to another, Cathy considers making interconnection interesting, and therefore is always keen on exploring her interest through traveling, visiting museums, attending courses, drawing and painting, from which she gathers new ideas, and makes connection to make sense of the world around her. Pivotal experiences that sustain Cathy's interest are summarized in Figure 7-1.
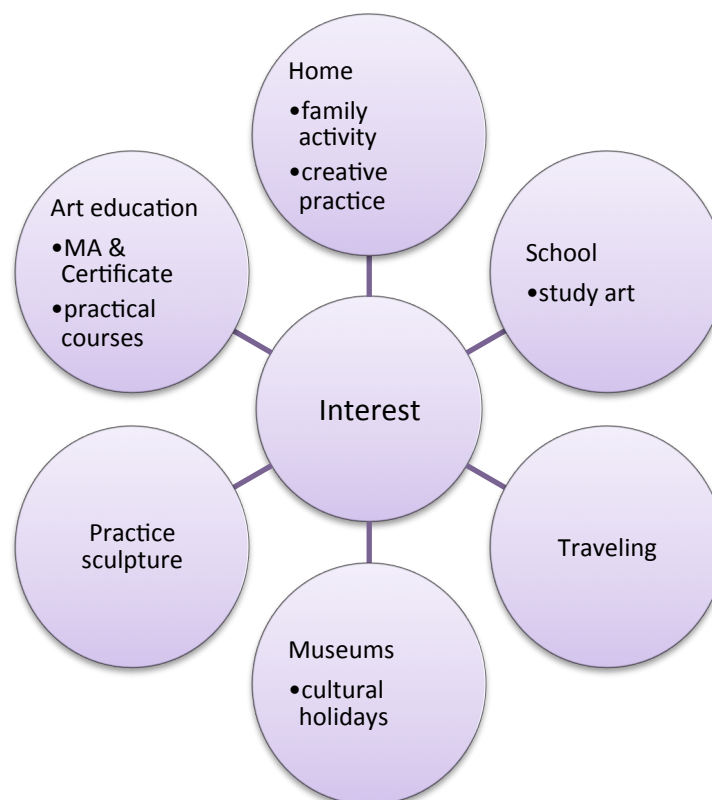
Figure 7-1 Pivotal experiences in Cathy's pathway

Cathy's story delineates a pathway starting with early exposure to the arts,

leading to a further lifelong pursuit of artistic interest. Similar to Lisa's pathway (See Section 5.1), Cathy's pathway represents a pattern where an individual engages in art at an early age; the individual then continues to develop the interest by keeping practicing art or participating in art events during one's free time, or further pursues a degree or career relevant to art.

7.2 Helen: interest forged in adult life in new social group

It was actually in my adult life that it (interest) really expanded, and I think it's been a mix of, the social group I was with, and the man was I married to, his mother was an artist, and therefor he was interested as well. (Helen, GL)

Helen has worked all her life in education, and is currently working as self-employed educator after retiring from her role as a head teacher at a primary school. She is interested in art that 'is aesthetically pleasing', such as the Impressionists, John Singer Sargent, and Henry Moore's sculpture. Helen is also keen on design, and is passionate about studying the historical development of 20th Century design and the impact of art on design. Helen recently started taking art courses at the V&A, before which she has spent her free time traveling, visiting galleries, and buying art pieces from time to time. Her artistic interest was developed in her adult life when she started noticing that she was 'surrounded by art' and influenced by people she hung out with as she pointed out in the quote.

Growing up in the outskirt of London, visiting museums with family formed part of Helen's childhood life, but the types of museum her family chose to visit were rather general instead of focusing on art. Helen's interest in art was first 'sparked' (in her own words) during her senior year at school when she studied the Pre-Raphaelites. However, she did not explore her interest further until she turned the next page of her life. Majoring in History at teacher training college, Helen began to develop her interest and acknowledged the influence she drew from the subject she specialized in and the social group she hung out with. Having a good grounding

in history, Helen considered her academic training informed her interpretation of art, and helped her understand 'why painting is as it was in certain stages'. Meeting her husband who shares the same interest, and mixing with an 'artsy' social group in her adult life, Helen's interest began to expand because of the people she socialized with also appreciated art (see Helen's quote above). Participation in art became as Helen described as 'part of what we do.'

Traveling and visiting historical houses has been an important way Helen and her husband access art when pursuing their interest. She said, 'it's the other thing we do on holiday, because we go to country houses, which of course are full of works of art, paintings, ceramics, and vases'. Having spent the last ten years visiting international cities with her husband, Helen was used to gravitating towards art, and always checked what gallery and museum the city has that may have something to attract her interest. From time to time, her interest has expanded as she often came across new artists when she went on holiday. For example, Helen and her husband traveled to the United States, explored a house museum (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum), and 'tripped over Singer Sargent' in Boston. In addition to traveling, Helen and her husband also looked for art pieces to decorate the house when traveling, and they have bought several watercolor paintings from their neighbor, who happens to be an artist. Sharing the same interest with her husband, Helen acknowledged the influence from her other half; she would not have explored modern sculpture if not because of her husband's interest in sculpture.

As a keen learner of art and design, Helen has been accumulating knowledge via different channels, e.g. television, books, lectures, and courses specifically provided by the V&A. Recently exploring the interlinks between art and its impact on design, Helen focuses on reading books about Art Nouveau and attending V&A's yearly course about 20th century design history, which she considers is 'to open doors' and to gain different perspectives. Helen enjoys watching the BBC art programs on the television, and confirms that she benefits greatly from watching the BBC series on the Tate and on the Pre-Raphaelites. 'One often then gets the expert with the painting or a piece of art there, explaining, what contexts, what various things', she

says. Helen considers the TV an important channel from which one gets access from very credited experts.

Involved in education throughout her life, Helen often uses the museum for teaching, and for her own interest as well. Seeing the museum as a place for learning, Helen says, 'it's place to access things that I don't trip over in my everyday life'. She acknowledges the educational value of the museum, as museums provide the nearest first-hand experience one can get. Therefore, Helen is driven by the idea that one can broaden his or her horizon and gain insights of the world one lives in by visiting museums and galleries, and she carries it out by traveling and visiting historical houses and galleries where she valued the authentic experience (Prentice 2001) she gained. Helen is also aware of different benefits and depth of knowledge that she gains from exploiting resources such as courses and TV programs, which she may not gain from visiting museums. She is convinced that it is crucial to combine different resources that serve different purposes so that one can find satisfaction in the pursuit of artistic interest. Pivotal experiences that sustain Helen's interest are summarized in Figure 7-2.
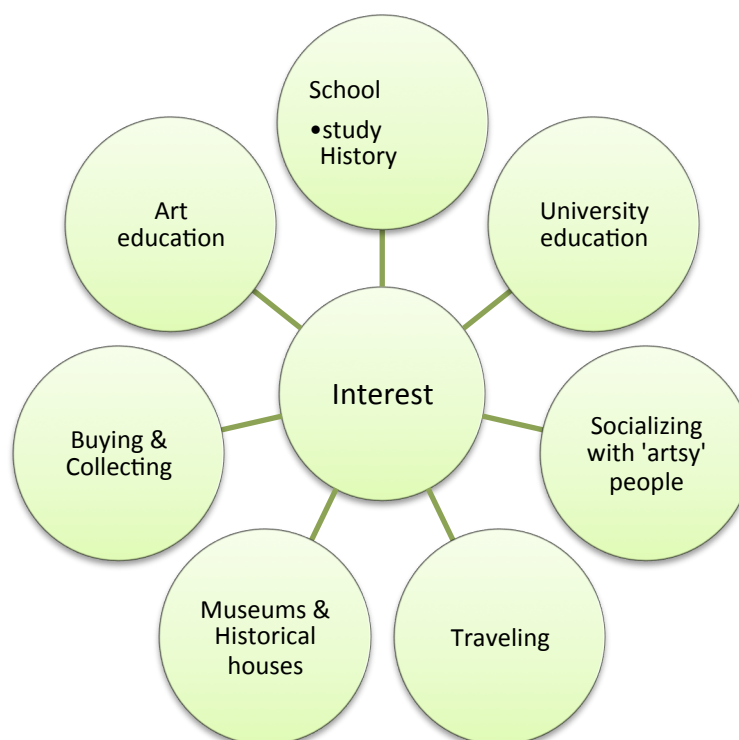
Figure 7-2 Pivotal experiences in Helen's pathway

Helen's story demonstrates a pathway, in which an interest is sparked early at school, but developed later in life. Similar to Lisa's pathway (see Section 5.1), Helen's interest was also sparked early in school-based activity. Moreover, like Howard and Mike, (see Section 5.3 and Section 5.4), Helen began to explore her interest as new opportunities to engage in art emerged in adulthood. Her pathway shows a pattern where an individual's interest is sparked at a young age, but they do not explore the interest until the individual enters into another environment, and mixes with a different social group later in life.

7.3 Jill and Charlie: mutual interest developed in a joint pathway

In this section, I introduce Jill and Charlie's stories not only as two individual pathways, but also as a joint pathway. Jill and Charlie, a married couple, both participated in the research as two individuals; however, they visited an exhibition and joined a discussion with me as a couple. They were interviewed individually at first: Jill was interviewed alone while waiting for Charlie to arrived from work, and Charlie was interviewed later, with Jill by his side. They were later interviewed jointly as a couple after visiting an exhibition together with the researcher.

Jill and Charlie are both young professionals working and living in London. Jill, who originally comes from Taiwan, came to the UK to pursue postgraduate study in Edinburgh, and settled in London with Charlie after completing her study. Charlie grew up in Suffolk, South of England, and met Jill when they both studied for a postgraduate degree in Edinburgh. Both of them have been interested in art since they were of school age, and have been enjoying creating art and participating in art events before meeting each other. After they became a couple, they have been developing their mutual interest in art in several ways; for example, they went on cultural holidays and visited galleries together. In this section, individual experiences are first presented briefly in Section 7.3.1 and Section 7.3.2, and then Section 7.3.3 is dedicated to the couple's experience as a joint pathway.

7.3.1 Jill

Jill is a consumer experience designer working in London, and a frequent gallery visitor. She is very fond of modern European art, and contemporary art in general. Jill's interest in art was influenced by family and a cultural-rich environment in which she was raised. Growing up in Taipei City with parents who actively encouraged her develop artistic interest, Jill enjoyed drawing as a child and attended art lessons arranged by her parents where she sketched, did live drawing and watercolor, and practiced Chinese calligraphy and brush painting. Referring to her family as a 'museum-going family', Jill recalled her parents often taking her to educational places like museums and libraries, and always visiting exhibitions as a family. She also remembered seeing a lot of paintings at the house of an aunt, who studied oil painting and taught art to children.

Majoring in Chinese Literature at university, Jill explored her interest in art from an angle different from the creative process she used to engage as a child. She engaged in the intellectual pursuit of art through enhancing her knowledge in Chinese culture. Noting that 'learning about the Chinese language and its forms, one can associate Chinese characters with drawings. (…) We also learned about the thoughts that prevailed among the literati world', Jill made connections between the development of art and its wider historical and cultural contexts. She also explored topics that interested her, e.g. creative industry and cultural communication by studying extra modules at university and attending lectures provided by other institutions.

After university, Jill hoped to pursue her interest further and to start a career relating to art and creativity. 'Because I really like artworks, I thought maybe I could find a job in the field', said Jill. She came to Edinburgh and studied design and digital media; she was amazed by the vibrant cultural life in Edinburgh, and spent a great deal of time participating in artistic events in the city, which she described as 'full of history' and 'very suitable for cultivating one's interest in art'. Making extensive use of museums in Edinburgh, Jill participated weekly in a lecture series at the National

Gallery of Scotland, and actively looked for opportunities to strengthen her grounding in European art history. She continued her engagement in culture and art after moving to London, and has been a regular visitor to the Saatchi gallery, Tate Modern and the National Gallery since then. Believing that 'art is easily accessed in cities of Edinburgh and London', Jill acknowledges the influence of the environment she lives in, where she benefits from abundance of resources and an art-friendly atmosphere. Pivotal experiences that sustain Jill's interest are summarized in Figure 7-3.
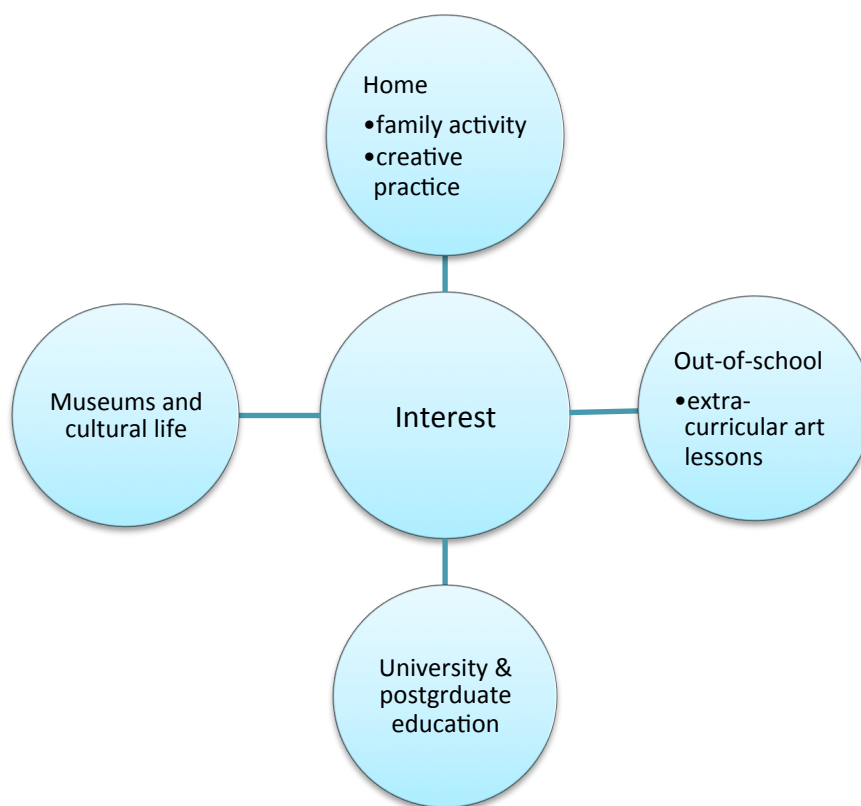
Figure 7-3 Pivotal experiences in Jill's Pathways

7.3.2 Charlie

Charlie works as a paralegal in London and specializes in the creative aspect of law, i.e. laws of intellectual property. He is a passionate gallery visitor and has an interest in contemporary art and fine arts. Growing up in Suffolk, Charlie was used to taking the train to London to go to music shows and galleries since he was 15 years

of age. As a student, Charlie's academic interests were Art, English and Law. He was interested in art in secondary school and did A-level in art, which he acknowledged as having a significant impact on his interest. 'My initial study at school has formed a lot of that interest (…) I like this artist because I studied at school, and then you learn about this and you go off in different directions', said Charlie.

Charlie chose to study Law at university. However, he carried out his creative practices that he had engaged in secondary school, and did photography and creative writing in his spare time. Charlie later realized that he was more interested in the creative side of law. As a result, he changed course and pursued a postgraduate degree in Edinburgh where he met Jill. Switching from creating art to consuming art, Charlie noticed himself changing the way he pursued his interest in the past six years. He spent more time seeing art exhibitions, and became a regular visitor of several galleries in London, e.g. Tate Modern, V&A, Whitechapel gallery, and the Whitecube. He consumed other types of art as well by sourcing tickets on the Internet and participating frequently in music and theatre. Having enjoyed pottery in his study of art at school, Charlie developed a liking towards ceramics, and began collecting pieces of ceramics that are unique and sometimes serve practical purposes, such as 'Studio Pottery'.

Although Charlie's study of art at school has informed much of his appreciation of art, he developed a different approach over the years of 'exposing myself to as many different types of culture and art'. Charlie was aware that he became more open to the idea of 'learning through experience without doing any research beforehand', and enjoys much more having a 'blind experience' in art. He began to place his trust on certain institutions, e.g. the Whitechapel gallery, which he would go to regularly to explore what might be interesting to him. Pivotal experiences that sustain Charlie's interest are summarized in Figure 7-4 below.

As two individuals, Jill and Charlie experienced similar pathways, which are characterized by early influences from family setting or school setting. These early influences are then followed by subsequent engagement that further develops the interest. Most importantly, as a married couple, Jill and Charlie's pathways

converged, influencing and supporting each other. In the next section, I discuss how the dynamic of being in a couple relationship influences the mutual development of artistic interest.
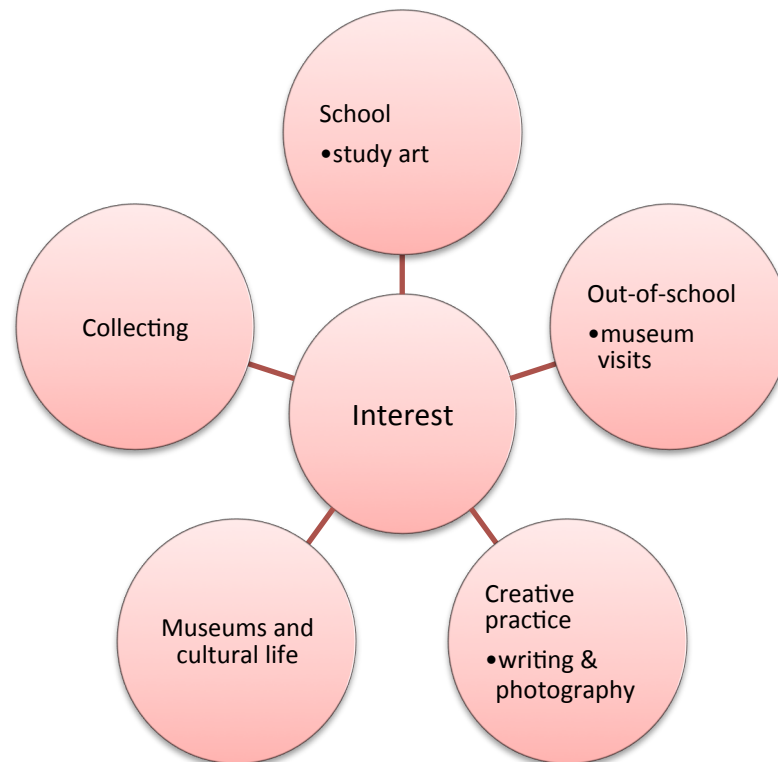
Figure 7-4 Pivotal experiences in Charlie's pathway

7.3.3 Joint pathway

If I were by myself, I would travel for museums, like I went to Paris because of the museums. Now I'm with him, we tend to explore cities and culture when we travel, and we may be subconsciously looking for opportunities for the culture…wherever we go, we always visit art museums! (Jill, GL)

I haven't been to these kinds of thing (participate in art and culture) on my own much recently, because my wife and I tend to like the same thing, it's easy for us to go together. (Charlie, GL)

Sharing mutual interest in art, Jill and Charlie have been engaging in several activities jointly when their paths converged. As Jill's quote indicates, the couple have enjoyed going on cultural holidays during which they usually visit galleries, or 'trying to find the area where young people, artists, and craftsman are and visit that area as well' as Charlie added. In other words, the couple enjoy exploring new cities and the cultural life together, and their traveling experiences are believed to be enhanced. Not only do Jill and Charlie plan for holidays, but also they visit galleries together, as Charlie's quote indicates. Over the years the couple has developed a shared pattern when visiting galleries, which shows a negotiation between different visiting paces and habits. Charlie, who likes to 'get very close to things' he is looking at, and Jill, who always 'read the label and try to draw links', are used to going to the gallery together but sometimes going off to look at different things. Although they may go separate ways, the couple never stays apart more than one room, and always comes back to something together and exchanges opinions. The couple's statements are consistent with my observation of the couple visiting an exhibition, which is described in the following paragraph.

The couple's recent visit to the British Museum's *exhibition Ming: 50 years that changed China* was an example of the pattern described above. During the visit, Jill, who had a prior knowledge of Chinese culture, as it was part of her heritage, was the one that moved faster and selected objects to look into. She was observed going back to find Charlie several times and sharing information with him. Charlie, who moved more slowly in the exhibition, was observed responding positively to Jill's information. The couple was also observed coming together to examine a jade belt, and drawing links between their past visit to the National Palace Museum in Taipei, and the artifact in the exhibition. In short, the couple was observed learning together, and from each other viewpoint during the visit.

While coordinating with each other's preferences when visiting galleries, Jill and Charlie also share resources together. On the one hand, the couple has different habit of accessing resources. Jill is used to reading art news online and subscribing to newsletters from her favorite museums and galleries, but Charlie is rather reluctant

to consume distributed contents online. Together they have a bimonthly magazine *Aesthetica* subscription, which they both read, although Jill enjoys it more than Charlie does. On the other hand, the couple respects each other's preference and accompanies each other to events. Since Jill appreciates and benefits from gallery talks, Charlie is also willing to go with Jill, and has enjoyed some of the talks himself.

Having been regular visitors to particular galleries, Jill and Charlie purchase museums memberships, and benefit greatly from member's right of bringing a guest to shows and events. Thinking that 'museums are a necessity in life', Jill is very happy about becoming a member of the Tate with Charlie recently, as they have enjoyed visiting the Tate very much. The couple also shared the Art Pass membership, and used it very often on exhibitions and historical houses.

The couple also collect art. Jill shares an affinity with Charlie's collection of ceramics, and the couple try to find a common ground in terms of what to buy, as Charlie noted that 'now we only buy the art that we both like'. In addition to ceramic pieces, the couple also owns an old Japanese silk painting.

Both appreciating the fact that living in London gives them great access to culture and art, Jill and Charlie share similar values towards museums. Noting that 'museums select objects, whatever goes into the museum has to be tested by time', Jill perceives the museum as setting up high standards which guarantee a good quality of its offerings. Similarly, Charlie values the expertise and effort museum professionals put into curating an experience. This shared perception is reflected by the couple's patronage for museums that they believe demonstrate high quality and expertise. The couple also acknowledges the educational value of the museum. Believing that one accumulates knowledge and gains insights into the culture from museums, Jill considers the museum a place where one develops the self actively. Similarly, Charlie perceives museum visiting as an 'opportunity to see some pieces that he has liked and appreciated for a long time'. This perception is also reflected by the couple's visiting strategy and active participation in museum-related activities. Shared experiences in Jill and Charlie's joint pathway are shown in Figure 7-5 below.

In short, as Jill and Charlie's stories show, interest may deepen as an individual

experience is enhanced by building a mutual interest with someone who appreciates similar things or shares their taste (e.g. exploring a city and its cultural life together). Interest may also expand as individuals negotiate and coordinate with other people's preferences and habits (e.g. looking at the same exhibition from other people' lens). Hence, a joint pathway may support the development of interest for both parties.
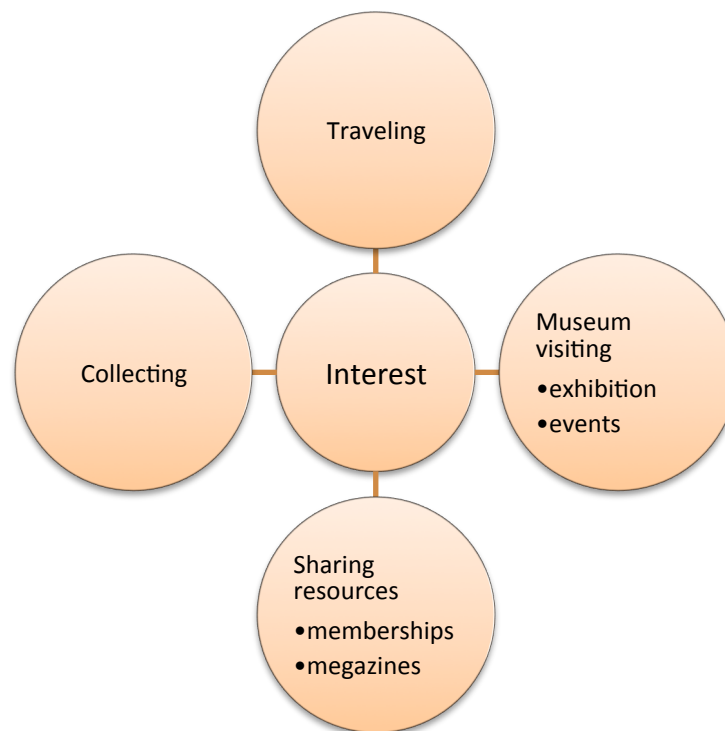
Figure 7-5 Shared experiences in a joint pathway

7.4 Developmental dynamics of artistic interest

In this section, I look across the four pathways through which artistic interest is sparked and developed, and I highlight key factors that play important roles in the developmental process. Although each pathway differs, in close examination, these pathways are characterized by, as discussed in Section 5.5, three developmental dynamics: influences, resources, and perceived values. The developmental dynamics of interest are found to have an impact on the development of pathways, and

distinguish one pathway from the other. Understanding the developmental dynamics also helps address the research questions regarding how interest is developed (RQ1) and the roles museums play in interest development (RQ2). I briefly discuss the three developmental dynamics of interest summarized from the four selected participants. A detailed discussion of the developmental dynamics of the entire group of 14 participants will be presented in Chapter 8.

7.4.1 Influences

The first developmental dynamic of interest to highlight is influence. Among the four pathways, influences are associated with key persons (e.g. family, friends), institutions (e.g. museums, schools), activities and practices (e.g. visiting exhibitions, drawing, traveling). Some influences, on the one hand, may spark an interest. For example, both Helen and Charlie's interests were sparked by their studies at school (e.g. learning about the Pre-Raphaelites, or creating art). On the other hand, influences may generate impact through long-term exposure. For example, Jill and Cathy initially formed their interest from childhood creative practice, influenced by supportive, art-loving families, Traveling seems to be a mutual practice that the four art enthusiasts engaged in doing, which was articulated as a strong influence to the sustaining of an interest; through traveling an interest was expanded or deepened as Helen's experience of 'tripping over' John Singer Sargent's artworks when traveling to Boston showed. The expression of 'tripping over' art derives from Helen, and is used to as a conceptual idea to describe art enthusiasts' encounters with art that trigger an interest in the museum setting, and further discussions are presented in earlier (Section 6.2.2.2) and later sections (Section 8.2.2.2).

7.4.2 Resources

The second developmental dynamic is interest-related resources that are accessible to art enthusiasts. Resources revealed in the accounts of four participants

include: distributed contents (e.g. catalogues, magazines, newsletters, TV programs), institutions (e.g. museums and galleries, university), services and facilities that are associated with these institutions (e.g. museum courses, memberships). For example, Jill made extensive use of art-related institutions to develop her interest in art. She exploited university modules and galleries, and attended talks when she visited galleries to gain insights of art; she also shared membership of the Tate with Charlie, and subscribed to newsletters from galleries she regularly visits. Jill and Charlie's joint pathway also reveals relationship-based resources that support the development of mutual interest. The interactions between the couple can be considered an informal channel to exchange and obtain information.

7.4.3 Perceived values and roles of museums

The third developmental dynamic is art enthusiasts' perceptions of museums and galleries. To address RQ2, this research is particularly interested in specifying the perceived roles of museums in art enthusiasts' social life and in relation to interest development. Hence, a special focus is placed on how museums and galleries, a key interest-related resource, are perceived by participants. In the pathways presented before, participants' perceived value of museums and museum going can be drawn from past engagement in museums. For example, having traveled to places to visit particular collections in particular museums or sites, Cathy appreciates the museum for providing the opportunity to see authentic works of art, from which she finds pleasure and deepens her knowledge about Islamic art; she also acknowledges the educational value of museums, seeing museum as a place where one educates oneself. In other words, Cathy perceives the museums as a place to access authentic works, which also plays educational and entertaining roles in her life.

7.5 Phases of interest development

In this section, I take a temporal and developmental view of the distinct

processes through which interest is sparked and developed. Looking across the four pathways, one can find interest may be sparked early in life by means of having the opportunity to engage with art when one is young ('early pathways' as discussed in Section 5.6). All four participants' interest was sparked early in life when they had the opportunity to engage in creating art at home or studying art/history at school. However, interest may also be sparked as one matures, or one may only begin to develop when one encounters new opportunity later in life ('late pathways' as discussed in Section 5.6). Helen, whose interest was sparked at school, only began to pursue her interest further in her adult life through socializing with 'artsy people'.

Despite that, each pathway is unique, common developmental phases can be found between different pathways. Drawing from the pathways of all 14 participants, three developmental phases are found: initiating phase, the maintaining phase, and the stabilizing phase (See Figure 7-6 below). The three phases assimilate to the developmental phases I illustrated in Section 5.6, only lacking the 'a-ha moment'. I further explain each phase in the rest of the section.

The initiating phase describes the initiation of artistic interest. The phase may appear in different settings where an individual's interest is sparked or piqued by certain person, object, activity or event. In Cathy, Jill and Charlie's stories, interest was initiated when they engaged in creative activities (at home or at school) at an early age, usually with strong influences from family members, i.e. parents. Helen, on the other hand, described an opportunity of learning about the Pre-Raphaelites at school that triggered her interest, but she considered her interest only expanded until she began socializing with people who had mutual interest in her adult life.
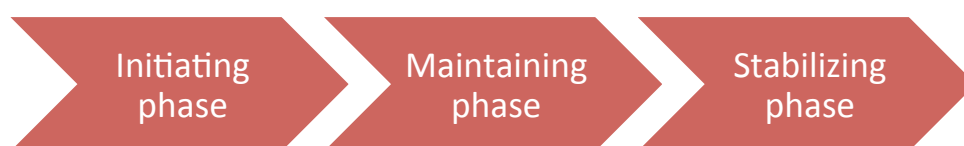
Figure 7-6 Phases of interest development

The maintaining phase describes the maintaining of an emerging interest. The phase appears when participants begin to explore their interest and to seek for more opportunity to reengage with art; sometimes, they go across settings for more resources. Cathy was a typical example, and she pursued her interest into secondary education (e.g. doing A-level in art, preparing for art school). Jill's story, in particular, demonstrates boundary-crossing resource seeking; she began to explore different aspects of her interest by means of visiting galleries, taking modules at university, and going to talks at cultural institutions.

The stabilizing phase describes the developing of a stabilized interest. The phase appears when an interest is developed into a predisposition, and becomes part of one's identity. In this phase, participants are motivated to and consciously invest more effort in pursuing their interest. On the one hand, the stabilizing phase is characterized by participants' involvement in art as a routine. For example, Jill and Charlie's joint pathways illustrates that when art became the couple's common interest, the couple began to appreciate art together through visiting galleries, sharing museum membership, going on cultural holiday, and buying art, which formed part of what they do together as a couple. On the other hand, in the developing phase, participants are found to pursue systematic engagement in art, and are also motivated to engage in activities that require a great deal of effort and time, with a view to deepening the interest. For example, Cathy began to complete her art education after retiring, and she pursued a degree and a few certificate courses at the museum. Helen was also found to deepen her interest in 20th -century design through systematic engagement – enrolling in a V&A yearly course.

7.6 Summary

In this chapter, I present concrete examples of the development of artistic interest drawing on the accounts of four art enthusiasts: Cathy, Helen, Jill and Charlie. These examples provide a close examination of the developmental process of artistic interest, which generates insights for further analysis of the formation of artistic

interest (which will address RQ1) and the role of museums in the development of interest (which will address RQ2).

From Section 7.1 to 7.3, I discuss four different pathways illustrated by Cathy, Helen, Jill and Charlie's stories. Section 7.1 depicts Cathy's pathway, characterized by early influences drawn from her family in terms of engaging in drawing and painting and visiting galleries as a family. Section 7.2 depicts Helen's pathway, characterized by a later influence from mixing with an art-loving social group in adult life. Section 7.3 depicts Jill and Charlie's pathways as individuals, and then focuses on their joint pathway as a married couple, in which they develop a mutual interest in art. These pathways represent different process through which an interest is sparked, maintained and developed into a predisposition.

In Section 7.4, I highlight three developmental dynamics of interest, which characterize the pathways. I find that the influences one draws from key persons, institutions, objects and activities in relation to interest; the resources one has access to; and the perception of museums one develops are relevant to the development of interest. The developmental dynamics also differentiate one pathway from the other. The three developmental dynamics will be discussed again in full detail in Chapter 8.

Finally, in Section 7.5, I examine the pathways from a temporal and developmental viewpoint, and summarized three phases art enthusiasts experienced in their pathways. This developmental model explains how artistic interest is developed through the initiating, maintaining, and stabilizing phases, each of which is characterized by different ways of engaging with art. In Chapter 8, I will examine the developmental processes of interest across 14 art enthusiasts using this model.

Chapter 8

Group London: Cross-analysis of art enthusiasts

In this chapter, I present a cross-analysis of 14 art enthusiasts in Group London (GL), building on the key themes I highlighted in Chapter 7. The data I analyzed in this chapter are primarily generated from semi-structured interviews; subsidiary data sources include participant observations, learning ecology maps, and observations on participants' social media activity. This chapter begins with an introduction of 14 participants' profiles (Section 8.1), where I analyze participants' demographic information and their areas of interest. I then move on to discuss significant themes I draw from the data, namely the three developmental dynamics of artistic interest (influences, resources, and perceived values), which help address my first question: 'How does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) In Section 8.2, I focus on the key influences that contribute to an interest in art; in Section 8.3, I turn to interest-related resources; in Section 8.4, I highlight one of the key resources, museums, and explore how museums are perceived by art enthusiasts throughout life and in relation to their interest, which helps address my second research question: 'What roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest?'(RQ2) In Section 8.5, I look at key phases of all participants' pathways, using the model I elaborated in Section 7.5; I also discuss the issue of identity development in Section 8.5. Finally, I summarize the findings in Section 8.6. As noted in Chapter 4, participants are semi-anonymized for ethical reason, and pseudonyms are used throughout this chapter and in writing up this thesis for the purpose of convenience.

8.1 Introducing art enthusiasts

This section presents background information about 14 art enthusiasts recruited in London, including an analysis of participants' areas of interest. I first

analyze the demographic features of Group London (GL) in Section 8.1.1, and then I discuss GL participants' area of interest in Section 8.1.2. Participants' profiles are analyzed by four demographic features: gender, age, level of education, and occupation (See Appendix 10 for detailed demographic features).

8.1.1 Demographic features

In this section, I discuss four demographic features with references to participants' gender, age, educational achievement, socioeconomic background, and ethnicity. As I explained in Section 6.1, art enthusiasts in this research are further distinguished by their roles in relationship with museums, i.e. volunteer, visitor, and museum course participants. Participants are, therefore, labeled with two categories, central and peripheral, with an implication to participants' level of engagement (see Section 4.3.1.1). This categorization serves the purposes of addressing the research question by building case studies of participants with different level and form of engaging with art, and facilitating recruitment.

8.1.1.1 Gender

In GL, females (9 out of 14) are the majority in comparison with males (5 out of 14 (see Figure 8-1). A similar trend is found on the whole when combining the two groups of participants: females are overrepresented by 20 out of 28 participants, in comparison with males, which is represented by 8 out of 28 participants.
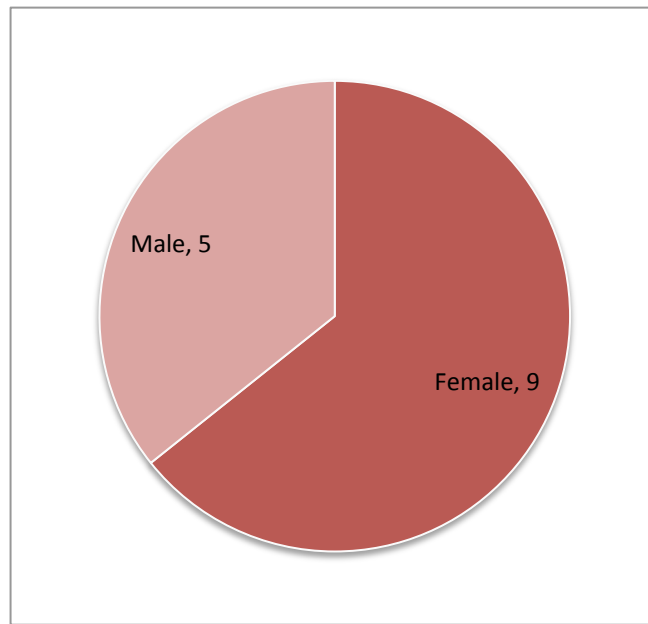
Figure 8-1 Gender distribution (GL)
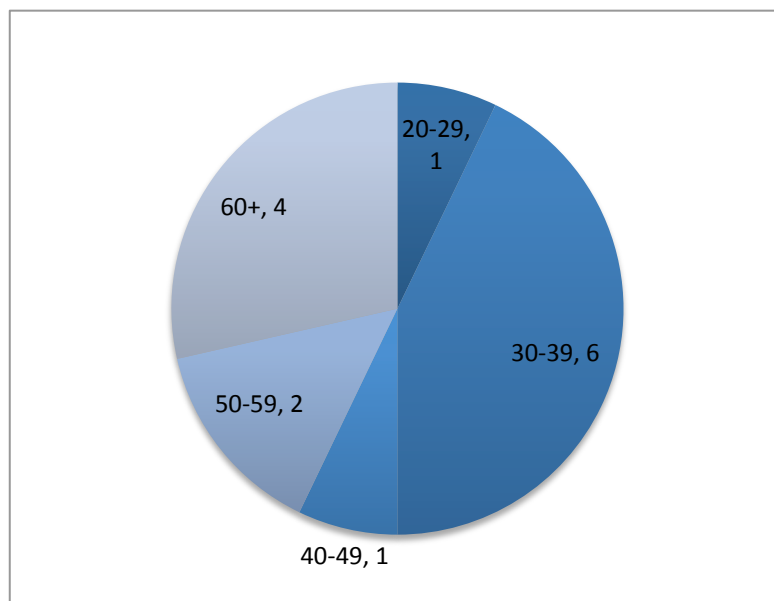
Figure 8-2 Age distribution (GL)

8.1.1.2 Age

In this research, participants are categorized by five age groups: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and 60 and above, In GL, the participants can be divided exactly into two halves by age: the 20-year-olds (1 out of 14) and 30-year-olds (6 out of 14) together account for half of the participants; the 40-year-olds (1 of 14), 50-years-old (2 of 14) and 60-years-olds and above (4 of 14) together account for the other half. Participants under 50 (8 out of 14) are slightly overrepresented in comparison with those over 50 (6 out of 14) (see Figure 8-2).

8.1.1.3 Level of education

Holders of university and postgraduate degree are overrepresented by 13 out of 14 participants in GL, meaning that almost all participants completed university-level education. Only one participant holds GCSE qualification as his highest educational qualification. About two-third of participants hold postgraduate university degrees (8 out of 14) (see Figure 8-3). It is fair to say that the majority of the GL participants are well educated, and have completed higher education.
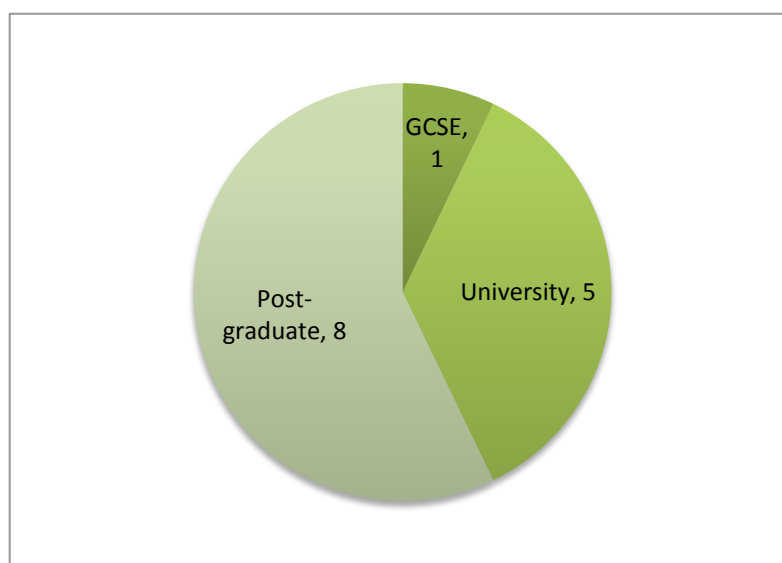
Figure 8-3 Level of education distribution (GL)

The subjects GL participants studied for university or postgraduate degrees include art-related subjects, humanities and social sciences subjects, science-related subjects, and marketing. Five out of 14 participants, including one participant who had an undergraduate dentistry degree and a postgraduate art degree, studied art-related subjects, including art history, Islamic art, digital design, and fine art. However, these participants pursued a career irrelevant to art after their studies; two of them, in fact, studied for art degrees after retirement for personal interest. Five out of 14 studied humanities or social sciences subjects in university or postgraduate level, e.g. history, archaeology, law, education. Three out of 14 went into science, e.g. dentistry, physics, but one of them pursued a postgraduate level art degree after retirement, as mentioned above. One out of 14 participants had postgraduate university degree in marketing.

8.1.1.4 Socio-economic status

In this research, I categorized GL participants' socio-economic background according to the classification system devised by UK's Office for National Statistics, the Socio-economic Classifications (SEC)[7], which is measured by occupation of the adult population in the UK. Although the unit of analysis of SEC was household rather than individual, which assigned the category to the head of the household or the main person responsible for the accommodation, for the purpose of classifying participants in this research, I treated art enthusiasts as independent individuals rather than considering their roles in a household. Therefore, art enthusiasts are classified as if they were the main person responsible for the accommodation. The SEC originally devised eight classes, but for different analytic purpose, five- and

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[7] The Socioeconomic Classification is retrieved at:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/current-standard-classifications/soc2010/soc2010-volume-3-ns-sec--rebased-on-soc2010--user-manual/index.html

three- class versions are also used. In this research, I use the eight-class version (see Table 8-1) to group participants.

The employed participants in GL account for half of the entire group (7 out of 14), and the other half, represented by full-time students and pensioners, is categorized as unclassifiable according to SEC. Among the employed, the majority (4 out of 7) sits in the first class; they are employed in higher professional occupations in health, science, law, or education sectors. Three out of the seven employed participants sit in the second class; they hold lower professional or associate professional positions in media and engineering sectors (see Figure 8-4).

However, among the unclassifiable, the majority (5 out of 7) is retired workforce, and these participants had held higher professional or managerial occupations in finance, law, health, or education sectors.

Table 8-1 Socio-economic classification (SEC)

Class	Category
1	Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations
2	Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations
3	Intermediate occupations
4	Small employers and own account workers
5	Lower supervisory and technical occupations
6	Semi-routine occupations
7	Routine occupations
8	Never worked and long-term unemployed
Not classified	Full-time students; Pensioners
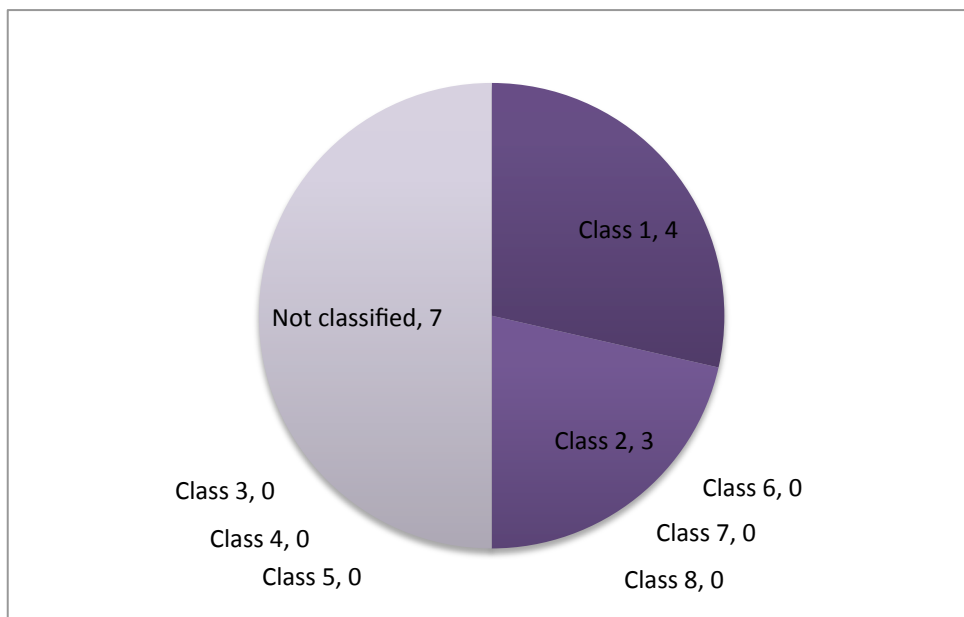
Figure 8-4 Socio-economic background distribution (GL)

8.1.1.5 Ethnicity

In GL, participants belong to three different ethnic groups, which, according to the ethnic categories developed by the UK's Office for National Statistics (see Table 8-2), can be categorized by: 'White', 'Asian/Asian British', and 'Other ethnic group'. The majority of participants (10 out of 14) are White – either British, or other European descendants. Three out of 14 participants are of Asian background; among the three, two of them are Chinese, and the other one is Malaysian. One participant from GL is of other ethnic background – a descendant of Amerindians (see Figure 8-5).

Table 8-2 Ethnic group categories

White
1. English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
2. Irish
3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any other White background
Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups

5. White and Black Caribbean	
6. White and Black African	
7. White and Asian	
8. Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background	
Asian/ Asian British	
9. Indian	
10. Pakistani	
11. Bangladeshi	
12. Chinese	
13. Any other Asian background	
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	
14. African	
15. Caribbean	
16. Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background	
Other ethnic group	
17. Arab	
18. Any other ethnic group	
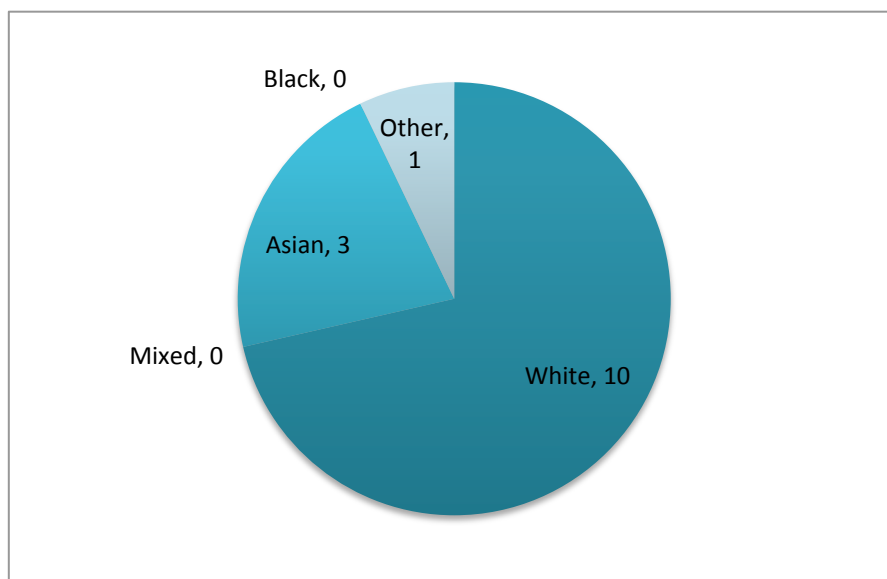
Figure 8-5 Ethnic group distribution (GL)

In short, art enthusiasts in this group are slightly overrepresented by females, young or middle-aged professionals aged between 20 and 50 years old, and have relatively high socio-economic status. The majority of participants have completed higher education, and the majority of the group is White British or other European descendant.

8.1.2 Areas of interest

In this section, I discuss, first, how interest is expressed, and then I look at interest in relationship with participants' art-related experiences and practices. Art enthusiasts in GL demonstrated diverse and eclectic areas of interest, which were captured through open-ended questions stated in semi-structured interviews. The questions were phrased openly and in a less structured manner, e.g. 'what art are you interested in?' Hence, participants were given the freedom to use their own language to define interest. The following two subsections are dedicated to: presenting the ways interest is expressed (Section 8.1.2.1); discussing how interest is linked to certain practices and may be determined by relevant knowledge and experience in engaging with art (Section 8.1.2.2).

8.1.2.1 Items of interest

Each participant demonstrated a mixed area of interest; participants expressed this by using distinctive items, which were diverse and eclectic. Figure 8-6 below shows examples of the items of interest (taken from an exhaustive list) mentioned by the participants in interviews.

Among the mentioned items, the top three most frequently mentioned items were paintings (8 out of 14), sculpture (5 out of 14), and photography (4 out of 14), showing that the majority of participants showed interest in paintings. However, across the 14 participants, the items used to define interest sprang across difference art forms, styles and time periods, which meant that participants showed interest in a variety of art historical areas and periods. Moreover, some participants tended to define their interest in a manner of personal taste. I now elaborate my points with some examples.

As I examined each participant's set of items of interest, there was often a mixture of disparate items. For example, Alex's area of interest included 'paintings',

'Old Masters', 'some Picassos', and 'some Expressionists'. However, some participants demonstrated a set of items with particular focus. Pam, for example, reported that she was most interested in art from the Renaissance period, and she used two more items – Michelangelo (its most representative artist) and Sculpture (its most celebrated art form) – to elaborate her interest. She commented:

(Researcher: What comes to your mind when you think about art?) Um…I suppose, because Renaissance is my favorite, I'm thinking of Michelangelo and sculpture. (Researcher: Why Michelangelo?) He's an outstanding sculptor and artist of the period, and that's my favorite period. (Pam, GL)
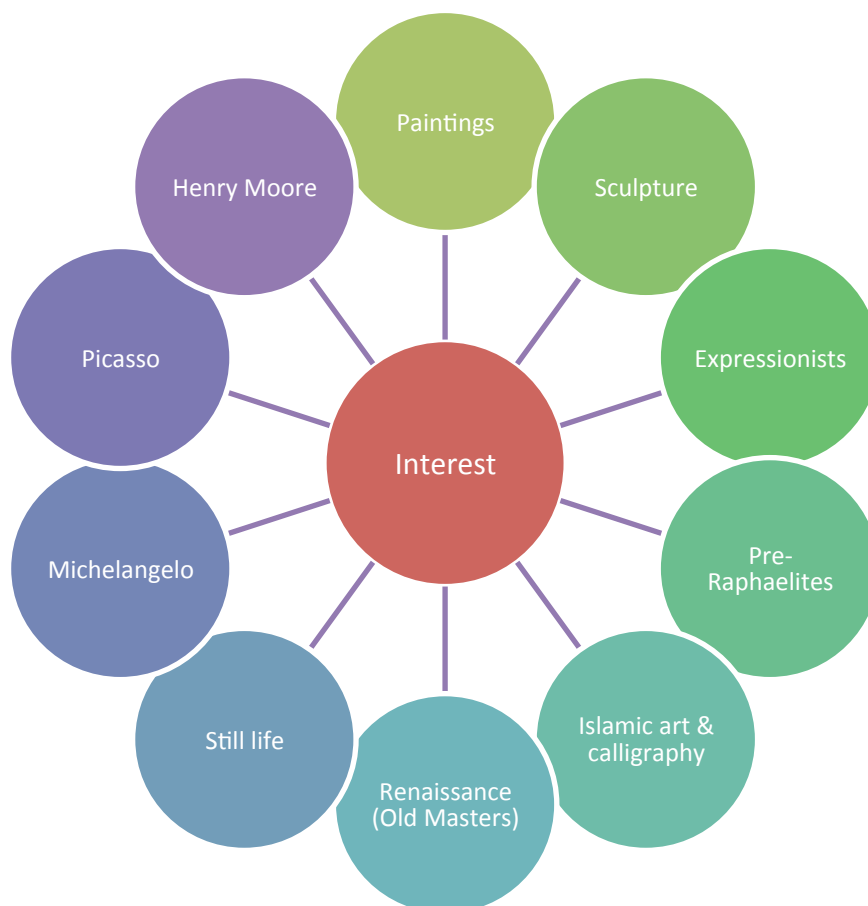
Figure 8-6 items of interest (GL)

A similar example was also found in Josh's account. Josh used items such as installations, video art, interactive art, and contemporary art to define his interest,

all of which demonstrated some relevance to art in the contemporary period. However, among the two-third of the participants (9 out of 14) rather eclectic items were mentioned.

Nearly two-third of the participants (8 out of 14) referred to their interest in a manner of personal taste and preference, with the support of the above-mentioned items, which resonated with how interest researchers (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006) conceptualized interest, namely, as attraction, liking or preference. Various types of expression were found among these participants. For example, participants tended to use rather subjective, broad and loose terms or phrases to in their statements, such as 'experimental stuff', 'art that are aesthetically pleasing', 'art that is technically very good', or 'art that is not that experimental'. Similarly, expressing dislikes was also a common way of defining interest. For example, Stella expressed interest in painting, textile work, and 'flat things'; she also added that she 'didn't really like installation', and neither did she enjoy 'Dutch Masters'. A similar example was found in Jo's quote. She described herself as having 'a great love for beautiful things', and she also considered modern art not to her taste. She commented:

I don't particular enjoy a lot about modern art, it seems to me more about techniques [and process] as opposed to the end product. I think the end product is far more interesting than the technique. (Researcher: So what type of art are you particularly interested?) I don't think I have a particular set, for example, I would go and see most things. (Jo, GL)

Another type of expression related museums and collections to one's area of interest. One participant, Jill, used the Tate Modern and Le Centre Pompidou to delineate the type of artworks that interested her, supporting the item, Modern art, which she used to describe her interest as well.

In general, participants demonstrated diverse interest, and used diverse language to define their interest. Both central participants (volunteers or course attendees) and peripheral participants (frequent visitors) tended to define their interest by using a mixture of art-related items or loose terms, as they were given

the freedom to do so. A link was found between participants' areas of interest and participants' engagement in interest-driven practice, which is discussed in the following subsection.

8.1.2.2 Links between areas of interest, identity and engagement

In GL, the six central participants were museum volunteers at the Tate Modern, the V&A, and the British Museum, and museum course participants (at the V&A). A link was found between these participants' interest and their involvement in the museum. A typical example was Pam. As discussed in the preceding section, Pam's interest focused on art of the Renaissance period, which aligned well with the V&A collection, in which she based her engagement as a volunteer and her practice in guiding specifically at V&A's Renaissance gallery (although she guided in other galleries as well). A similar example was found in Susan's account. She volunteered at the Tate, and demonstrated interest in Modern and Contemporary art, which also aligned with the collection features of Tate Modern. Similarly, as course participants, Cathy and Helen showed particular interest in Islamic art and design, which both linked to the courses they had participated at the V&A. The alignment between initial interest in museum collection and volunteering practice was understood, as I pointed out in Section 6.1.2, as an essential characteristic among museum volunteer (Stebbins 2001, 2011). Similarly, interest also drove participants' engagement in learning, as Cathy and Helen's example showed.

Among the eight peripheral participants, a link was also found between interest and participants past engagement in art, such as creative practice. Examples were found in John, Maria, Jill and Charlie, who shared interest in drawings and paintings. These participants linked their interest to their creative experiences in the past, e.g. making art at school, or engaging in extra-curricular art lessons, which pointed out different contexts from which an early pathway to art took place.

Although unanimous focuses of interest were found among participants,

particularly among central participants whose interest was found to align with the museum, each participant presented diverse items of interest. It should be noted that the majority of participants demonstrated very mixed interest, which sprang across art of different culture, forms, schools, styles, and time periods. More importantly, these listed items were associated with different sources of influence, e.g. an event one attended, a friend who shared the same interest, a museum one visited as a child, a curious object one saw at different point throughout one's life, as much as interest was influenced by volunteering practice or creative practice.

To further explore the diversity of interest and the dynamic process through which an interest evolves, I pursue the question 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' by taking a retrospective examination of the processes through which art enthusiasts engaged with art. The following sections are dedicated to answer this question by identifying and exploring the developmental dynamics of artistic interest, including the influences that spark and sustain the interest, the resources that make the pursuit possible, and the role of particular key resources – museums and galleries.

8.2 Influences

In this section, I engage with my research question 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) by elaborating one of the three developmental dynamics of artistic interest, influences. In this research, participants were asked to delve retrospectively into how they were influenced in terms of developing an interest in art, and I then deduced three categories from the data, which framed 'influences' with particular people, which I discuss in Section 8.2.1; places, which I discuss in Section 8.2.2; activities and practices, which I discuss in Section 8.2.3. These categories highlighted specific elements of an influence on interest; altogether, they helped elaborate the context in which artistic interest was formed.

Figure 8-7 shows the three categories of influences, which I characterized as the first dynamic of interest development. Under each category, items are listed as

examples representing the category; for example, museums, art learning spaces (e.g. schools, art studios), and neighborhoods were identified as key influences associated with the category 'place'. The three circles overlap, because an influence categorized as in one circle may also have an impact on another circle; for example, creative practice as an 'activity & practice' influence, in fact, overlaps with the 'places' influence because creative practice was often found to take place in various learning settings, such as at school as part of the formal education, or in an informal learning space (e.g. art studio) as an out-of-school activity.
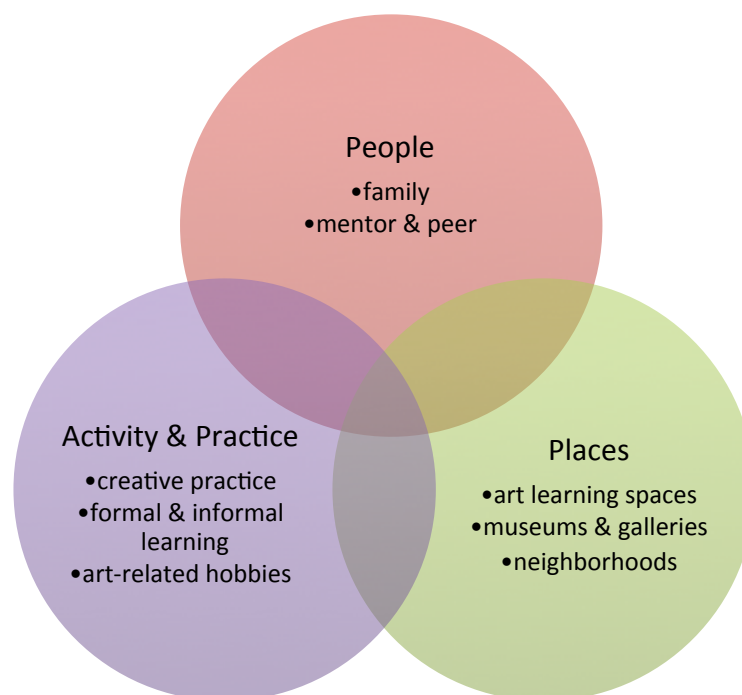
Figure 8-7 Categories of influences on artistic interest (GL)

8.2.1 People

In this section, I present the first category of influence, people, which was further specified by three subcategories: family (e.g. parents, partners), mentors (e.g. teachers) and peers (e.g. friends, fellow volunteers). Among the 14 participants in GL, family members, particularly parents, partners, adult children; peers, particularly friends, fellow volunteers; and mentors, particularly schoolteachers were mentioned as key figures they came across in life and had considerable impact on interest in

different manners.

8.2.1.1 Family

Family referred to members of the participant's family, as well as the intimate setting where interactions with family members took place. Family was the most frequently mentioned category, in which the majority of participants (11 out of 14) specified as an influence on their interest. Parents were most often identified as a source of influence; nine out of 14 participants acknowledged parents as a driving force in engaging them in art in different manners. These participants gave examples of parents actively influencing children through early exposure to art: through visiting museums and galleries, traveling, and encouraging children to create and appreciate art. A typical example was Paula. Paula reported that her parents actively encourage children to develop an interest in art and culture through getting children to visit theatres, museums and galleries, mostly for education or social reasons. She commented:

Both of my parents are teachers, so they were into, you know, getting us into the theater, getting us into the museums and galleries kind of stuff. (Paula, GL)

Eight out of 14 participants shared Paula's experience. They stated that they had parents who took them to museums and galleries, traveled to cultural sites, or encouraged them to create art when they were young. Furthermore, parents' attitude towards and taste in art also made an impact on children; parental engagement in art was linked with home resources related with art (Pitts 2009). Jo was a typical example. In her quote, she commented that her parents and family members, who engaged with art, got her engage in art:

I wasn't particularly an artistic child. But my family, has a huge number of art [teachers or

artists], who were art teachers, who did art. My mother was art teacher and I remembered both mother and father taught me to draw, and how to do profiles and things like that. (Jo, GL)

In Jo's case, growing up in an artistic family whose members were art teachers and artists made a positive impact on Jo's interest in art. She grew up appreciating art and involving in art like her family. It can be inferred that parents play a key role in terms of providing access or opportunity to engage in art in the development of interest. This finding was consistent with the works that addressed parental influence and home resources in interest-driven pursuits (e.g. Crowley et al. 2015, and Pitts 2009).

Three out of 14 participants also considered their partners or adult children as influence. Participants mentioned that their other halves shared the same interest, and they tended to participate in art together. Partners, therefore, generated influence in supporting participants' interest-driven pursuits. A typical example was Helen, who described that her husband she had mutual interest when they went on holiday. She commented:

When we are away, if we are in Cottage in Yorkshire, and we found in the local town has some art shops, we went to have a look, and bought some beautiful watercolor and bronzes of animals. So it's quite, I think, having married to someone also interested in it, and therefore, it's just part of what we do. (Helen, GL)

Helen's example was a good illustration of building an interest together with a partner, and she characterized their interest in art, traveling and collecting as part of their routines ('it's just part of what we do'). A similar example was found in Charlie and Jill, who shared the experience of going on cultural holidays and visiting galleries in their spare time, as discussed in Section 7.3. Partners could be understood as playing a role in supporting the development of interest.

Adult children were also found to play a similar role as parents in terms of

providing access to the art world. One participant, Susan, considered her children an influence, and valued their 'young ideas and influence'. Susan's children also had strong interest in art, and they were described by Susan to have kept her updated for what the art world looked like nowadays.

Two of my children study art, and the youngest one is very, he's very stimulating to me, because he keeps me updated in what's going on, his interest in art and artists. So through him, I know lots about art. He talks a lot about art. (Susan, GL)

Hence, adult children, in this case, were considered to have as much influence as parents had in engaging participants to explore an interest. As I addressed in Section 6.2.1, family influence was found to have two-fold impact. As Pitts (2009) noted, experience as a parent seemed to have an impact on interest; participants as parents, were influential to their children, and in turn, they were also influenced by children's interest.

8.2.1.2 Mentors

Three out of 14 participants considered mentoring figures as a source of influence. Participants mentioned teachers or tutors in formal or informal learning settings (e.g. school, drawing session at a museum), and described them as having inspired their creativity or understanding of art. For example, John reported that he had an art teacher who encouraged students 'to use any kind of material you wanted, rather than get restricted', and he had enjoyed making art in her class as a student. A similar example was found in Patrick's account. He mentioned that he benefited from his tutor's constructive criticisms at the drawing sessions at the British Museum, which was considered helpful in sustaining his drawing practice. Furthermore, it is also noted that teachers in domain beyond art also play influential roles. Stella was a typical example, and she reported that she was inspired by her English teacher, who evoked students' interest with the question 'what is

representation', and she therefore, learned about different ways of interpreting art from the class.

Among these examples, teachers and tutors were found to generate influence through giving guidance, and therefore supported the development of interest. This finding was consistent with Pitts' (2009) study, in which she found that mentoring figures, in particular in school setting, were considered a prominent influence on early interest. Although mentoring figures were mentioned by a small number of participants, half of the participants (7 out of 14) confirmed their art learning experiences at school, mediated by a teaching figure, had been an interest-related influence (See Section 8.2.3).

8.2.1.3 Peers

Seven out of 14 participants considered peers who shared their interest, or peers with expertise or knowledge in art (e.g. friends, colleagues, fellow volunteers) as a source of influence. Peers were described as an influence because they were able to exchange information and opinions about an object of interest with participants, and exploring interest together in a particular group. Different types of interaction with peers were found. A typical example of peer influence was found in Alex's account, in which he pointed out that he was influenced by peers ('academics') he worked with when he worked in France. He commented:

(…) in France, I started to go to museum, not with family, but with academics. (…) there are people who have a background [in art], they know how to enjoy art, so I learn a lot from them. And it was then that I started going to some museums, sometimes for the permanent collection, and sometimes for a specific exhibition. (Alex, GL)

Alex's example was an illustration of an art novice learning from a peer who had an expertise and was more capable in the field of art; interacting with peers helped build the interest, especially in encouraging one to visit museums. A similar example

was Maria, who reported that her traveling with a close friend who 'has been into art and knows a lot' helped her learn about artists and their works. More examples were found to support the case of peer influence, many of which involved interactions with friends, colleagues, and fellow volunteers. This finding confirmed the value of peer influence contributing to the deepening of interest, which was also addressed in other studies of interest-driven pursuits (e.g. Azevedo 2011). This category, together with the category of mentors, also revealed the links between artistic interest and cross-setting engagement through, for example, learning at school, or volunteering at museums.

8.2.2 Places

In this section, I present the second category, places, which referred to physical spaces, institutions or environment that had an impact on participants' interest. As discussed in Section 8.2.1, certain figures were highlighted as playing a role in sparking or expanding participants interest, including teachers, schoolmates, senior volunteers or fellow volunteers, and they seemed to be associated with particular physical settings, such as schools, museums, or other art learning spaces. The category was further specified by three subcategories: art learning spaces, i.e. schools, studios where participants took lessons and practiced art; museums and galleries where participants engaged with works of art; and neighborhood where participants used to live.

8.2.2.1 Schools and other art learning spaces

This subcategory referred to learning spaces such as schools, art centers, drawing schools, and learning centers affiliated with museums; the experience of learning about art in different settings can also be linked to these spaces. Schools were first mentioned as an influence by 11 out of 14 participants. As noted in Section

8.2.1.2, participants already mentioned being provoked or inspired by teachers or tutors at school. They further confirmed that they enjoyed and engaged in art courses at different level in a formal education setting. Charlie, for example, acknowledged the influence of school in terms of sparking his interest in art, and he had studied art in secondary school (see Section 7.3.2). As Pitts (2009) noted, positive experience of receiving education at school was considered an important factor for sustaining an interest. Schools were closely with participants' prior learning experiences in art, and will be explored further in the following section (Section 8.2.3.2).

Three out of 14 participants also mentioned other art learning spaces (excluding the museum), including the Prince's Drawing School in London, and the Midland's Art Centre in Birmingham. These institutions facilitated learning in an out-of-school setting, and helped deepen participants' interest both in the creative and intellectual aspects. A typical example was Patrick, who was self-initiated and engaged in drawing courses after his retirement. His interest was sustained in these art learning spaces, as he commented:

I've also done courses in NG (National Gallery) and the Prince's Drawing School, where the tutors have taken us around and looked at the paintings and explained the backgrounds, so I suppose I have a deeper appreciation of the history. (Patrick, GL)

Similar to Patrick's experience, Cathy and John, both of whom had shown interest in art at school, also reported that they benefited from taking courses in particular drawing schools. This finding further confirmed that interest in a subject at school could lead to self-initiated learning (Barron 2006). In addition, learning spaces affiliated with museums were also mentioned by two participants; they attended courses related with their interest at museum affiliated learning spaces.

8.2.2.2 Museums and galleries

Museums provided a setting for interaction between a person and an object of interest, and such interaction has traditionally been the main focus of interest research (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006; Krapp 2007). The expression of 'tripping over art' – articulated by Helen who, in her own words, 'tripped over' John Singer Sargent's work in an exhibition when she traveled to Boston and was sparked interest in Sargent (see Section 7.2) – provided an example of museums acting a physical setting that realized a triggering moment. This expression was only found in Helen's account, but was borrowed as a conceptual idea to describe similar responses found in 3 out of 14 participants, whose interest was sparked when they 'tripped over' art in a museum setting. These unexpected encounters were described as a triggering moment when participants' interest in a certain artwork was piqued, which could have a subsequent impact on the development of interest.

Half of the participants (7 out of 14) considered their early encounters with museums or galleries an influence on artistic interest. Among these participants, these encounters were mentioned mostly in a social context; participants described visits they paid with family members or friends, or in school groups, and these experiences were considered positive and coupled with positive feelings about the artworks or the entire experience. A similar link was found in the studies of interest-driven pursuits, in which museums were linked with early interest in science (Crowley et al. 2015). Two typical examples of early and positive encounter with art museum with family were found in John and Cathy's accounts. John, for example, mentioned the Birmingham Art Museum, which was one of his early museum experiences (a visit with family), and considered it an exciting and enjoyable one. He stated:

(…) we used to go to, when we were little, we used to go to the science museum, went to the art museum, I remember going there, it's quite exciting, like a real treat. So yeah, at an early age. (John, GL)

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Cathy, on the other hand, depicted a memorable visit to the National Gallery when she was eight or nine years of age with her family. She recalled seeing a painting by Rembrandt, from which she learned about the different meanings of beauty. She stated:

I remember thinking as a child, um, looking at a painting of an old woman and being amazed how someone who was not beautiful, was quite ugly and wrinkled, but the way he [Rembrandt] painted her, it was sensitivity and affection, it was beautiful! (Cathy, GL)

Similar examples of encountering art at an art museum or gallery at young age were found in the other participants' accounts. It was found that early experience at museums and galleries could, if not directly, leave with the participants a memorable experience that could lead to further engagement, as Anderson (2003) noted.

It should be noted that museums and galleries were also mentioned as an interest-related resource (see Section 8.3) in addition to an influence. Similarly, museums and galleries also played a role in the neighborhood participants lived (see Section 8.2.2.3), or were considered a leisure destination (see Section 8.2.3.4).

8.2.2.3 Neighborhoods

The subcategory, neighborhoods, referred to the environment/city, in which participants grew up or had been living, and was mentioned by half of the participants (7 out of 14). Among these participants, four of them mentioned that growing up or living in London had a positive impact on interest, because of London's rich cultural offerings and resources. The other three participants mentioned other (and international) cities, e.g. Edinburgh, Chicago, and Thessaloniki, in which they grew up or studied, for similar reasons. A typical example was Josh, who moved from Taiwan (where he is originally from) to London for his studies and work five years ago. He considered living in London a sustaining influence on his interest in visiting

galleries; he also drew a comparison between London and Taipei, and noted that he became more active in visiting art exhibition in London in contrast to Taipei. He commented:

I went to galleries occasionally when I was at uni, because there weren't many places in Taipei. It was actually in London when I started going more. (…) In London, you still have loads to see even if you visit one place every week! There are always new exhibits going on. (Josh, GL)

Josh's quote also inferred that being geographically convenient to museums was understood as an advantage that led to an active cultural life, and therefore contributed to the development of artistic interest. This particular advantage should be considered part of the interdependent contexts of a learning ecology (Barron 2006), and as were the other learning spaces (e.g. schools, art studios, museums, universities).

8.2.3 Activities and practices

In this section, I present the third category, activities and practices. A range of activities and practices that participants used to engage in doing was already referred in the preceding two sections. For example, as addressed in Section 8.2.2.1, several learning settings were closely linked with creative practices (e.g. art-making), including schools, art centers, or other art learning spaces. The activities and practices discussed throughout this section were understood, as both Azevedo (2011) and Crowley et al. (2015) noted, as practice-based pursuits of a domain of interest. Some of the activities and practices were considered to initiate an emerging interest (e.g. creative practice), whereas the other activities were interest-driven pursuits that deepened an existing interest. The category was further specified by six subcategories: creative practices; participation in formal or informal learning settings; art-related hobbies; practices at work; traveling; and volunteering practice.

8.2.3.1 Creative practice

Creative practice was considered an influence by 10 out of 14 participants, who reported that their early interest in art was linked to creative experience. These participants engaged in creative practice at young age in various settings, including home, school, or out-of-school as extra-curricular activity. Different level of involvement was also found among these participants. Some (e.g. Josh, Pam, Patrick) enjoyed drawing and doodling as a child, others (e.g. Jill, Stella, Maria) engaged in extra-curricular art lessons, and still others (e.g. Charlie, John) engaged in art courses at school, or further pursued formal education in art schools (e.g. Cathy, Susan, Patrick). A typical example was Stella. She described herself involving in art at young age through taking art lessons that her parents arranged as extra-curricular activity; she also continued her practice throughout her student life engaging in art courses. She commented:

I took a lot of art lessons, um, well, when I was child I had a choice, they (parents) said 'you can either continue doing ballet, or art. You can only have one activity.' I said 'ok, I'll do art.' (Researcher: What did you do in those lessons?) Kind of general, like, let's make things out of clay, or let's make things in the style of Matisse. Um...and I really like that kind of directed art, and then I moved into oil painting, because I took lessons and I really liked it. (Stella, GL)

The other nine participants shared Stella's experience, reporting that they engaged in creative practice in their childhood. Many of these participants also stated that early artistic interest came from these creative practices. Hence, early year engagement in creative and artistic practice, in particular, was linked to the initiation of artistic pathway. This finding aligned with similar studies of scientific interest and pathway to science (e.g. Crowley et al. 2015).

Interestingly, it was also found that among these participants who engaged in creative practices at a young age, six of them expressed aspiration for pursuing a

degree or career in art when they were young. For example, Susan, who considered herself 'always better at practical subjects' and enjoyed making art at school, stated that it was natural for her to go into a subject such as art and craft for a higher level. An aspiration to pursue art careers or studies in art can be interpreted as attempts to deepen an early interest. Among the six participants who aspired to pursue a career in art, two of them completed undergraduate degree in art, but went into a different direction afterwards; three of them pursued other careers or degrees, but returned to art-related subject for postgraduate studies after retirement or after university; and one pursued a different subject in her studies. Hence, these participants went on and off their pathways, but they seemed to remain connected to art through different channels, including carrying out their creative practice.

8.2.3.2 Formal and informal learning settings

As discussed in both Section 8.2.1.2 and Section 8.2.2.1, participants already mentioned that early interest in art was supported by learning experiences at school or out-of-school settings, and in some cases, mediated by inspiring teachers or tutors. Hence, formal learning setting was considered an important setting where interest-related learning took place, and was mentioned by 11 out of 14 participants. Participants reported that their interest was provoked or inspired by their learning at secondary school, university, or college. Among these participants, seven of them stated that they enjoyed and engaged in art courses at different level ranging from A-levels to postgraduate level. Charlie, for example, acknowledged his studies on art at secondary school as an influence on his interest. He commented:

(…) my initial study at school has formed a lot of that interest, and then I guess it just spiralled from that because everyone is just influenced by something, so it's just taking an obvious choice, I like this artist because I studied at school, and then you learn about this and you go off different directions. (Charlie, GL)

Furthermore, the subjects participants studied varied, and were not limited to art. History and literature were also mentioned as subjects that had an impact on interest in addition to art. For example, Helen's interest in the Pre-Raphaelites was inspired by her studies on history at senior year. Similarly, Jill took modules on literature and creative industry at university, which she reported, had broadened her understanding of art, and paved the way for her further pursuit of postgraduate degree relevant to art. Hence, participants not only acquired practical skills in art-making, but they also developed knowledge and understanding about art from different perspectives through learning at school; moreover, participants developed new practices and created new learning opportunities, such as gallery going (for school assignment, for example). This finding, again, supported Barron's (2006) work, in which she pointed out that interest in a subject at school could lead to self-initiated learning, and developing strategies to support the interest, such as engaging in further education, or out-of-school activities.

Informal learning setting, on the other hand, was considered an influence by 11 out of 14 participants; participants reported that learning experiences at out-of-school settings, such as museums, drawing schools, and art centers. As addressed in Section 8.2.2.1 and Section 8.2.3.1, participants already stated that they engaged in art learning (not limited to art making) in several learning environments, and 7 out of 14 participants also reported that they carried out their creative practices in out-of-school settings. Maria, for example, engaged in out-of-school art activities as a child. She had an opportunity to choose what to do during school break, and she engaged in what interested her. She stated:

(…) Especially once you finish school, you have to do something, and my mom said 'you have to do something. I don't want you just to play around…' So, and she said to me, 'what do you want to do?' 'Ok I want to do drawing and painting.' (Maria, GL)

As Crowley and Jacobs (2002) noted, family activities that built around a specific topic of interest (an island of expertise) contributed to children's developing of

advanced experience and knowledge about such topic. Four out of 14 participants reported that their interest was supported by learning activities they engaged in family setting. For example, Alex explained that he learned to appreciate architecture and buildings from his parents when they traveled, and he considered this way of learning rather informal ('That way, but nothing academic'). Similarly, Stella confirmed the influence of family learning. As a child, she used to travel and visit international museums with family, and she reported always buying books (See Figure 8-8) and reading with her family to learn more about the artists when they visited museums abroad. She stated, 'when we go I would get a book of Monet for young artist, and Van Gogh for young artist, Picasso for young artist'. Finally, Susan, whose artistic interest derived from her early interest in craft making, reported that she learned to be practical from her parents, who were also active in sewing and crafting. These examples echoed with Crowley and Jacobs' (2002) point that learning that rooted into family activities had an impact on interest-related experience.
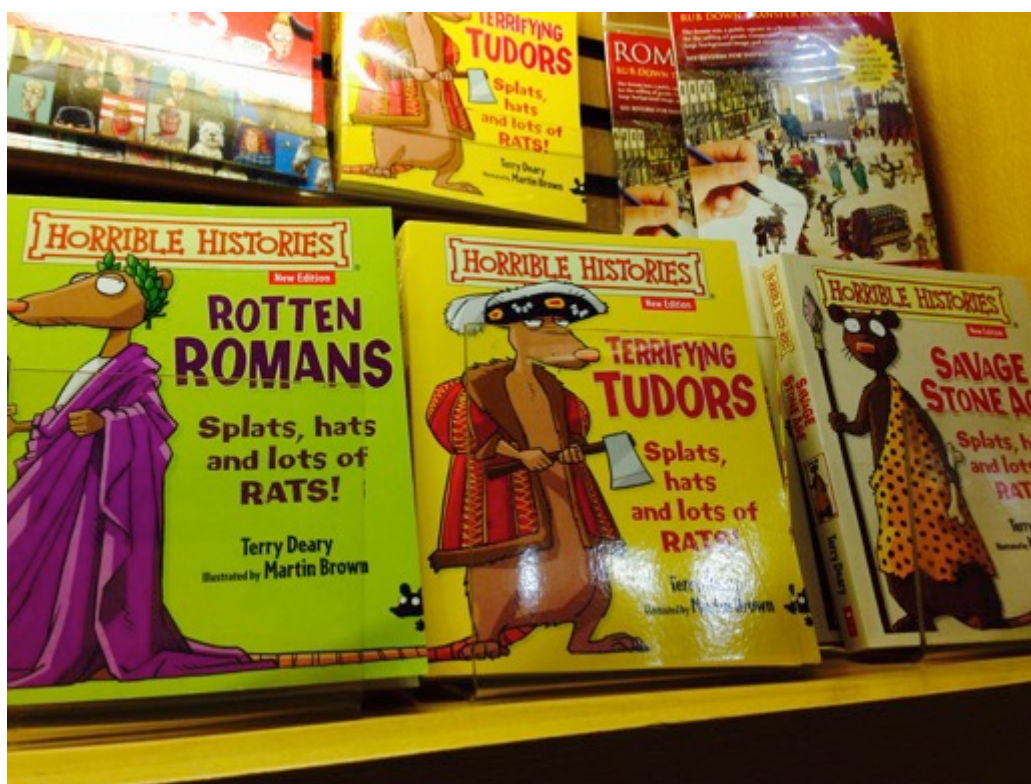
Figure 8-8 An example of the types of book Stella and her family engaged in reading for a museum visit (Photo by Carol Chung)

8.2.3.3 Volunteering

Three central participants, two of them volunteered at the Tate Modern, and the remaining one at the V&A, considered volunteering an influence for the access to cultural resources that volunteering brought. For example, Susan, who volunteered at the Tate, stated that she benefited from lectures and talks open to volunteers. She said, 'I really enjoy having that access to extra knowledge. And of course I can go to the galleries and exhibitions more than once'.

Furthermore, volunteering was also characterized as an activity of self-expression and fulfillment, which aligned with the main rewards for pursuing serious leisure such as volunteering, as Stebbins (2011) noted. Participants considered volunteering an opportunity to engage in what they truly loved and to do what they were good at, which made volunteering a rewarding leisure experience. A typical example was Pam, who pursued her interest and completed her BA and MA in art history after retirement. She appreciated being a guide at the V&A because it offered her the opportunity to share her love of art and to impart her knowledge about art to people. A similar example was found in Patrick's account. He considered volunteering an opportunity to interact with people that he, as a teacher, loved to do, and to remain connected with art that he was interested in. He commented:

I was spending quite a lot of time at the Tate when I was teaching at St Paul's school. When I stopped working, I started looking ahead and what I would do when I have the time. I wanted to carry on my connection with the Cathedral, and I suppose I want to have some link with the art world, and I approached and made some enquiries. I've done it for two years. I really enjoy meeting people. I like working in sort of environment of art. (Patrick, GL)

Hence, volunteering could be seen as providing an opportunity to deepen participants' interest through gaining more access to museums, and through engaging in what participants loved to do. As a practice, which required a greater

extent of commitment, i.e. time, effort, and even money, engaging in volunteering could also be understood as an indicator of a more developed interest.

8.2.3.4 Other art-related hobbies

As discussed in Section 8.2.2.2 and Section 8.2.3.1, participants engaged in art making and museum visiting in their spare time, which were already reported having a direct impact on the developing of interest in art. In addition to these two activities, 9 out of 14 participants also reported that they engaged in other art-related hobbies. These hobbies covered a broad range of art forms, including film, theater, literature, and music, and represented participants' involvement in different fields of art. The relationship between interest in visual arts and interest in other art forms (e.g. film, music, and theater) needed to be clarified, but it was considered beyond the scope of this research. However, my initial observation suggested that the majority of participants consumed or participated in broader forms of art in addition to visual arts.

In addition, collecting was an art-related hobby that directly linked with interest in visual arts; 9 out of 14 participants mentioned that they had bought art – small objects (See Figure 8-9), prints, replicas, or originals – or collected art in a small scale. Participants mentioned buying art for decoration purpose. Alex, for example, reported owning two Van Gogh replicas, and 'a very nice photograph in black and white' in his house. Charlie and Jill also decorated their house with art they bought. Charlie, in particular, explained the rationale for buying art: 'it's not just something as a pretty picture. We try and like interpret something, and pick things that have a little bit of message, or context or story behind them'. The art Charlie and Jill bought was not only decorative, but also a demonstration of the couple's taste.

Figure 8-9 Cathy's collection of Asian ivory and jade decorations (Photo by Carol Chung)

Collecting as a hobby was also linked to other relevant practices, such as participating in art fairs. A typical example was Jo, who reported that she and her husband shared the interest in buying art, and tended to visit art fairs with a view to buying art they liked. She stated:

Well, we do like buying. So we buy a bit of art from time to time. Over the years we have a little collection in the house. We would go to art fairs to have a look around. And if some of our, people [artists] we like, and their galleries are doing something, and we get invited, we'll go and see. (Jo, GL)

From the examples, the practice of collecting could be understood as an interest-driven pursuit that involved a general interest in art. As Stebbins (2011) noted, buying or collecting art was understood as a form serious leisure pursued, in

particular, by liberal art hobbyists. Collecting, hence, was a hobby that sustained the interest.

8.2.3.5 Traveling

Traveling was considered an influence by 9 out of 14 participants. These participants saw traveling as a channel to access art, and linked traveling with museum visiting; traveling, as studies of authentic experience suggested, became inseparable from museums (Prentice 2001). As discussed in Section 8.2.1.1, many participants reported that their parents took them traveling and visiting local or international museums while participants were young. These participants also visited museums on their own while traveling, and came across with something that interested them. For example, Alex associated his museum experience with traveling. He said, 'when you travel, you start visiting places. In particular, about museums, it started with traveling, making plans, meeting other people in other countries'. For Alex, museums seemed to be an attraction to visit in order to get a sense of a new place.

Furthermore, a close link between traveling and gaining access to a culture, including its art, was found. Cathy was typical example of using traveling as a channel to approach foreign culture and its art. She engaged in cultural tourism, which, as she revealed in the quote below, sparked her interest in Islamic art. She commented:

I think I was interested in Islamic art, because I always had that immediate reaction when I first went to Istanbul, to the Cathedral Sophia, it is now museum, but it was a mosque. When I saw the Arabic writing on the medallion there, I was really impressed with the beauty of calligraphy. (Cathy, GL)

Engagement in cultural tourism, as Stebbins (1996) noted, was seen as a serious leisure form particularly linked with liberal arts interest. Moreover, traveling opened

the door to art and became a means to deepen an interest.

8.2.3.6 Work practice

Although participants' occupations were irrelevant to art in a strict sense, two out of 14 participants considered work practice as an influence, and these participants both had been teachers. Helen, who used to teach at primary school, believed that teaching and talking about art with youngsters generated insights for her understanding of art. She commented, 'it makes you look at something afresh. It makes you think about it'. Similarly, Susan, who used to teach in adult education, shared the experience of being informed by her teaching practice. In addition, one participant considered his career choices informed by his interest in art. Charlie, who works in intellectual property law, described his work as helping artists protect their life via law. He considered that his career was a combination of interest in art and law, and the interest had been developed since secondary school. It could be inferred that participants' practice at work may seem irrelevant to art, but could be connected to art, especially through teaching.

8.3 Resources

In this section, I continue to engage with my research question 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) by elaborating the second developmental dynamics of artistic interest, the resources. Resources, as Barron (2006) pointed out, was one of the key component of a context/setting identified as significant to the development of a given skill or knowledge (i.e. in a learning ecology). Resources are very relevant to the influences that have an impact on the development of an interest. School setting, for example, was understood as a setting that provided learning resources in various forms that involved different activities (e.g. history lessons) and tools (e.g. text-based information about the Pre-Raphaelite). Hence, the

resources in relationship with the context/setting that sustained participants' interest played a key role in understanding the pathway to art. Furthermore, the changing dynamics of accessing resources, for example, the behavior of an individual's seeking for resources was seen as an important indicator for the study of a developing interest (Hidi and Renninger 2006). In the interviews, participants were asked to elaborate what they mobilized to sustain the interest in art, including the channel through which they obtained information, and the habits they developed when they accessed certain key resources as well.

Figure 8-10 below shows the three categories of interest-related resources, which I characterized as the second dynamic of interest development. Under each category, items are listed as examples representing the category; for example, the category 'distributed resources' can be further discussed by subcategories, including printed publications (e.g. books, catalogues, magazines), online contents (e.g. newsletters) and multimedia contents (e.g. TV and radio programs). The resources participants mentioned were categorized by: venue-based resources (Section 8.3.1), people as resources (Section 8.3.2), and distributed resources (Section 8.3.3).
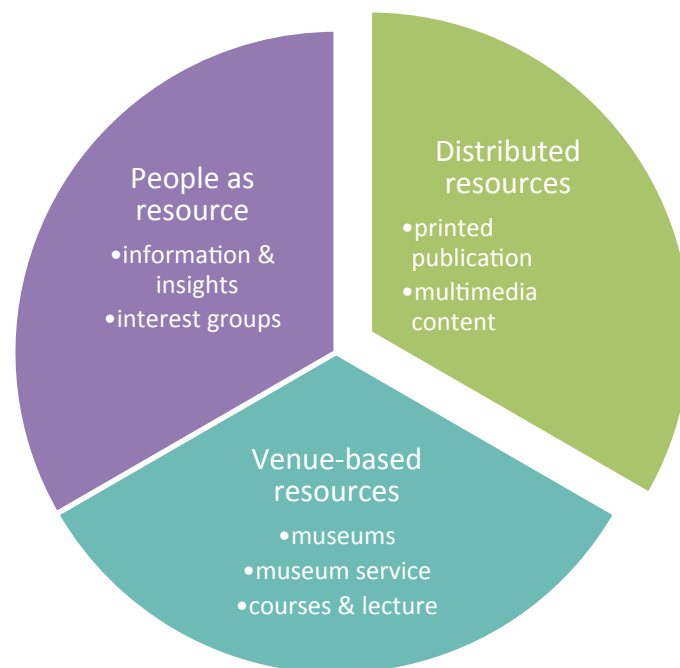
Figure 8-10 Categories of interest-related resources (GL)

8.3.1 Venue-based resources

In this section, I present the first category of resources, venue-based resources. Participants considered the following as venue-based resources: museums and galleries, museum-related services and facilities (e.g. memberships, affiliated libraries, curator talks, and guided tours), courses and lectures provided by museums and other cultural institutions.

8.3.1.1 Museums and galleries

Museums and galleries were the most frequently mentioned subcategory, which was addressed as an interest-related resource by all 14 participants. This finding was not surprising since it was pointed out in several preceding sections that museums were considered a place that supported the interest (although in different contexts), and an obvious link was found between interests in museum collections and volunteering practice among central participants. Moreover, participants were recruited as a frequent gallery visitor in this research. Most participants saw museums as an interest-related resource, which served as an important channel for information about art and as an initial contact point for accessing artworks and artifacts that interested them.

Among the museums and galleries mentioned by participants, those located in greater London included: The Royal Academy of Art, National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, British Museum, V&A, Tate Modern, Whitechapel Gallery, Courtauld Gallery, Saatchi Gallery, Institute of Contemporary Art, Whitecube, Serpentine Gallery, Dulwich Picture Gallery, Somerset House, Hayward Gallery, and the Barbican Centre. Participants not only saw museums as relevant to their interest, they also had a list of museums that they visited frequently, and considered aligning with their interest. For example, Patrick mentioned that he tended to visit 'major galleries' with his wife regularly to see exhibitions, in addition to the galleries in Mayfair that he often visited on his own. He stated:

(…) when I say regular, maybe 3,4,5 times a year, so not very many, but major exhibitions/galleries we would come to London to see. The RA [Royal Academy of Art], National Gallery, the Tate, Dulwich Picture Gallery. (Patrick, GL)

Similarly, the other participants also developed their own list of museums and galleries that they valued more. For example, sharing her favorite museums in London, Jo said, 'I would go to the V&A, British Museum, Tate. I haven't been to Dulwich but I would love to. It seems far away, that's the problem. I do like the Courtauld'. Furthermore, Jo placed trust on some these museums, and became a patron (paying memberships) to some of them. This can be linked to the following subcategory.

8.3.1.2 Museum-related service and facility

As Jo's example suggested, memberships was mentioned as a resource associated with museums and galleries by 9 out of 14 participants. Memberships included museum memberships, e.g. Royal Academy of Art, the Tate Modern, the British Museum, and the V&A; and cross-organization memberships, such as the National Trust, the Museum Association, and the National Art Association of Decorative and Fine Art Society (NADFAS). Participants reported that they purchased the above-mentioned memberships, which gave them access to member's benefits including private views, free admissions (or discount) to paid exhibitions, and events and facilities that were exclusive to members. Pam, for example, enjoyed participating in Monday lecture series as a member of NADFAS. She commented:

I belong to the NADFAS. National Art Association of the Decorative Fine Art Society. (…) Now I have been a member for two years, and every fourth Monday, I know I am going to hear a very good lecture, on Matisse, or there would be one on Macintosh. They

have study days sometimes. (Pam, GL)

Similar to paying memberships, central participants, especially volunteers, were also given access to the museum, including private views, free admissions, and exclusive events. Four out of 14 participants, who are volunteers, reported making use of their volunteer badges to access exhibitions, to attend events, and to invite friends to events.

Six out of 14 participants considered talks and lectures as a resource associated with the museum. Some participants were regular attendees of curator talks or lectures at certain institution (as a member or as a volunteer), as addressed in Pam's quote. Others reported that they often went to talks and workshops that were non-exclusive and open to general visitors. For example, Jill and Charlie both mentioned that they tended to go to curator talks at the National Gallery.

Guided tour and audio guide were also considered a museum-related resource by 5 out of 14 participants. These participants reported that audio guides and guided tours facilitated their understanding of exhibition contents, and considered them useful and informative. Some of them reported that they hired guides from time to time, or under specific circumstances. For example, Jill reported that she hired audio guide when she visited museums abroad, because audio guide provided more information about the artwork, which she was keen to find out. She said, 'it is very convenient in terms of knowing more about paintings and the stories depicted in them [the artworks]'.

Museum affiliated libraries were mentioned as a resource by one participant, Pam. She reported that she frequently visited the volunteer library and the National Art Library at the V&A for references and key books that she used to research on the V&A collection, and in preparation for her guided tours. Hence these libraries were considered an important resource for research.

8.3.1.3 Courses and lectures

Finally, 4 out of 14 participants mentioned courses and lectures as an interest-related resource. Participants mentioned that the courses were run by museums (e.g. the V&A) or other educational institutions (e.g. the Prince's Drawing school). Participants reported that they took part in practical or theoretical courses on themes relevant to their interest; for example, participants mentioned attending courses on drawing, 20th century art, and Asian art. For example, Helen made use of structured courses run by the V&A to deepen her interest in Art Deco. She engaged in this course to gain insights for a topic of her interest. She explained:

(…) Two reasons behind it, one reason, motivation was because I wanted to study something, in some depth, with some expertise, but was totally unrelated to what I did for work, so in other words it's purely for pleasure. (Helen, GL)

As Helen's example pointed out, courses were considered a resource to 'open doors' and to develop expertise. It was also found that participant who used courses as a resource, engaged in more than just one course in recent, and that these participants tended to be retired, or freelancer. Since the courses mentioned by participants were ran during weekdays and lasted for a term or a year, participating in courses seemed to be exclusive to those who had more spare time to devote to their interest. Hence, a link can be made between courses as a resource and participants who worked flexible hours or who retired from work.

8.3.2 People as resources

In this section, I present the second category, people as resources, which was based on the relationships and connections participants built with certain people they came across in their pathway to art, e.g. fellow volunteers, capable friends, and fellow students, some which were addressed in Section 8.2.1. Twelve out of 14

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participants considered their relationships and connections with certain people as a resource. Making use of these relationships and connections, participants were able to: gather information about a given topic of interest (through words of mouth); and build their interest through networking, learning and gaining insights from peers, or developing a different perspective.

First, participants considered words of mouth as a source of information. They sought people's recommendations to gather information about art events. Jo was a typical example, and she said, 'I would go to the websites, of course. I'd also talk to other people, "did you see this other thing?" People would come to see one thing, so their experience is very special to them'. It was found that people's experiences were considered a channel of information, and they were described as a resource.

Secondly, mixing and interacting with people who shared similar interest was considered an opportunity to build an interest; several ways of building an interest were mentioned. John, for example, reported that meeting people with similar interest deepened his interest. He commented, 'you sort of build your interest, you get more into it, more people to talk about it'. Similarly, Patrick shared the experience of building his interest in drawing by sharing experiences and discussing with fellow students about 'the problems we had with drawing, and how we come through' at the drawing session he attended. This echoed with the value of peer influence discussed in Section 8.2.1.1 and aligned with Azevedo's (2011) study of interest-driven pursuits. It could be further deduced that through building an interest, participants formed art-related communities, in which member were able to share resources, and even drew in more resources through networking. For example, Pam mentioned that she was able to join the NADFAS (which was a very good branch, according to Pam) because of the referral of a guide she knew at the V&A. Similar examples of sharing membership with friends – using other people's membership as a guest – were common.

Following the discussion on peer influence, learning and gaining insights from peers provided another context in which participants built an interest with other people. Similar discussion was presented in Section 8.2.1, where I pointed out that

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interactions with more experienced and capable peers had an influence on the deepening of interest. For example, Maria revealed that her interactions with a capable friend, who practiced and appreciated art, and introduced her to artists and their works. She considered this friend her source of knowledge. She commented:

(…) she [Maria's friend] has a lot of paintings that she did in the house, sculptures as well. Then we went to different galleries in London, the V&A, the Tate, all around, exhibitions we saw there, so, yeah I have learned a lot about art, Rembrandt, Turner – I like Turner – and so she introduced me to these people before I heard about them. So I'm learning about them, what they were doing, and their drawings. (Maria, GL)

Finally, participants also reported that they gained different perspectives on art through interacting with people. For example, Susan considered talking to other people and 'finding out what they like and why' an important way of building her interest. She described a situation in which she developed a different perspective about art when visiting gallery with a friend who enjoyed very different styles of paintings. She stated:

I was at the Courtauld gallery with a friend last month, and I loved all the Impressionist stuff, but the old fashioned portraits I just walked straight through them, but seeing through her eyes... I said why do you like them? They are just people you don't know, and they didn't do anything to me...and she pointed out, for her it gave a her a sense of, what the people were like in those days, what they wore, little artifacts that gave clue to what life was, so she sort of made me look at it in a different way. (Susan, GL)

Through interacting with people, one gained insights and perspectives, as Susan said, to be 'taken out from my comfort zone and be able to look at something differently and understand'. Hence, people were understood as resources that supported and challenged art enthusiasts.

8.3.3 Distributed resources

In this section, I present the third category, distributed resources, which referred to contents delivered through various media, for example, through publication in print, the multimedia, and the Internet. Those mentioned by participants included printed publications (e.g. books, magazine, newspaper), online contents (e.g. websites, newsletters), and the multimedia (e.g. TV and radio programs).

8.3.3.1 Print publications

Twelve out of 14 participants reported that used print publications as an interest-related resource; different types of publication that served different purposes were mentioned. Art books and catalogues were first mentioned as a resource used to find out about a specific topic participants are interested in, and 9 out of 14 participants reported that they owned art books or catalogues (See Figure 8-11 below). For example, Helen pointed out books as a source of knowledge in depth. She said, 'I would use online resources to find where things are, that sort of things, but in terms of finding out more about an artist or style, I haven't. I use books'. Hence, Helen reported that she bought books that focused on specific themes she was interested in, e.g. Art Nouveau, John Singer Sargent. Similar examples were found in the other participants; for example, Jill and Patrick both mentioned that they owned books about art techniques. It was also found that all central participants confirmed that they owned a collection of art books on the topics they were studying (in a course) (see Section 8.3.1).

Figure 8-11 Maria and John's collection of art books about Barbara Hepworth, purchased during a holiday visit to the artist's museum (Photo by Carol Chung)

Magazines and newspapers were the second type of publication. Five out 14 participants used magazines to keep them updated for on-going events. These magazines tended to be event-driven, for example, the *Timeout*, or magazines featuring on art, e.g. the *Aesthetica*, which Charlie and Jill subscribed and read its reviews of art exhibition (see Section 7.3). Three out of 14 participants mentioned using newspapers for tracking events and for the reviews. For example, Cathy reported that she read the Saturday Times' art column for reviews and articles about art. A typical example was Patrick, who stayed informed of on-going exhibitions by reading the newspaper. Interestingly, he further created a pin board out of newspaper clips. He stated:

I still do my cutting out, so exhibitions, which I would go on the *Saturday Times*, *Time out*, and the *Evening Standard*. These are the three papers I looked at, put them out, and then I

have my pin board, and now I make a plan of what to see. (Patrick, GL)

8.3.3.2 Online contents

Online resources were mentioned as a convenient access to the art world by 9 out of 14 participants. Among the online resources, websites of museums, newsletters, and event emails were common items mentioned by the participants. Many participants reported that they were subscribers of newsletters of the museums and galleries they valued. For example, Stella mentioned that she regularly received emails from the V&A, British Museum, and Tate, and also 'patterns from knitting daily', which was related to her interest in knitting. As addressed in Section 8.3.3.1 that participants stayed informed of art events through reading the newspapers or magazines, it seemed using the Internet to look for information about art events and topics of interest was also common among participants. A few participants actually prioritized online sources over printed sources because of its convenience and immediacy. Josh, for example, prioritized online or electronic sources because of his work habits. He commented:

It's not that I feel exhibition catalogues are not worthy of buying. When I was in Taiwan, I bought one or two from time to time, but I haven't bought them for a long time. (…) I prefer stuff online. (Researcher: Is it because it's how you work?) Yes, I spend most of the time working on my computer, or I use ipad now. (Josh, GL)

Pam, for example, recognized the convenience of online information when she researched on museum collection. She commented, 'one tends to use books less, because there's so much on the Internet'. However, the issue of accuracy of online sources also came to participants' attention. In the same example, Pam, speaking from her own experience of researching online, also noted that the accuracy of online contents may not be good, so she tended to avoid Wikipedia when

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researching online.

8.3.3.3 Multimedia

Seven out of 14 participants reported that they used multimedia as a resource. These participants consumed multimedia contents on podcasts, television, and radio, and many of these contents were available online. For example, Jill reported that she watched podcasts about design, e.g. TED Talks; Alex and Patrick listened to art programs on the radio. It was found that 5 out of 14 participants considered themselves audience of the BBC Radio 4, or BBC Channel 4. For example, Susan was an audience of the Reith Lecture Series on BBC Radio 4, from which she learned about views of the artist Grayson Perry, who was invited to speak in the program. Four participants also reported that they watched documentaries and art programs on BBC Channel 4, and considered them useful and informative. Jo was a typical example. She reported that through watching BBC Channel 4, she explored a lot of the achievement of artists of different time.

There's all sorts of programs, the Baroque, the Impressionists, their stand in the history of art, all very useful, because they tell you how unique these people were in their time. Yes I do like that, because it tells you how central art really was to, just about every society it is. (Jo, GL)

A similar example was Helen, who was, too, an audience of BBC Channel 4. She spoke highly of BBC art programs because they were considered very credited sources. She said, 'they are good because, you often then get the expert with the painting or a piece of art there, explaining, what contexts, what various things'.

8.4 Values and motivations

In this section, I present findings regarding the third developmental dynamics of interest, the perceived values. I engage with my research questions: 'what motivates art enthusiasts to visit museums?' and 'what is the role of museum in the development of interest?' (RQ2) by looking into the value participants developed towards museums and galleries. In the preceding sections, I have discussed the role of museum in relation to interest. Museums were identified as places that had an influence on participants' interest under various circumstances and at different life stages. Moreover, museums were considered a rich resource to develop interest, and were appreciated for their offerings, i.e. the libraries, guided tours, lecture programs etc. In this section, I further explore the generic roles of museum, as in how museums are perceived (what values museums convey) that motivates participants to engage. As addressed in Section 6.4, my conceptualization of motivation was informed by Macdonald's (1995) cultural itineraries.

Figure 8-12 presents seven categories relevant to the perceived values of museums. They are: learning/education, relaxation, entertainment, restoration, escapism, place, and social interaction. Some of the categories, e.g. learning, relaxation, entertainment, social, and escapism, are data-driven, and others, e.g. place and restoration, are informed by motivation studies reviewed in Chapter 3. I discuss each category with examples in the following four sections.
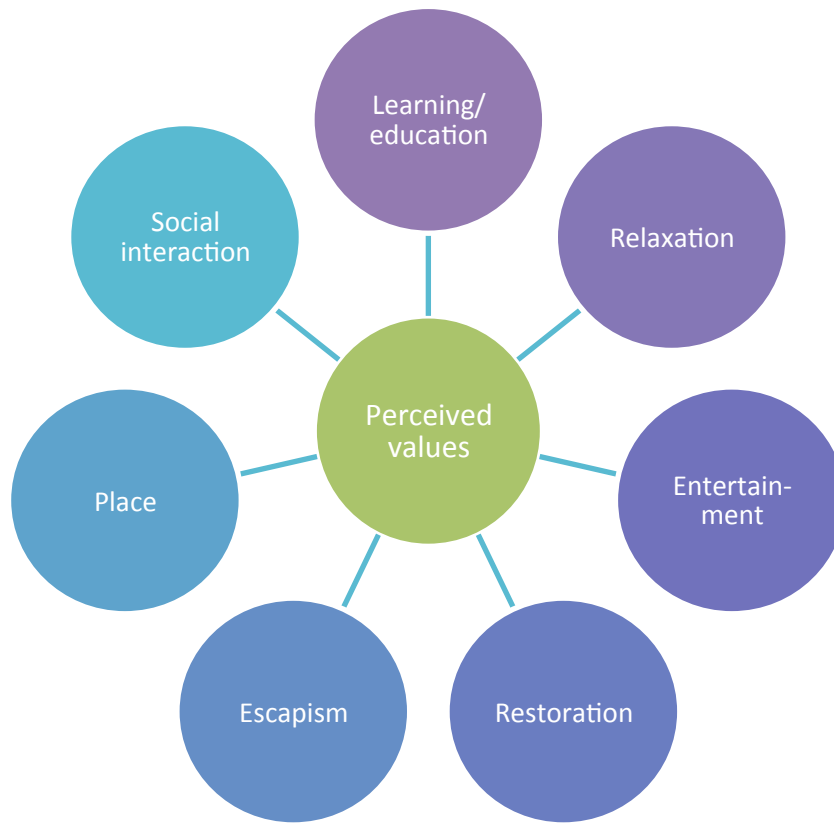
Figure 8-12 Categories of perceived values (GL)

8.4.1 Learning/education

Learning was a data-driven category mentioned by the majority of participants (13 out of 14), in which museums were valued for providing an opportunity to learn, and 'to get education'. The category resonated with Macdonald's (1995) 'education' itinerary, and Moussouri and Roussos' (2013) 'education/participation' motivation. In this category, participants reported that museums were places for learning, and they used terms that addressed learning directly or indirectly to describe how they perceived value of museum. For example, terms associating with knowledge and insights, such as 'to learn something new', 'to get insights', and 'to enhance one's knowledge' were often found in participants' accounts. For example, Stella stated that museums had educational value for her for providing her an opportunity to draw connections.

(…) the same purposes as anthropology, allowing me to draw connections between people and time and ideas. Um, I feel like for a younger me, the idea was primarily education. I guess you could argue that, still, education. (Stella, GL)

Similarly, participants also addressed the educational value of museums by explaining how museums contributed to enrich understanding and generate insights. For example, Helen perceived the museum as a place for learning, and she said, 'museums enabled us to have much more understanding of civilizations before ours, and how that shaped us'. Charlie also highlighted that museums were places for insights, and he valued them for 'the unexpected things and the insight I get from the experience and opportunity to learn something new, or to see a connection I didn't know it was there previously'.

Participants also addressed the museum's value for learning. For example, Patrick perceived art museums as places 'to learn about how artist create their works'. Moreover, art museums were specifically appreciated for the inspirations they generated to stimulate creativity. Two out of 14 participants perceived the museum as a place of creative inspiration. For example, Patrick perceived museums as places 'to make contact with somebody else's artwork' and to 'get inspiration'. Similarly, John considered that museums were 'good for kids', because they 'bring and show the power of being creative'. Hence, the learning/education motivation, as a generic motivation was also linked with specific interest (a situation-specific interest), which supported Prentice, Davies, and Beeho's (1997) finding.

In addition, it was also found that museum's value in terms of learning was also addressed in a self-directed context. Jill was a typical example. She not only perceived the museum as a place to absorb knowledge and 'to collect one's thoughts', but also pointed out that learning in the museum was a self-motivated and an active process. She commented:

(…) It's [museum-going] to collect your thoughts. And going to museums is an active

behavior. You don't passively absorb knowledge, or enjoy the aesthetics of things (in the museum). You are self-motivated in doing this. (Jill, GL)

Jill's account could also be read as a motivation to participate. As Moussouri and Roussos (2013) noted, there was a link between visitor's education/participation motivation and visitor's visiting strategy. Jill's perception of museum as an active and self-directed learning space seemed to support her active participation in museums, especially in making use of museum-related resources, including joining curators talks or hiring audio guides.

In short, it was found that the educational value of museum was perceived in several similar contexts, including the context of drawing connection, learning and gaining insights, and of being stimulated of creativity.

8.4.2 Social interaction

The category, social interaction, was data-driven, and referred to museums' value for social interaction; it was mentioned by 7 out of 14 participants. Participants perceived the museum as a social space, and described museum visiting as a social experience with friends or family, where the participants acted as facilitator or as member of social group. The category, again, resonated with Macdonald's (1995) 'social event' itinerary, and Moussouri and Roussos' (2013) 'social event' motivation. Josh was a typical example. He considered the museum a place where he hung out with friends, and he tended to go, he said, 'sometimes with my friends who happen to be free'. Similarly, Susan reported that she tended to bring her family to the Tate as guests for gallery openings. She also stated, 'it's what I do with friends who are retired. We would go to the gallery and the theater'. In other words, Susan considered the museum a place to spend time with family and friends. Similar statement was also seen in Pam's account. She valued the museum for the opportunity to interact with friends, especially when she practiced guiding and needed feedback from audience. She commented:

It's been a social place, and sometimes I am doing tours, I invited a couple of friends to be guinea pigs, so we had a fun time, having lunch, and it's people who are also interested in the museums. (Pam, GL)

Pam's statement showed a scenario in which participants shared interest with the company he or she went with. It could be understood that participants more than often visited museums with people who also appreciated art, in particular, members of the art-related community participants formed when building the interest, as noted in Section 8.3.2. Jo was a typical example. She described the museum as a particular place she shared with her husband most of the time. 'We go together for everything. We sometimes take friends, but we're always there ourselves, looking at different things and like different things,' said Jo. Similar statements are also found in Patrick and Charlie, who both share interest with partners. This, again, was linked to the finding related with influences, in which participants reported that they considered partners who shared their artistic interest a key influence that supported the interest; these participants also confirmed perceiving museums as places for social interaction.

8.4.3 Relaxation, entertainment, escapism, restoration

Four categories related with leisure were found across 10 out of 14 participants. Participants reported that they visited the museum for leisure-related reasons, including: to relax; to have fun, for entertainment; to escape from routines; and to feel restored (for example, from stress). Hence, these categories, 'relaxation', 'entertainment', 'escapism' and 'restoration', referred to the perception of museum visiting as leisure.

The first subcategory was data-driven, and was found in three participants' accounts, in which they mentioned the museum as a place to relax and to organize their thoughts. For example, as addressed in Section 8.4.1, Jill considered the

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museum a place to collect one's thoughts. Similar example was found in Jo's account, in which she mentioned that museums could be relaxing if one had access to a quiet corner. She stated, museums were 'places of refuge and rest if I can get to a nice member's room'. Providing a comfortable environment seemed to be an important factor contributing to the perception of museum as a relaxing space, and this aligned with the work of Packer (2008) and Slater (2007).

The second subcategory, 'entertainment', referred to the museum as a place to enjoy oneself, to do something interesting, and to have a good time. This data-driven category was specified by six participants, who used terms that addressed the entertaining aspect of museum visiting (particularly pleasant emotions) to describe this motivation. For example, Stella considered visiting different museums and seeing exhibits as 'something interesting' to do, and she reported that she had a 'museum day' every week, when she 'saw all the exhibits' in the city. Similarly, Alex confirmed that he went to the museums 'to have a good time', and to see what he enjoyed. Some statements also demonstrated a social element, revealing museum visiting both as an entertaining and a social experience.

The third subcategory, 'escapism', was data-driven, and referred to a perception of the museum as a means to escape from everyday routines. This was addressed by one participant, John, who considered the museum a distinct place that took visitors into 'a different world', and museum visiting was considered 'to break the monotony'. He commented:

(…) It's nice to break the monotony, it's almost like you go into a different world, you go from your everyday life and to museums, and it's like getting to a different world. (Researcher: Yes, I agree, it's different from what you see every day. And for example you see different culture at the Birmingham Art Gallery) Yeah, and that's the main benefit, I think. Escapism. (John, GL)

As John pointed out, the reason to visit the museum was to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life, and to make a change by experiencing different culture

exhibited in the museum. This motivation was also discussed in Slater's (2007) study, in which she argued that escapism was an important motivator, especially in an art gallery setting.

The fourth subcategory, 'restoration', was informed by Packer's (2008) study on the restorative element of museum experience. One participant, Paula, considered museum visiting a restorative experience, and she pointed out that one visited the museum 'to feel good' after the visit. She commented:

(…) you don't go to the museum to get depressed. I want to go to the museum and feel good after. Somehow when you see like, I don't know, a depressing movie or depressing piece of art, you still feel good after? (Paula, GL)

Paula also said, 'it isn't necessarily the art that attracts you; it's you, you wanted to be attracted by something. So it's rather therapeutic'. In this statement, she further elaborated her point that museums were places that restored and healed people. The idea that museum visiting was therapeutic aligned with Packer's (2008) discussion on the restorative elements of museum experience.

8.4.4 Place

The category, place, referred to the value of museum as an attraction or a destination where one visited to experience a specific culture, or to see something, e.g. specific collection of museum objects. The category was supported by the majority of the participants (13 out of 14); the category was specifically informed by Macdonald's (1995) study, which categorized 'place' as an itinerary/motivation, referring the museum as an attraction or destination to learn about a specific locale, or to see specific things. Moreover, the category was closely linked with traveling, which, as discussed in Section 8.2.3, was seen as a significant influence on participants' interest.

Four out of 14 participants considered museum an attraction where they liked

to spend time seeing something. For example, Josh, who said, 'I rarely stay at home, and always want to see something during the weekends', tended to consider the museum his usual weekend destination. The fact that most museums and galleries in London were free of charge also made them ideal attractions for Josh. Similarly, Susan considered museums as attractions because she was 'always looking for new places to go', and museums catered for a huge variety of interest.

Six out of 14 participants further specified museums as cultural attractions, which linked museums with learning about a particular culture, or cultural tourism as discussed in Section 8.2.3. For example, Maria explained that she visited museums when traveling, because, as she said, 'it's about culture. When you see art, you see different things they express, part of the real life they live, you would see that in some paintings'. In other words, participants perceived the museum as a place to learn about a particular culture, especially when they traveled. Similarly, Alex considered the museum an important cultural destination because museums provided a 'nice summary of a country' (and provided good coffee), and he tended to visit the museum when he traveled to a new city. He stated:

(…) Museums can be something important to the city, you can find a very nice summary of a country, and have a good time. Even better, in London, much better coffee than most of the house. (Alex, GL)

This perception of museums, as I argued in Section 6.4.3, aligned with Stebbins' (1996) discussion on cultural tourism as a form of liberal arts hobby. Perceiving and visiting museums as cultural destination could be understood as a demonstration of a hobbyist interest in cultural tourism, in which considerable effort was dedicated to planning and researching in order to appreciate the culture represented by museums.

Extending from the above-mentioned two points, an object-appreciation focus was also found among those who perceived the museum as attraction or cultural destination. Eight out of 14 participants considered museums as destinations to see

specific collection of artwork or artifact. For example, Stella, originally grew up in Chicago, reported that she visited the Chicago Institute of Art every time she was in town, and specifically to visit her favorite painting by Futurist painter Gino Serverini. Similarly, Cathy visited the Hermitage Museum in Russia specifically for its collection of Islamic art. She stated:

I went to the Hermitage a few years ago in Russia, and that was particularly to look at, they've got so much, you could spend days and days, but they had quite a good collection of Islamic bronzes. (Cathy, GL)

Relevant to this object-focus context, participants also mentioned that museums were perceived as a place to have firsthand encounter with museum collections. A typical example was Helen, who appreciated the museum not only for its educational value, but also she considered the museum offering the opportunity to acquire 'the nearest first-hand experience one can get'. She pointed out that seeing actual paintings in real life at the museum was 'a real privilege'. Helen's example was an illustration of 'object experience' (Pekarik, Doering and Karn 1999) – a type of satisfying museum experience mediated by encountering authentic and fine objects in the museum setting.

8.5 Phases

In this section, I resume to engage with my research question: 'how does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest?' (RQ1) and I attempt to reflect on what I have discussed in the preceding sections, namely, the influences on artistic interest, the interest-related resources, and the generic roles of museums in art enthusiasts' life, with a view to delineating the developmental phases of artistic interest. As I illustrated with four detailed pathways in Chapter 7, interest development was characterized as a process through which interest was sparked, deepened, and eventually stabilized and deeply shaped participants' lifestyle. Helen, for example,

described her pathway as a 'gradual opening up process', in which different influences and resources intersected, and shaped the ways she engaged with art. She commented:

(…) because all those things we talked about, that all those different influences, and each one has added something, open the door and the possibility, so it's been a, sort of a gradual opening up process, I would say that, when we go on holiday, we looked for opportunity (…) we've got some paintings at home that we bought, as in actual paintings not prints by famous people. And we've bought an abstract sculpture. (Helen, GL)

Despite that each pathway to art was unique because different influences, resources, and values intersected in a different way, the pathways I summarized from 14 GL participants were characterized by common phases, beginning with how interest was initiated, explored and maintained, and finally, became a stabilized form, as Figure 8-13 shows. From Section 8.5.1 to Section 8.5.3, I discuss each common phase of interest development, elaborating with the examples I drew from 14 art enthusiasts.

Initiating phase → Maintaining phase → Stabilizing phase

Figure 8-13 Developmental phases of artistic interest (GL)

Furthermore, Helen's quote also gave clue to the process of identity building. Helen, for example, reached an understanding of how her interest became part of who she was, and took initiative in building her identity as art enthusiast who went on cultural holiday, and bought art. Hence, upon reflecting on the pathways to art, I also discuss the issue of identity and self-development in Section 8.5.4.

8.5.1 Initiating phase

The initiating phase referred to the initiation of artistic interest. As I argued in Section 5.6, the existence of a specific environmental stimulus that triggers an interest may not appear in the initiating phase, because, in some cases, interest initiated through long-term or early practices; in other cases, owing to that it was difficult for some participants to articulate an exact past moment that sparked their interest. Therefore, major influences – either one that provided a trigger for artistic interest or one that entailed repeated exposure to art – should be considered the main characteristic that distinguished the initiating phase from the other phases.

Taking a closer look, among the 14 art enthusiasts, the initiating phase was further categorized as early pathways and late pathways by the time interest was initiated. For the majority of the participants (13 out of 14), the initiation of interest appeared as early as in childhood. The majority of the participants had opportunities to engage in art as youngsters, and their interest was therefore initiated. Some engaged in creating art as a child, others was sparked interest in art when studying art at school, and still others enjoyed visiting art-related sites, e.g. galleries, theatres, historical building with family. Engaging in creative practice was a common experience among these participants whose pathways began early. For example, Jill, Maria and Stella were engaged in creative practice and taking art lessons as extra-curricular activity in their childhood; they reported that they had an interest in drawing and painting early in their life. Similarly, creative practice, as discussed in Section 8.2.3.1, was found to contribute to the initiation of artistic interest for Josh, Susan, Cathy, Patrick, and Pam, who considered themselves artistic as child, and enjoyed making art. Creative practice was also supported in formal learning setting. For example, John and Charlie stated that they were sparked interest in art at young age by their studies of art at school.

Family – parents, in particular – played an important role in sparking early artistic interest. Family encouraged creative practice to take place as demonstrated by above-mentioned examples (parents signing up art lessons for children, or in

other cases encouraging children to be creative and 'to be practical'). Family also played a role in gaining access to art by means of visiting historical buildings, museums, and theaters that had impact on youngsters' early exposure to art. For example, nine participants shared the experience of having been sparked interest in art as a child because their parents appreciated art, or used to take them to the above-mentioned spaces.

In brief, among the participants who had early pathways, major influences that contributed to the initiation of interest were often related with early exposure to art in settings of home, out-of school learning, and school learning, taking the form of creative practice and family cultural events. These early opportunities opened the door to the world of art. This finding also resonated with the studies of early pathways in science (Crowley et al. 2015), in which, similar developmental dynamics (the role of parents, school and out-of-school activities, and museums) were mentioned.

One of the 14 art enthusiasts, Helen, demonstrated a late pathway; her initiating phase took place when she turned into a young adult. Despite that she reported noticing a triggering moment early in her life – being sparked interest in art the when she studied the Pre-Raphaelites at school – it was until she socialized with a particular social group, including her other half that her interest was initiated and began to expand. In Helen's case, the influences from peers and partner played a more important role than the other influences in terms of contributing to the initiation of artistic interest.

In brief, the initiating phase was characterized by the emergence of artistic interest, which was found to appear, for the majority of participants, in childhood or adolescence. Interest was also found to emerge as participants matured and interacted with new people; peers had as much influence as family as participants grew up. It was found that key contexts that initiated artistic interest included: family, school, out-of-school, or other social settings; interest was initiated with the help of family, peer, creative practices, and formal learning.

8.5.2 Maintaining phase

The maintaining phase referred to the maintaining of an emerging interest, and was characterized by increasing effort made to reengage with interest. Three observations were found relevant to the maintaining phase. First, it was found that participants sought for new opportunities to reengage with art in this phase. For example, Jill pushed her childhood interest in drawing into a different direction by attending courses that established her understanding of art and culture at university (See Section 7.3.1); Charlie visited London regularly to see art exhibitions in addition to his studies of art at school (See Section 7.3.2). Repeated engagement, as many interest researcher noted (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006, Schiefele 2001), was the main characteristic of the maintaining phase of a situational interest. It was also found that, in these examples, participants sought for cross-boundary opportunities (e.g. from creative practice to formal learning, from classroom to museum).; for example, Jo and Alex grew up learning to appreciate art with strong support from family, and as they matured they began to build their interest on their own, and appreciated art at museums and galleries. John, who was sparked interest in art at school, maintained his interest by participating in drawing courses at informal learning institutes, i.e. the Midland Art Centre. Pam, who hoped to study art history in university but went into banking, reengaged with her interest by spending her spare time (before retiring) introducing the art and history of London as a Blue Badge guide[8]. This observation supported Barron's (2006) study, in which she argued that people developed self-initiated knowledge acquisition strategies and created cross-setting learning opportunities to sustain interest-driven learning.

Secondly, it was found that participation in art-related activities and in cultural institutions played a key role in the maintaining phase. Rather than triggering the interest, participation in these activities and spaces generated a different impact on

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[8] The blue badge tourist guides are trained and qualified tourist guides with extensive knowledge about London, certified by the Institute of Tourist Guiding. Information retrieved at: http://www.guidelondon.org.uk/blue-badge-tourist-guides/

the maintaining of interest. On the one hand, participating in art-related activities (e.g. visiting galleries, engaging in formal or informal learning about art, traveling, guiding) deepened the interest. On the other hand, art-related spaces, i.e. museums, art centers, also became more influential to participants' interest, and participants became more active and self-driven in involving themselves in these institutions; they were also found to actively seek for interest-related resources, in particular the museums, courses and lectures at educational institutions, and networking opportunities within the art-related community participants formed in the process of building interest.

Lastly, some examples also suggested that the maintaining phase elapsed for a rather long period of time, during which, interest, as Renninger and Hidi (2011) noted, could fluctuate or fall off. Cathy, Susan, and Patrick, who were sparked interest in art as a child, further pursued formal education in art (although none went into a career in art), but as time passed, they were driven away from their interests for different reasons. Although participants gradually changed course to other practices, they still pursued their interests by other means – traveling, visiting galleries, creating art in their spare time – hence, the maintaining phase endured throughout their career. An interest became dormant as participants failed to persevere the maintaining phase due to practical reasons, such as time constraint or financial stress. Patrick was a typical example. He stated that there was a period of time when he was preoccupied by making ends meet, and therefore lived in 'cultural dessert'. Patrick's withdraw from his interest-driven pursuits (e.g. drawing, visiting exhibition with his partner) could be understood as an example of failure to attune to the conditions (constraints and affordance) of an interest-driven practice (Azevedo 2011). Luckily, he was able to pick up his interest again, and reengage with his interest-driven practice after retirement.

In brief, the maintaining phase was characterized by a greater extent of self-motivation and self-directness in a period of time when art enthusiasts reengaged with artistic interest. Participants sought for a greater variety of resources and participated in a wider range of interest-related activities, which played a key

role in deepening an existing interest.

8.5.3 Stabilizing phase

The stabilizing phase referred to the developing of a stabilized interest, which appeared as a tendency or a predisposition to gravitate towards art and to involve art in one's life. Two main characteristics of the stabilizing phase were systematic engagement and habitual/regular involvement in art, and two observations were found in this phase deriving from the above characteristics. First, participants' pursuit of further education and volunteering opportunity was an illustration of systematic engagement. Cathy's pathway was a typical example. As discussed in Section 7.1, after spending years traveling and visiting museums and galleries for her interest, Cathy made further attempt to pursue an education in art after retiring. She participated in weekly courses (attending to both the theoretical and practical courses) at the V&A and at the Prince's drawing school, while carrying out her habit of going on cultural holidays and gallery visits. Cathy's pursuit of knowledge and engagement in creative practice and cultural tourism was an illustration of a later phase interest, in which cognitive component of an interest, e.g. stored knowledge and stored value (Renninger, Ewen, and Lasher 2002), and higher level of engagement (Hidi and Renninger 2006) stood out in comparison to other indicators of interest.

More participants demonstrated systematic pursuit related to interest. For example, Pam, who aspired to study art history (but delayed her education because of work), completed her BA and MA in art history after retiring from work, and now dedicated her spare time volunteering and guiding at the V&A. Patrick, Susan and Stella's involvement in the Tate and the British Museum through volunteering were also examples of systematic engagement, in which they consciously pursued an interest-related practice. It was found that such engagement in pursuing an interest required strong motivation and self-discipline, and was considered a feature of this phase.

Secondly, habitual/regular involvement in art was characterized by art enthusiasts making it a habit to involve art in their daily routines. Looking across the 14 participants, this was often reflected in participants' traveling habits, and leisure choices. Ten out of 14 participants tended to go on cultural holidays regularly, and they considered traveling an important channel to access art. Participants also engaged in art-related leisure activities. For example, Josh, Susan, Paula, and Stella tended to spend their weekends visiting museums as for entertainment and to pass their spare time. Similarly, Jill, Charlie, and Jo became patron to specific galleries, to which they committed to visit repeatedly. Six out of 14 participants were involved in collecting and visiting art fairs from time to time.

From the above observations, it was found that similar influences derived from art-related activities and practices were found to contribute in terms of deepening an interest in the stabilizing phase. Art enthusiasts seemed to delve in their interest in greater depth, and more consciously in this phase through participating in interest-related activities on a regular basis, which formed part of their routine; in the meantime, they became experienced in some of their practices, which helped form their identity (see the following section). Participating in particular activities such as traveling, volunteering, informal learning and buying art, again, not only required a great deal of effort and resources, i.e. time, money, research, but also implied the working of self-discipline, motivation and perseverance. These above-mentioned characteristics also indicated a later and more developed phase interest, as noted by Hidi and Renninger (2006).

As addressed in Section 6.5.4, a great deal of references were also taken from participants accounts that I treated as evidence of the stabilizing phase to elaborate the roles museums played in participants' life. As I pointed out in Section 8.5.2, participants considered museums relevant to their interest. Moreover, in the stabilizing phase, participants involved more deeply in museums, for example, some approached museums with particular agendas, e.g. volunteering, taking lessons; and participants were often found to access museum-related resources (e.g. yearly courses, curator talks, audio guide). Hence, I linked participants' systematic

engagement and access to interest-related resources with certain perceived values towards museums. In particular, museum's values for learning ('learning/education'), and as cultural destination ('place') were closely linked to participants' systematic engagement (e.g. attending courses, volunteering) and habitual involvement (e.g. visiting museums during holidays) that characterized this phase.

In brief, art enthusiasts' systematic engagement and habitual involvement in art in a variety of ways characterize the stabilizing phase. Interest was found to be deepened and supported by art-related activities, certain cultural institutions and related resources participants gained access to. In a similar way, participant' involvement in art, especially in museums, was also driven by a more developed interest, and reflected perceived values they had toward the museum.

8.5.4 Developing of art identity

As participants went through the above-mentioned phases of interest development, it became clear that participants took initiative in developing the interest. As Helen's quote pointed out, she began to see herself in relationship with art and with her interest, and came to understand herself as an art enthusiast and realized how her interest shaped her lifestyle. The process of interest development, again, as Barron (2006) noted, was linked to identity development. In this section, I elaborate this point with two observations that I drew from examining the accounts of 14 participants.

The first observation was built on 7 out of 14 participants' statements regarding the growing of self-understanding, which was characterized by participants gaining deeper insight into the self, and learning more about themselves in relationship with art. In other words, an 'art identity', similar to what Bell et al. (2009) and Crowley et al. (2015) both described as a science identity, or 'epistemic identity' as Greeno and Hull (2005) defined, was forged as interest developed. For example, participants were found to identify with the lifestyle they held, and centralize the role art played in life. Patrick was a typical example. He considered art an important part of his life

taking the following different forms, and that he enjoyed 'the variety of things, and the interplay, which includes visiting museums and galleries, meeting people, (…) volunteering, (…) watching interesting TV program'. He considered all of the above indispensible to his identity as an art enthusiast.

Furthermore, participants also saw themselves as learners of art, forming what Bell et al. (2009) defined as learning identity, through evaluating their experiences of interacting with art as a discipline. Charlie was a typical example. As discussed in Section 7.3, Charlie was informed by his previous studies in art, but he was aware of himself becoming more open and more inclined to draw on his subjective experience over the course of developing an interest in art. By comparing two different approaches to art, he came to characterize himself as an open-minded art learner. He commented:

(…) before, it was more like, 'oh I've read about it, this is an example of…' So it was more prompted, it was more led, kind of like seeing something, to check my expectation of, to check if it fits in with something that I read or researched, whereas now, I just, I'm more open, (…) I'm just seeing what's there, what's to be interpreted from it, or just filtering through things and then focusing on something I'm drawn to for one reason or another. (Charlie, GL)

Another example of developing learning identity was found in Cathy's account. Cathy made a cognitive evaluation of how she learned and 'reacted more to visual stimuli'. She said, 'I learn more by looking at things to acquire feeling of something from what I experience visually'. In other words, Cathy's example was an illustration of developing a reflective awareness of learner's identity.

The second observation was based on 13 out 14 participants' statements regarding the building of competence as an art enthusiast. Competence was considered a key to maintaining intrinsically motivating experience (Krapp 2005), and was found relevant to the identities an individual built around interest-driven pursuits (Azevedo 2011). During the course of building up an interest, participants

not only developed more understanding about the content/topic/activity that interested them, but also became more experienced as they engaged in activities and made use of resources, which eventually built up their competence. For the majority, competence entailed the capacity to appreciate art. For example, Alex was aware of his growing capacity to distinguish the value of some paintings, and he commented:

(…) In the gallery in Madrid, there's one (painting) in particular that I can [see its value], well, this is the valuable painting, I can't tell why, but this is the valuable one. (Alex, GL)

Similarly, Maria noticed that she began to appreciate art from a new angle. She studied psychology in university, and soon she was aware of its influence on her interpretation of art, and considered her interpretation well based.

(…) It [psychology] takes you farther than just say, 'ah this is good', a painting is more than that! The influence through the persons throughout his life. (Researcher: So you realized that you developed a new perspective in art?) M: Yes, and for everything, I think. (Maria, GL)

Furthermore, accumulation of knowledge was found to contribute to the developing of competence. Helen was a typical example. She was interested in 20th Century art, and hence, she undertook a course at the V&A to fulfil that interest and her desire to learn something in depth. Helen therefore recognized her growth in knowledge during her course, and stated that she was able to understand the context of 20th Century art and design and actually applied them when she came across buildings and textiles.

Competence was also reflected on participants' capacity to stay informed of and updated for the current art world. For example, Jo and Stella both considered themselves well informed of the events about art and museums. Jo described herself as 'very attentive' to her surrounding in terms of cultural events. Stella, too,

considered herself up-to-date with what was happening around her. She said, 'there's never an instance that I don't know what's going on in the museum world'.

8.6 Summary

In this chapter, I present findings regarding the development of interest of 14 art enthusiasts recruited in London. Fourteen individuals' pathways are broken down by cross-analyzing participants' demographic background, the developmental dynamics of interest, i.e. influences, resources, and perceived values, and the temporal development of artistic interest, i.e. phases of interest development. In Section 8.1, I give an overview of the art enthusiasts in Group London, which is found to be slightly overrepresented by females, aged between 20 and 50, in possession of higher education credentials, and of rather high socio-economic background. A brief discussion of participants' area of interest is also presented in the section, which shows diversity, although a few examples of focused interest, and some links between interest and engagement in certain practices, e.g. creative practice, volunteering are found.

From Section 8.2 to 8.4, I pursue a three-strand analysis of the developmental dynamics of interest, elaborating how varieties of influences play out in the process of developing artistic interest, what resources are accessed, and in particular, how museums are perceived in such process. In Section 8.2, I identify key influences associating with people, i.e. family, peers, mentors; places, i.e. museums and galleries, other institutions, neighborhoods; and activities and events, e.g. creative practice, formal and informal learning, traveling, and elaborate how they inform an interest in terms of providing an opportunity to spark an interest or to deepen an already emerged interest. In Section 8.3, I point out key resources in relation with the development of artistic interest: venue-based resources refer to museum-related services, and services provided from other cultural institutions, e.g. memberships, lectures, talks, workshops, courses; people as a resource refers to interactions with people as an informal way of gaining insights and access in art; distributed resources

refer to interest-related contents, e.g. books, magazines, the Internet, newsletters. In Section 8.4, I uncover art enthusiasts' perceived value of museums, which contributes to understanding the rationales and ways of exploiting the museum, and the role museum plays in the process of interest development. Seven values/motivations are identified in this section, including 'learning/participation', 'social interaction', 'relaxation', 'entertainment', 'restoration', 'escapism', and 'place'.

Synthesizing the developmental dynamics of interest elaborated in previous sections, in Section 8.5, I analyze the temporal development of artistic interest in 3 phases: the initiating, maintaining, and stabilizing phase. I identify the characterizing features of each phase, i.e. emergence of interest, seeking of cross-boundary resources and engagements, systematic engagement, and habitual involvement, and point out how key influences, resources and perceived values of the museum interplay in each phase. I also argue that an individual's self is developed and enriched as the individual builds up an interest.

Chapter 9

Comparative discussion

In this chapter, I compare my analysis of both Group Taipei (GT) and Group London (GL), which I presented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 8, and conduct a comparative discussion on the developmental processes of artistic interest. The reasons for studying the two groups of art enthusiasts together is to explore how the developments of artistic interest differ within these groups, where they are similar and how cultural context affects the development of interest, which helps answer my research question (RQ3). Such comparison will also show the interrelation of all the factors that influence the development of interest, from which I draw key findings. The structure of this chapter is developed from the structure I used to organize Chapter 6 and 8. I discuss the following items comparatively: art enthusiasts' profile (Section 9.1), the developmental dynamics of interest, i.e. influences (Section 9.2), resources (Section 9.3), perceived value of museums (Section 9.4), and finally, the phases of interest development (Section 9.5).

9.1 Art enthusiasts' profile

Looking at the demographic features of art enthusiasts across all data, the two groups share much similarity. Female participants featured prominently in both groups (11 in GT, and nine in GL). In terms of age, GT seems to be the younger group. In GT, the majority of the adults are aged 20 to 49 are (11 out of 14), whereas the same age category is less prominent, but is still represented by eight participants in GL. GL, however, has more participants aged over 50 (6 out of 14). In terms of level of education, both groups are predominantly overrepresented (13 out of 14) by university or postgraduate degree holders. The number of adults who complete higher education (university degrees and above) are both high in GT (13 out of 14)

and GL (13 out of 14). However, about one-third of GL participants studied art-related subjects up to undergraduate or postgraduate level (5 out of 14), whereas none of GT participants did.

Socioeconomic status, although assessed by different classification systems in the two groups, also show that art enthusiasts from both groups have relatively high socioeconomic status. In GT, where I adopted the Five-Level Scale of Occupational Prestige and Socioeconomic Status (Hwang, 2008), ten art enthusiasts are positioned at higher levels (level 5 and 4, representing higher and lower managerial or professional occupations), or medium level (level 3, representing administrative occupations), in addition to four unclassifiable individuals (i.e. full-time student, housewife or pensioner). Whereas in GL, where I adopted the Socio-economic Classifications (SEC) developed by UK's Office for National Statistics, seven art enthusiasts are placed on higher levels (class 1 and 2, representing higher or lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations), in addition to seven unclassifiable individuals (two full-time students and five pensioners).

High socioeconomic statues are also reflected by the pensioners' former occupations across groups. A quarter (7 of 28) of art enthusiasts across groups are pensioners (two in GT, five in GL), and their occupation prior to retirement shows that all of them were previously employed at top levels under both classification systems.

In terms of ethnic background, GL is a multiethnic group, as participants were recruited in a multicultural setting (London). In GL, the majority of participants (10 out 14) are White British or other European descendant, and the rest are Asian/Asian British, or other ethnic background (Amerindian). GT, on the other hand, is an all-Asian (Chinese) group.

Figure 9-1 below gives a comparative view of the demographic features of art enthusiasts (GT in blue and GL in red) as discussed in the above paragraphs. The two lines generally coincide, and diverge slightly at the following points: 'Age 20 – 49', 'Age 50+', and 'Unclassifiable'. The divergence suggests that art enthusiasts in GT are slightly younger than that in GL; since GL is a predominantly elderly group, more

pensioners are found in GL than in GT. In short, it seems that art enthusiasts in two groups are demographically alike; participants in this research are predominantly females, holders of higher education credential, aged under 50, and generally of high socioeconomic status.

	Female	Male	Age 20 - 49	Age 50+	GCSE	University+	Higher SE	Medium SE	Unclassifi-able
GT	11	3	11	3	1	13	8	2	4
GL	9	5	8	6	1	13	7	0	7
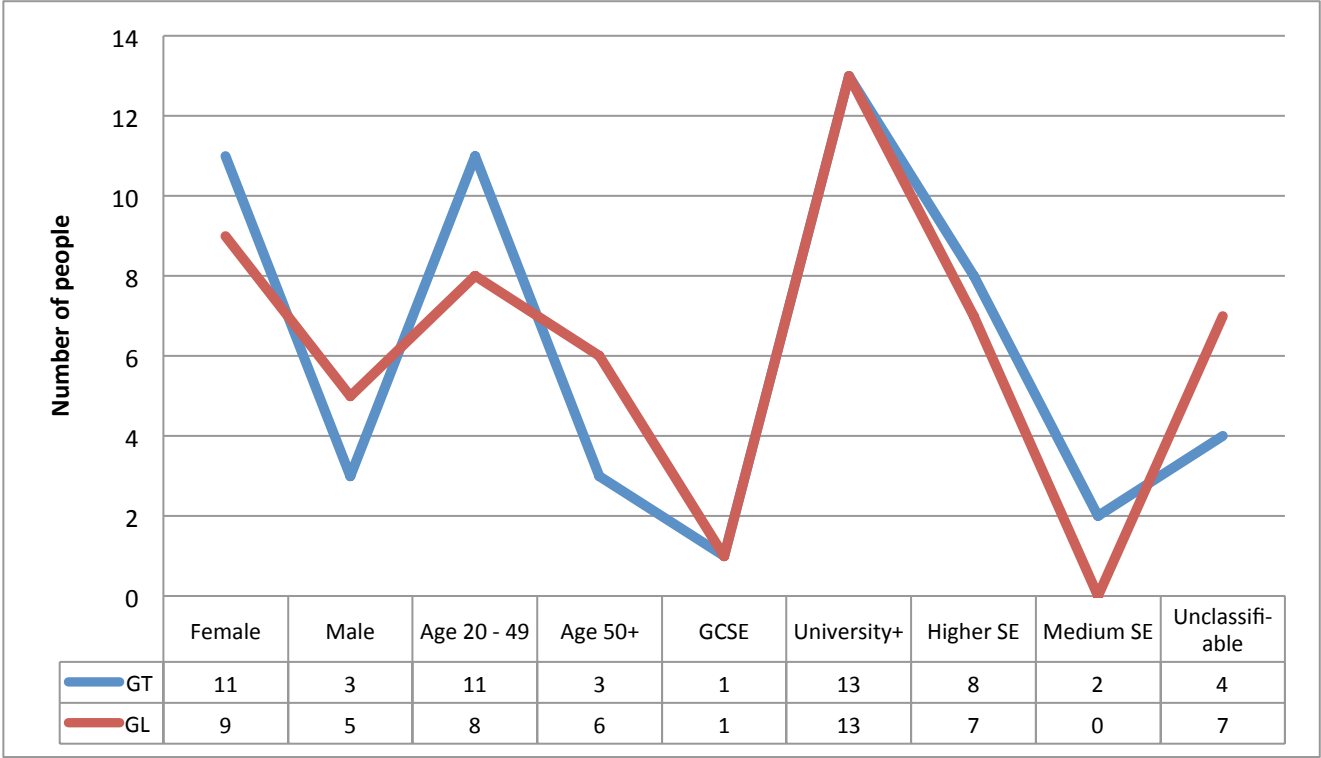
Figure 9-1 Demographic features in comparison

The demographic trend identified in this research is largely consistent with similar research of larger datasets such as the national surveys of similar aims. It corresponds with Taiwan's national survey of art participation, which shows that participants of visual art are overrepresented by female, affluent, and well-educated people (Hsu 2011). It also supports UK's Taking Part survey, which indicates higher attendance rates in art among women and adults under 65, and higher attendance in museums and galleries among upper socioeconomic groups (DCMS 2013). This is not surprising since researchers, such as Bourdieu (1984), Bennett et al. (2009) and Hsu (2011) have identified strong links between cultural participation and sociocultural factors, in particular educational level and socioeconomic status.

The second theme of art enthusiasts' profile is participants' areas of interest, which is measured by the items of interest that participants have used to define interest. Across the two groups, the items of interest mentioned are very much diverse and eclectic, and these items seem to reflect personal preference or taste. These items cover a broad range of art. I identified five common categories to compare the items of interest across groups: form/materiality, school/style, time period, genre, and specific artist. Table 9-1 shows a few examples of item of interest that match each category.

Table 9-1 Items of interest in GT and GL

Category	Examples mentioned in GT	Examples mentioned in GL
Form/Materiality	Chinese brush painting, Photography	Painting, Sculpture, Islamic calligraphy, Photography
School/Style	Fauvism, Impressionists, Classical school	Pre-Raphaelites, Expressionists, Impressionists
Time period	Medieval art, Modern and Contemporary art	Renaissance, Contemporary art
Genre	Religion-themed paintings	Still life
Specific artist	Monet, Van Gogh, Ishida Tetsuya	Henry Moore, Michelangelo, Rodin

Comparing the categories and their matching items, interests in painting (whichever tradition or style), photography, Impressionists, contemporary art are shared between GT and GL. In general, it is found across groups that items of interest differ between individuals and indeed reflect personal affinities and preferences, which are very often associated with participants' prior experience, e.g. one has an interest in the Pre-Raphaelites because one studied about it at school. However, a few observations are noted while comparing areas of interest across groups, which demonstrate similarities and differences between the two groups.

First, in both groups, participants used a mix of items to define interest. However, art enthusiasts in GL seemed to use more flexible/loose terms when they were asked to define their areas of interest, e.g. 'experimental stuff', 'art that is technically very good', as well as dislikes. Comparatively, only three participants in

GT applied flexible/loose terms (e.g. 'various styles that interest me') when defining their interests. This difference may be partially explained by the means of data collection. All GT participants were first asked to define their interest first through an online survey questionnaire, and later asked to elaborate on these interests during interview session; hence most of them have used items rather than narratives in defining their areas of interest. On the other hand, two-third of GL participants were directly asked to elaborate on their areas of interest in person during the interview sessions (due to different recruitment process) rather than first completing the questionnaire; hence, narratives were more frequently used in GL.

In both groups, connections are found between the specific items of interest and the interest-driven pursuits, e.g. volunteering, studying for a course, engaging in drawing, attending lectures. In other words, interests were built around participants' practice and engagement in art. This finding connotes that interest is not only a preference or liking for a specific content/activity/object, or a stable predisposition, as most interest research notes (e.g. Hidi and Renninger 2006). Artistic interest can be understood as being built around and supported by a series of practice and engagement in a developing process.

Finally, the two groups exhibit some similarities: some art enthusiasts demonstrate a diverse set of items of interest, whereas the others demonstrate a comparatively convergent and similar set of items. This finding reflects the point that interest develops in dynamic processes (Crowley et al. 2015), is shaped by various dynamics (e.g. parents' taste, opportunity to engage in art at schools), and therefore evolves – expand, recede, or deepen – over time. One can only look into the developmental process of interest to understand why some art enthusiasts develop mixed and diverse areas of interest in art, whereas the others stick to specific areas of interest.

9.2 Influences on artistic interest

Drawing from key studies of interest-driven pursuits (e.g. Crowley et al. 2015

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and Pitts 2009), I highlight three developmental dynamics that characterize art enthusiasts' pathways to art. I conceptualize these dynamics as 'influences', 'resources', and 'perceived values'. In this section, I focus on comparing the key influences on artistic interest identified by art enthusiasts from the two groups. In both groups, I categorized what Pitts (2009) addressed as 'pivotal influences' by three categories: people, places, and activity and practice. In the category of people, three subcategories, family, peers, and mentors, are common influences between the two groups.

9.2.1 Family, mentors and peers

Family, in both groups, is acknowledged as a pivotal influence on artistic interest to various extents. Family members, in particular parents, are stressed as a key source of influence by 7 out of 14 participants in GT, and 11 out 14 in GL. Participants in both groups described parents as actively encouraging them to engage in art-related practice (e.g. signing them up for art lesson); taking them to cultural sites/events (e.g. vising theaters, historical buildings, museums and galleries). Parents' taste in art also has an impact on their interests in terms of passing down similar likings for art or general attitudes towards art. Other members of the family, e.g. aunties, husbands, wives, siblings, and adult children, are also found to play a role in terms of building a participant's interest. Moreover, in both groups, participants' experience as parents not only influence their adult children's interest, but adult children also generate impact on participants, enabling them to experience art through the youngster's lens. In other words, parental influence, as other studies pointed out (Crowley and Jacobs 2002, Crowley et al. 2015, and Pitts 2009), plays a significant role in initiating an early pathway to art through providing home resources (accessing culture as family) and developing children's cultural capital. However, in most participants' accounts regarding parental influence, there is little evidence supporting Crowley et al.'s (2015) finding in which a specific party (father, in the case of Crowley et al.) plays a dominant role in helping children develop an

interest.

Mentors and peers, in both groups (11 in GT and 10 in GL), seem to be two equally prominent influences. Mentoring figures, such as inspiring teachers in both school and out-of-school settings are reported to spark artistic interest in both groups, and these teachers are found in various art-related domains, including History, English, Art, rather than art alone. It is found across groups that participants reported being influenced by teachers' inspirational teaching (e.g. using museum catalogues) or emotional support (e.g. giving encouragement, compliment). This finding, not only supports other interest-driven studies, which identify the role school teachers play in sustaining early interest (e.g. Pitts 2009), but it also shows that interest may find relevance across several domains (Barron 2006). Moreover, teachers as an external support to learning is recognized as a developmental dynamic in interest research (e.g. Renninger and Su 2012), and may have considerable impact in early phases of interest development. In addition, key persons that inspire the interest should also be considered in relation to the activity of learning and the physical setting, which are defined in the other two categories 'places', and 'activity and practice'.

Sharing the same interest among peers is considered a pivotal influence in both groups, which supports other interest-driven practice studies that stress the value of peer interaction in sustaining interest or interest-driven engagement (e.g. Azevedo 2011). However, peers, in particular fellow volunteers, seem to carry different weight as a source of influence in the two groups. Six GT participants who are volunteers reported fellow volunteers as a prominent influence through peer learning practices (e.g. forming book club) and gaining invaluable insights and experiences from senior volunteers, which enhance and build a mutual interest. On the other hand, among the four GL participants who are volunteers, they reported having regular contact with fellow volunteers through brief interactions during shifts (e.g. exchanging opinions about an exhibition), but rarely addressed peer learning opportunities (except for one participant who guided). Hence, fellow volunteers seem to be a greater source of influence for the community of practice in GT,

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whereas they seem to have minor influence in GL. This difference may be accounted for by museums' programming of volunteer training (e.g. the program does not facilitate peer learning) and the different dynamics of volunteer's community of practice (Abu-shumays and Leinhardt 2002). Moreover, this difference may also be a result of different perceptions on the benefits of volunteering ('social reward') as Stebbins (2011) noted.

Capable friends are stressed in both groups (6 out of 14 in GT and 7 out 14 in GL). Participants in both GT and GL similarly gained insights from or built interest with capable individuals that they encountered at different moments in life. Like fellow volunteers, a capable friend may play a role in sustaining interest.

In brief, family members (i.e. parents, children, partners, and other relatives), inspiring teachers, fellow volunteers, and capable friends play a role in the development of interest. The two groups differ slightly in the perceived influence of peers. Fellow volunteers seem to be viewed as a greater source of influence in terms of enhancing an interest in GT (where peer learning was frequently reported) than that in GL.

9.2.2 Schools, museums, neighborhoods

In the category of places, three subcategories: school and out-of-school settings, museums and galleries, and neighborhoods, are three common threads that can be identified between GT and GL. In both groups, art learning spaces (both school-based and out-of-school) are unanimously regarded (12 out of 14 in GT, and 11 out of 14 in GL) as a pivotal influence for early interest. The opportunity to engage in art and art-related subjects in school setting is considered a place-related influence where artistic interest is piqued by learning. A positive experience of classroom art education helps sustain interest (Pitts 2009). Additionally, out-of-school learning spaces (e.g. the Prince's drawing school, the Lang Yang studio) also helped sustain interest in both groups, and are mainly associated with learning practical subject (art making). This finding supports Crowley et al.'s (2015) observation that early interest

may be germinated in school-based and out-of-school learning settings. In addition, other informal learning spaces (e.g. cultural centers, community college, or extended education center at universities) are also identified as place-related influence in which learning experience is not limited to creative practice. Moreover, the experience of learning across the above-mentioned settings is shared between participants in GT and GL. This finding reflects the developing process of interest: as participants' interest develops, they tend to explore opportunities beyond the immediate setting where interest is sparked (Barron 2006).

As Crowley et al. (2015) finds, engagement in museums or museum programs helps germinate early interest in science. Although examples of participants' interest being sparked by 'tripping over' interesting exhibitions in museums can be found across both groups, which support the above-mentioned finding, interestingly, early encounter in museums and galleries is not entirely perceived as a pivotal influence. These early encounters – not all were concerned with art-related contents – often took place in three contexts: social events (family and friends), school trips (or school projects), and personal interest. On the one hand, in both groups, a few participants reported negative early encounters or one that failed to leave an impression. Many of these negative ones had been with school groups, and this was especially prominent in GT, where 5 out 14 participants mentioned early encounters with museum with school groups, but only one perceived the experience as positive. On the other hand, positive encounters, in most cases, can be linked to interest, but not limited to interest in art. Eight out 14 art enthusiasts in GT had positive early encounter with museums, whereas in GL, 7 out of 14 reported positive early encounter. Many positive encounters took place in social events, and were found to nurture early interest across various domains, including science, history, and art. However, one GT participant did not link positive encounters with early interest. Hence, the observations above suggest that a museum visit in one's early days may be a partial influence on interest. This gap may be accounted for by how early visits are perceived in relation to interest; the dynamics of the visit, namely the agenda of the visit, how the other members of the group influence the participant, or

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participants' situated identity during the visit (Falk 2009) may have affected the perception of an early encounter at the museum.

Neighborhoods, as in the surroundings near participants' homes, schools or communities, are perceived as a pivotal influence for sustaining early interest by both groups, especially by GL participants (7 out of 14), who associate artistic interest with culturally active and art friendly neighborhoods they currently or used to reside. Whereas in GT, only two participants reported having museums in proximity to homes and schools that encouraged them to explore museums as young students, from which artistic interest was nurtured. Furthermore, as one-third of participants in GL are not originally from London, a greater range of cities (domestic or international) were mentioned compared to GT. This difference can be partially explained by the immediate objective environments participants are situated; growing up in a culturally rich city, e.g. London, can be an advantage in many regards. However, an objective environment may be experienced rather differently. Two GL participants accounted for their perception of a culturally rich environment (living in London) by comparing their experiences of living in another city that offers fewer cultural resources; two GT participants at young age were active in exploring their interest, and perceived their neighborhoods as relevant to interest. This finding highlights the importance of the compatibility between one's immediate environment and interest; having easy access to cultural resources in one's neighborhood or community can be seen as interdependent with other context in a learning ecology, e.g. home and school resources (Barron 2006). However, reflective awareness (Renninger and Su 2012) of one's interest also has an effect on the perception of one's immediate environment.

In brief, schools and out-of-school learning spaces seem to be common places where early interest was piqued through learning about art for both groups. Early encounters in museums, however, seem to have partial influence on interest. The two groups differ in perceiving the influence of neighborhoods, which is a more prominent influence in GL than in GT.

9.2.3 Art making, learning, traveling, volunteering

The category of activity and practice consists of six subcategories, including creative practice, school-based and out-of-school learning, art-related hobbies, traveling, volunteering, and work practice. In general, there seems to be strong resemblance in all the subcategories identified in GT and GL. As noted in the previous sections, activities and practices can be viewed in relationship with the facilitators (i.e. parents, teachers) or other participants (i.e. fellow volunteers), as well as the spaces (i.e. schools, studios, museums, cultural sites) with which they are associated.

Creative practices in both school-based and out-of-school settings are unanimously considered a pivotal influence in both groups (9 out of 14 in GT, and 10 out of 14 in GL). Creative practice, as an interest-driven practice, is closely linked to artistic interest, which finds resonance with studies of science interest-related pursuits (e.g. Crowley et al. 2015). Among these people, two-third of GL participants engaged in creative practices from a young age, and considered themselves 'artistic', 'practical', or aspiring to become an artist. Whereas in GT, half of them engaged with art from a young age and revealed childhood aspiration for careers in art, and the other half started to engage in creative practice after retiring or in out-of-work hours.

School-based and out-of-school learning, as implied in Section 9.2.1 and Section 9.2.2, is reported as a pivotal influence by both groups. Participants in both GT (7 out of 14) and GL (11 out of 14) link their experience of studying art-related subjects with interest, and reported being inspired by activities they engaged at schools. Similar number of participants in both groups also confirmed out-of-school art learning relevant to their interest. Moreover, it is shared by both groups that some participants pursued interest across the above-mentioned settings, which confirmed Barron's (2006) work. In addition, some participants reported that they stopped practicing art after leaving school, but picked up their practice or reengaged in learning art years after. This finding suggests that learning at school indeed triggers

artistic interest; although interest may fluctuate over time (Renninger and Su 2012), it may be re-ignited after an extended period of time, building on an existing interest.

Volunteering, as discussed in Section 9.2.1, is acknowledged among central participants as a pivotal influence in both groups, especially in GT. Participants see volunteering as an activity that deepens an interest through building interest with peers (Azevedo 2011) or through peer learning.

Traveling, an interest-driven activity closely links with museum visiting (Prentice 2001), is reported as a prominent influence in both groups (10 out of 14 in GT, and 9 out of 14 in GL). Among these participants, some shared the experience of interest being deepened through gaining access to original artworks via traveling to other cities with renowned museums; others reported interest being sparked by encountering new artists and new exhibitions at overseas museums. Moreover, as noted in Section 9.2.1, traveling was also a way parents actively engaged children in art and culture (through getting children to visit cultural sites, and teaching/learning with children about a specific culture). This finding not only indicates traveling as an important interest-driven practice that links to interest-related resource, but traveling, particular in one's childhood with family, also implies the possession of ample home resources, which build up one's cultural capital.

Art-related hobbies in addition to museum visiting (as addressed in Section 9.2.2) are seen as interest-driven practices that help examine artistic interest in a larger fabric of repertoire (Azevedo 2011). Participants in both groups (7 out of 14 in GT and 9 out of 14 in GL) share the experience of participating in other art-related domains, including musical concerts, theaters, films, and literature. Moreover, collecting art, as an immediate manifestation of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984), and a form of hobbyist interest (Stebbins 2011), is an interest-related practice shared by both groups. However, GL participants seem to engaged more in collecting than GT participants; five GL participants collected art, and nine bought art (including replica or prints), whereas only one GT participant engaged in collecting and bought art (including replica or prints). This difference may be partly explained by the society in

support of collecting. In Taiwan, owning art does not seem to be an indicator for cultural distinction (Hsu 2011); Taiwanese entrepreneur and senior managers/professionals are found to engage in other high-end leisure/hobby (e.g. golfing) rather than collecting art to manifest their distinctive lifestyles (ibid:179). In other words, art collecting does not seem to have a well-developed position in relation to people's social life in Taiwan. Hence, collecting engagement does not seem to be reflected in GT art enthusiasts' cultural participation pattern.

Finally, work practice, given that most participants' occupations are irrelevant to art in a strict sense, is considered a rather peripheral influence when compared with the other influences in both groups. Only one participant in GT (translator), and two in GL (both teachers) mentioned gaining insights for their understanding of art from their work practice.

In brief, the two groups seem to overlap in terms of acknowledging most of the interest-related activities and practices as pivotal influences on artistic interest. However, they differ in perceiving their volunteering practice and collecting practices as an influence.

9.3 Interest-related resources

In this section, I compare interest-related resources that GT and GL participants have access to on the pathway to art. Resources were analyzed by three common categories: venue-based resources, people as resources, and distributed resources. I pursue the discussion by these categories.

The first category, venue-based resources referred to museums-related and other institution-based resources (e.g. courses). Figure 9-2 below gives a comparative look of the number of people per venue-based resource mentioned by GT and GL participants. The two groups are quite similar in endorsing museum collections, lectures and talks, and courses, and see them as interest-related resources. One interesting finding is that among those who considered courses as a resource, GT participants sought for courses outside the museum (at community

colleges and universities), whereas GL participants looked for museum courses, in addition to other institutions. This finding suggests that the role of museums in terms of acting as alternative sites for art education may be different between Taipei and London. It is rather unusual for Taiwanese museums to offer diploma-equivalent, long-term, academic courses, whereas museums such as the V & A and the BM run these courses on a regular basis.

	Museum collections	Libraries	Audio guides/ Tours	Courses	Lectures/talks	Memberships
GT	14	5	8	5	7	6
GL	14	1	5	4	6	9
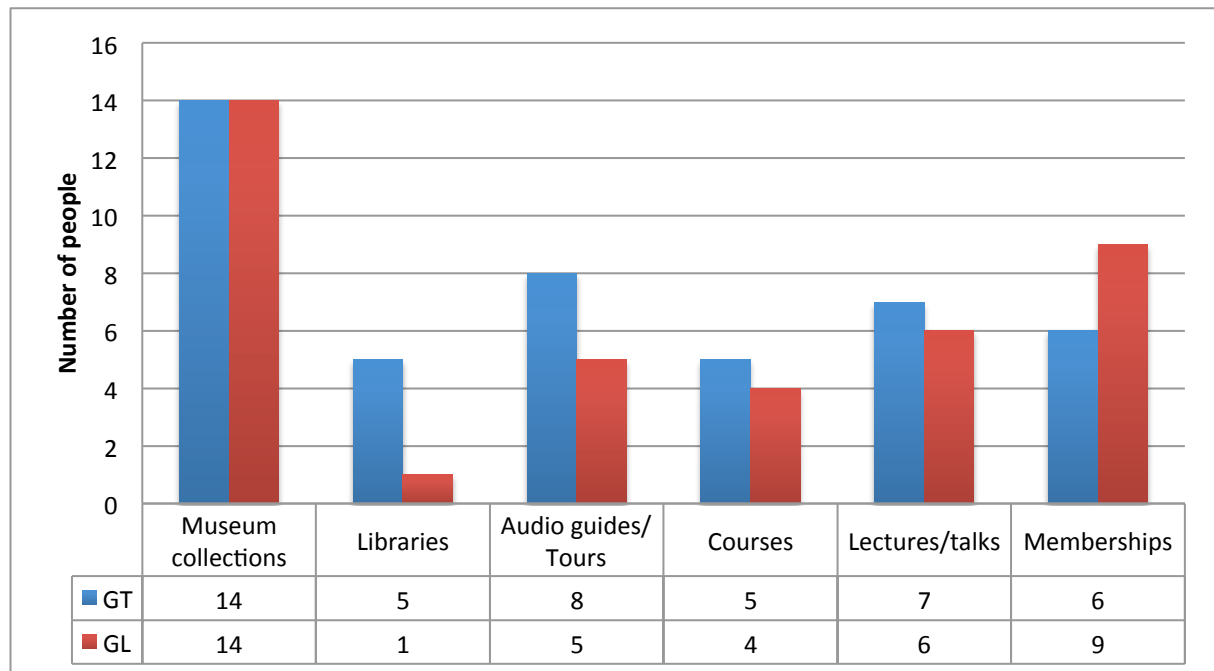
Figure 9-2 Venue-based resources mentioned by art enthusiasts

The two groups seem to differ in perceiving libraries, audio guides or tours, and memberships as resources. Libraries, especially those associated with museums, seem to be favored by central participants in GT, who had access to museum library for research or for personal interest during their shift. In contrast, only one central participant mentioned using the National Art Library at the V&A for research. All of the museums (BM, Tate, V&A, NPM, MOCA, TFAM) where central participants work have a library or reading/study room, hence, this difference may be explained by different needs and different responsibilities (i.e. guiding) as a museum volunteer. As explained in Section 9.2.1, a well-developed community of practice among museum volunteers that support peer learning may have prompted the use of library in GT.

Audio guides seem to be favored more by GT participants and they are perceived as informative and help one learn more, but those who tend not to hire an audio guide argue that they are too directive and time-consuming. The reasons to hire and not to hire audio guides were in fact similar between GT and GL. Hence, the decision seems to be made based on personal choice and needs during the visit.

Finally, memberships seem to be favored by GL participants, who tend to endorse certain museums or relevant institutions (e.g. NADFAS) by purchasing memberships. On the contrary, memberships by endorsement were not mentioned at all in GT, where membership exclusively referred to participants' privileges as museum volunteers. This difference may be partly explained by the value placed on certain practice, such as endorsing museums. As I pointed out that collecting practice is underrepresented by GT participants because art collecting and its relationship with people's social life is underdeveloped in Taiwan, endorsing museums by purchasing memberships has been rather uncommon for art enthusiasts in GT, owing to an underdeveloped structure of museum membership across Taiwanese museums (Wang 2007). Whereas in London, a different museum culture through which museums define their relationship with the visitors may prompt GL participants' patronage.

The second category, people as resources seem to be equally considered in both groups. The majority of participants in both GT (11 out of 14) and GL (12 out of 14) confirmed making use of the relationships and connections they have built with friends, fellow volunteers at the museum, fellow students in a course, or generally people who share their interest. These relationships and connections were also used in similar contexts to support the interest. For example, participants in both groups were found to form their own interest-related community, and tend to gather information about a topic of interest through words of mouth, which led to the building of an interest (Azevedo 2011, Crowley et al. 2015). Moreover, peer interaction was found more prominent in GT, where a number of art enthusiasts (volunteers) gave explicit examples of involving in self-motivated interest groups (some only exist online), in which they gained insights and different perspectives

through exchanging opinions with others. Interestingly, while a relationship or connection was also found in GL, these often took place within individuals' social circle, rather than within an interest group. This may be partly explained by, again, the community of practice within museum volunteers. However, the use of social media may also play a role, since GT participants were found to form and maintain their interest groups social media, whereas in GL social media is underused in general, and may not cater for such purpose.

The third category is distributed resources. In general, GT and GL participants seem to exploit similar kinds of distributed resources. Figure 9-3 below gives a comparative view of the number of people per distributed resources. Publications in print seem to be the most popular type of distributed resources in both groups. Participants reported accessing different sorts of art books, including art/exhibition catalogues, books about artists or styles, and tool books, and 10 out of 14 participants in GT, and 9 out of 14 in GL have owned the above-mentioned books. Moreover, in both groups, central participants were often found to have more access to books because of the need for a course, or for guiding, and books were considered relevant to these practices. Furthermore, collecting books or buying catalogues as souvenirs for museum visits were a common practice in both groups.

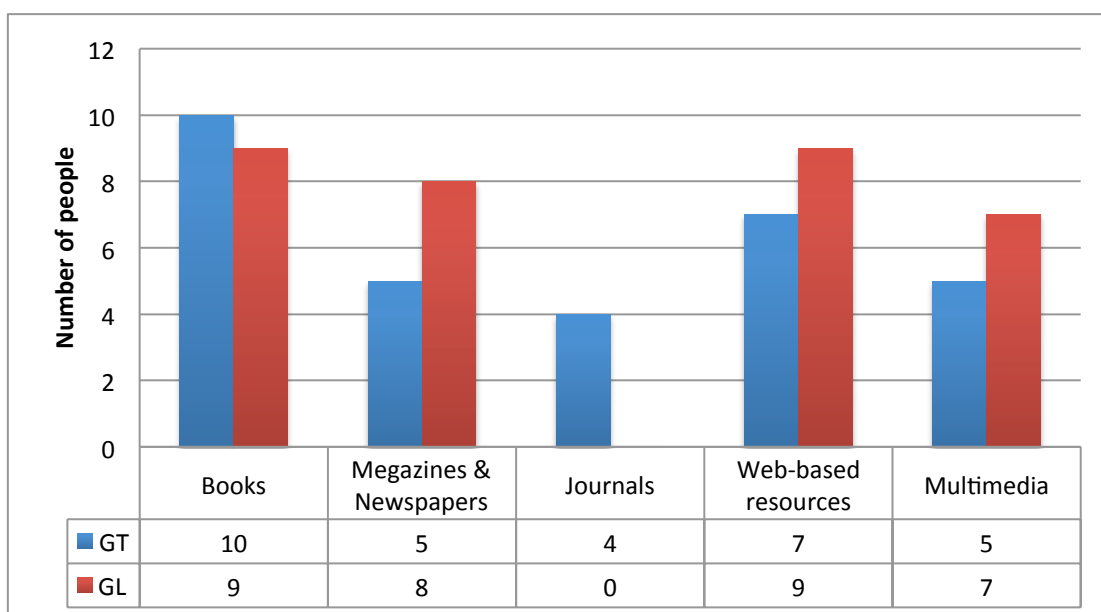|	Books	Megazines & Newspapers	Journals	Web-based resources	Multimedia
GT	10	5	4	7	5
GL	9	8	0	9	7

Figure 9-3 Distributed resources mentioned by art enthusiasts

Magazines and newspapers seem to be a more favored resource in GL. Eight GL participants mentioned accessing magazines or newspapers to gather information about art events, advertisements, or exhibition reviews, whereas five GT participants reported so. Timeout in GL is as widely accessed as its equivalent, Post, in GT. Interestingly, four central participants in GT reported reading the National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art, a specialized journal published by the museum, but no GL participants seemed to use museum journal a resource in GL. This is specifically related with GT participants' volunteering practice. The journal was considered an important source of information about the museum's major events among its volunteers, and every volunteer receives a free copy of the journal as one of the benefits serving as a volunteer.

Web-based resources including online newsletters, museum webpages, and online databases seem to be equally accessed by participants in both groups (seven in GT, and nine in GL). In addition to search engines, newsletters were reported in both groups a common way of collecting information about art events. Moreover, among the central participants in both groups, they shared concerns about the issue of authenticity and accuracy of online contents when using the web for research on the collection.

Finally, five participants in GT, and seven in GL have reported accessing multimedia contents. Taking a closer look, TV programs seem to be prioritized in GL, where four participants are audience of the BBC Channel four, and considered it an excellent art learning resource. Two GT participants mentioned art programs on the Public Television (an equivalent of BBC), but they did not follow the channel regularly. On the other hand, two GT participants listened to radio programs, and three GL participants listened to the BBC radio channel (Radio four, the Reith Lecture Series). BBC seems to play a central role in GL, but its equivalent, the Public Television, is underappreciated in GT. In addition, podcasts were also mentioned in both groups as an online learning tool.

To summarize, the two groups share common ground in accessing some interest-related resources, including museum collections, lectures/talks, audio

guides, courses, books, magazines, newspapers, web-based resources, and most multimedia resources. The ways art enthusiasts exploited the relationships and connections built with other art enthusiasts are also similar between the two groups. They differ, to a different extent, in using the audio guide, libraries, endorsing museums through memberships, and consuming art programs on TV. Some of these differences may be attributed to personal choice and needs (e.g. using audio guide), and others may be explained by more institutional factors (e.g. purchasing membership).

9.4 Perceived values and roles of museums

In this section, I compare how the two groups perceive the roles museums and museum visiting play in participants' life, and in relationship with their interest. GT participants identified seven motivation categories, including 'learning', 'relaxation', 'entertainment', 'restoration', 'place', 'social interaction', and 'identity'. GL participants also identified seven categories, including 'learning', 'relaxation', 'entertainment', 'restoration', 'escapism', 'place', and 'social interaction'. As figure 9-4 below shows, many of the motivation categories are shared between the two groups. However, a few categories are unique in one group, such as the perception of museum in meeting identity needs, which was not addressed at all in GL.

Learning/participation was the most prominent category found across the two groups; in general, the majority of GT and GL participants perceived museums as having value for learning, and acknowledged museum's educational role, and this perception was found across central and peripheral participants. However, variations exist among the ways art enthusiasts expressed their perception. On the one hand, participants in both groups provided a great deal of examples of themselves visiting museums with learning as the main motive (e.g. 'to learn something new', 'to get insights', and 'to enhance one's knowledge'); particularly in art museums, participants 'learn about how artist create their works'. Some also saw museums as playing an educational role in people's life (e.g. a place 'to get education'),

associated museums with 'the understanding of culture and civilization', and considered museums 'necessary to one's life'.

	Learning	Relaxation	Entertain-ment	Restoration	Escapism	Social interaction	Place	Identity
GT	12	6	5	2	0	6	12	3
GL	13	3	6	1	1	7	13	0
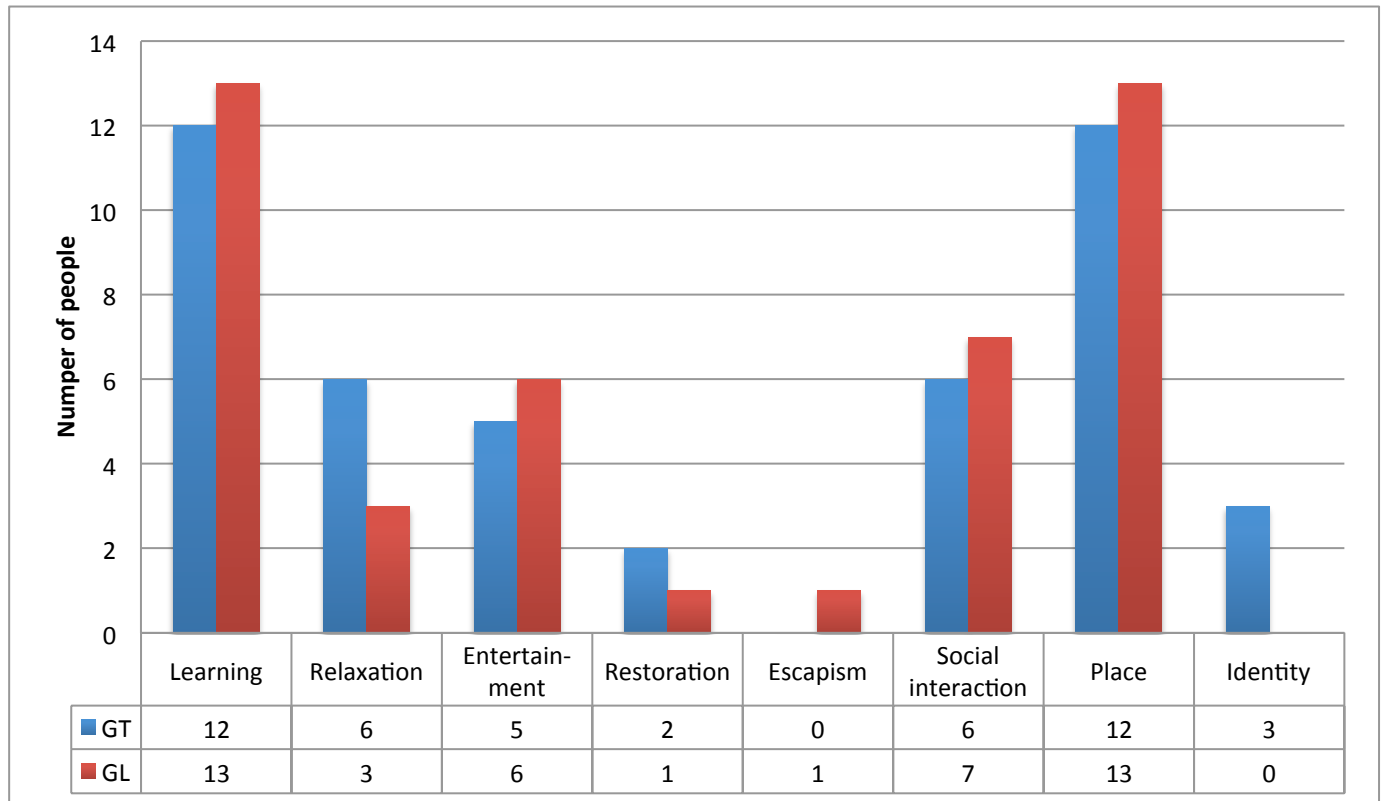
Figure 9-4 Perceived values of museums mentioned by art enthusiasts

'Creativity' was a variation of the educational value of museums; a small number of participants in both groups (one in GT and two in GL) perceived museums' role as supporting creativity, or inspiring oneself in creating art. This perception of museum is linked with the creative practice these participants engage in. Moreover, 'active participation' as another variation was also found among central participants in both groups. Four participants in GT and one in GL acknowledged the educational value of museums by actively participating in the museum as a volunteer, which reflected their identity as museum guides and their perceived responsibility to promote the educational value of museums. This perception of museums develop as participants become more conscious about their interest (Renninger and Su 2012), and further explains participants' involvement in museums using the museum as an

interest-related resource in its various forms as discussed in Section 9.3; or engaging in museums as a serious leisure (Stebbins 2011).

Participants in both groups (9 in GT and ten in GL) considered museums leisure destinations, and visited museum for leisure-related reasons, including relaxation, entertainment, restoration, and escapism. Both GT and GL participants perceived the museum as a place for relaxation. Interestingly, GT participants accounted for this perception by pointing out the physical properties of the museum (e.g. high ceilings), which made them feel comfortable and relaxed; whereas GL participants referred to the peaceful, and thought-provoking atmosphere (e.g. a place 'of refuge and rest', or a place 'to collect one's thoughts'). Museums were also associated with doing something fun and interesting (entertainment) in both groups. A small number of participants from both groups acknowledged the restorative value of museums (Packer 2008). They perceived museum visiting as therapeutic, and saw the museum as a place to feel recharged and to recover from stress. In addition, the category 'escapism' (Slater 2007) was found exclusively in GL; one participant perceived museums as a place to break life's monotony and to enter into a different world. These leisure-related perceptions of museums can also be viewed in relation to interest development; participants develop such perceptions as interest sustains and permeates into their leisure time.

About half of the participants in both groups perceived the museum as a place for social interaction. These participants gave examples of themselves visiting museum for social reasons: they considered museums as places to hang out with friends or family; museums are special places to share mutual interest with their partners. Among these experiences, art enthusiasts often acted as the facilitator or organizer of a given social group in a museum visit. That said, the perception of social interaction seems to link with participants' identity as museum volunteers, because these participants who perceived museums as places for social interaction, also took initiative in facilitating the social events in museums, and were able to mobilize and share resources (e.g. prior knowledge) or connections, which they accumulated through volunteering. In other words, museums are seen as places for social

interaction where resources are shared and interest are built upon. This observation was found across the two groups. This perception can be viewed in relation to the building of interest with peers (Azevedo 2011, Crowley et al. 2015) and may further explain participants' building relationship and connections during interest development (people as resources, as discussed in Section 9.3).

'Place' was a prominent motivation category in both groups that closely linked with the experience of traveling and cultural tourism (Prentice 2001). The majority of participants in GT and GL considered museums cultural or recreational destinations. This perception was often elaborated in three contexts. Participants in both groups (nine in GT and six in GL) considered museums as a cultural attraction to which they traveled, and they visited museums to gain insights about a specific culture, or to get 'a good summary of a city'. Furthermore, participants (eight in GT and eight in GL) also perceived museum as a site for accessing authentic and specific collection of objects. For these participants, museums play a role in providing firsthand contact with authentic, original artwork and artifact. Examples were found across the two groups, in which participants visited museums to see specific collection of objects, and they sought authentic experience of original work of art as opposed to seeing a replica by traveling abroad. A small number of participants (three in GT and four in GL) also perceived museum as recreational site where they like to spend their weekends. This perception develops partly from participants' engagement in traveling; the object-centered appreciation of museums can also link to participants' interest, as many examples suggested that participants visited specific collections of object that aligned with their interest.

The category of identity-building was exclusively found in GT, and was supported by three participants, who perceived museum's value as meeting identity needs (Falk 2008, Rounds 2006). Participants considered museum going a self-reflecting experience, in which one related the self to what one saw. Moreover, two participants, who are volunteers at the National Palace Museum, perceived museums' role in enhancing the self, adding to their identity as a cultivated person who is 'well-versed in art' or 'well-bred'. This perception, however, was not found

among GL participants at all. This difference, namely the perception of museum for identity building, can be understood by the perception of the 'social rewards' (e.g. social attraction) as a volunteer (Stebbins 2011). Given the high cultural profile of the National Palace Museum, being its museum volunteer may attract public perception of having certain qualities (e.g. altruistic, passionate, artistic, and cultivated) in Taiwan. Hence, this may influence individuals' perception of being associated with NPM as a volunteer. However, volunteers in GL do not seem to perceive the benefit of volunteering (in V&A, Tate Modern, and BM) in this regard.

In brief, it can be said that participants in GT and GL share very similar values towards museums and perceive the roles of museums in a similar manner. These values are developed from and linked to art enthusiasts' interest-related engagement, and they can be viewed as a dynamic in the development of interest. The two groups differ in perceiving the museum as a place for identity building.

9.5 Phases of interest development

In this section, I compare the developmental phases of interest summarized from the pathways of GT and GL participants. Each art enthusiast demonstrates a unique pathway, but looking across these pathways, they seem to share three common phases: the initiating phase, maintaining phase, and stabilizing phase. However, an additional phase, the 'a-ha moment', was found in GT, (see Section 6.5.2), which was a specific moment taking place after the initiating phase and was characterized by art enthusiasts' reflective awareness. This finding is exclusive in GT, supported by two examples. Figure 9.5 gives a comparative look of GT (blue) and GL's (red) common phases of interest development.

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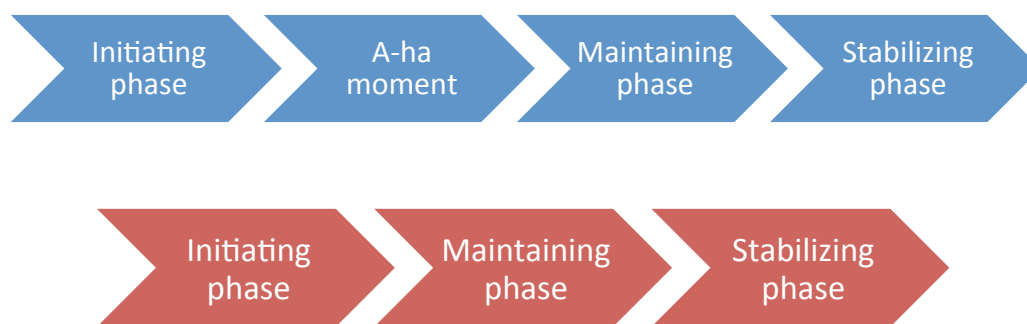
Figure 9-5 Comparison of the common phases of interest development

The initiating phase referred to the initiation of artistic interest. This was a common phase characterizing the beginning of pathways in both GT and GL. Similar observations regarding the initiating phase were found across the two groups. The phase took place across different settings, e.g. learning history at school, drawing as a child at home, or visiting galleries with family. Pivotal influences identified in the initiating phase were very similar between the two groups; common influences on artistic interest found in both groups include: family interaction, socializing with peers, school-based and out-of-school learning, and creative practices.

Although early and late pathways were found in both group, the majority of GL participants (13 out of 14) demonstrated early pathways, in which they had opportunities to engage in art as youngsters, and their interest was therefore initiated, whereas about one-third of GT participants (5 out of 14) showed late pathways. Given that age may be a factor in determining late pathways in GT (see Section 6.5.1), this difference may be partly explained by shared experience of rigid education system and social milieu that prevented people of certain generation from engaging in art and culture. In contrast, age did not seem to play a role in determining the time interest was initiated in GL; initiating phase generally began rather early regardless of which age group participants belong to.

This observation can be further explored with insights drawn from cultural psychology. Greenfield (2000:229-230) interprets human behavior from different cultures using 'the deep structure of culture'; she applies the framework of

individualism/collectivism on how people handle the relationship between the individual and the group. It can be understood that the shared experience of GT participants demonstrating late pathways may have been shaped, to some extent, by a cultural framework that prioritizes social conformity and expectation (collectivism) over individual desire (individualism). Hence, these participants did not have opportunity to or were not encouraged to explore their interest in the arts at young age.

The 'a-ha moment' referred to a specific moment when participants came to realize their own interest. This was exclusively found in GT, represented by two examples (see Section 6.5.2). In the a-ha moment, participants underwent a transition from lack of awareness of the fact that they were attracted by certain things/activities out of interest, to gaining a reflective awareness of their interest, which gave new meaning to what they have been attracted to. This finding is consistent with Renninger and Su (2012), who argued that reflective awareness may not be present during interest development, or may only be detected in later phase. However, because these two unique examples happened to be participants demonstrating late pathways (but it should be noted that not all late pathways were accompanied by an 'a-ha moment'), this finding may be partly accounted for by age. As Olivia's example showed (see Section 6.5.2), social circumstances that refrained one from exploring one's interest could shape participants of certain age group (50+), and hence, prevented the growth of awareness of one's interest. The a-ha moment, then, could take place when participants experienced a change, e.g. moving onto a different phase of life, when participants' objective environment changed, which prompted the growth of such awareness. However, the self-realization of interest was not emphasized among GL participants, as the majority of GL participants considered themselves artistic or had engaged in art as a child.

That said, the changing social environment and social milieu may also account for the early pathways demonstrated by younger participants in GT. Drawing from Greenfield (2000), one can understand the emerging social milieu in favor of art and cultural participation as a transition from collectivism to individualism that took

place among younger generation growing up in Taiwan. This understanding is supported by Yang's (1981) observation. Hence, younger participants, having grown up in a society that loosened its grip on the individual, were given more freedom to pursue a personal interest.

The maintaining phase, a common phase characterizing the maintaining of an emerging interest, was found in both GT and GL. Similar observations were found in both groups. Art enthusiasts sought for more opportunities to engage with their interest, and these opportunities tended to be cross-setting and cross-boundary. This finding is consistent with those of Barron (2006) and Crowley et al. (2015). Moreover, cultural institutions and art-related activities played a key role in this phase. It is found across the two groups that participants considered museums, art centers, universities, community colleges or other art learning institutions as having an impact on deepening the interest, and some of them prioritized resources that nurtured the interest in accumulating the relevant knowledge (Renninger and Su 2012).

Moreover, it was found in both groups that the maintaining phase may elapse for an extended period of time during which, interest may become dormant and participants might opt for other interest-related activities. This was supported by some examples in which art enthusiasts stopped engaging in interest-related activities (e.g. taking drawing lessons, or visiting galleries) due to some practical reasons (e.g. time, money, stress from study or work, or health issue), which forced them to re-prioritize life goals. This finding again is supported by other interest research (e.g. Renninger and Hidi 2011) and studies of interest-driven pursuits (e.g. Azevedo 2011).

The stabilizing phase, a common phase characterizing the developing of a stabilized interest, was found in both GT and GL. Similar observations namely, systematic engagement and habitual involvement in art, were found in both groups. The pursuit of the cognitive aspect of interest in later phase interest development (Renninger and Su 2012, Renninger, Ewen and Lasher 2002) was reflected in participants' systematic engagement in further and most often structured education

in art, and volunteering opportunity. On the one hand, central participants (seven in GT, and six in GL) in both groups involved in volunteering or art education (formal or informal) in this phase, and they were motivated to invest a great deal of effort in pursuing interest with a view of enhancing the level of mastery of an interest-related skill or knowledge. On the other hand, two peripheral participants in GT were also found to pursue art education (e.g. drawing at art studio, attending lectures at university further education center) in their spare time; however, no peripheral participant in GL was found doing so.

Habitual involvement in art was also supported by examples of similar nature in both groups. The majority of participants (9 in GT, and 10 in GL) consciously gravitated towards art and involved art in life through developing a habit of visiting museums or cultural sites when they travel. This observation was also reflected in participants' leisure choices; many participants paid regular visits to museums, galleries, attended art events, or went to art fairs/shops with a view to buying art in their spare time. In other words, cultural institutions and art-related activities, again, played a key role in sustaining the interest. Participants in both groups engaged in these activities, and exploited these resources more consciously, and to a greater depth. It can be understood that systematic engagement and habitual involvement both implied the working of self-discipline, motivation and perseverance in the stabilizing phase, which can be linked to more developed interest (Hidi and Renninger 2006). However, interactions with members of interest-related community (e.g. fellow volunteers, people who share interest) continued to play an important role for volunteers, course attendees and peripheral participants in this phase. Moreover, it became apparent in both groups that art enthusiasts developed certain values towards museums as an interest-related resource, as they accessed museums more often, and approached them with particular agendas (e.g. volunteering, education, cultural tourism) throughout this phase.

Finally, identity development was found relevant to the developing of interest, supporting the findings of Azevedo (2011), Barron (2006) and Crowley et al. (2015). In both groups, participants came to realize how central art was to them and actively

built and enhanced their 'art identity' as their interest developed. GT and GL participants developed self-understanding through their relationship with art by acknowledging how art enhanced their lives and shaped their lifestyles. Moreover, participants gained deeper insights into themselves (as a person, or as an art learner), and some of them formed an art identity or learning identity (Bell et al. 2009). On the other hand, it was found in both groups that participants developed competence as their interest developed, which contributed to the art identity participants built (Azevedo 2011). Competence was reflected in participants' capacity to appreciate art, which was relevant to accumulation of knowledge and skill; participants considered themselves competent as in being capable of making a sound judgment on art, approaching artworks from different perspectives. Competence was also reflected in participants' capacity in gathering information, and becoming more active in staying informed of and updated about the art world.

In brief, some similarities and differences in the developmental phases of artistic interest can be found when comparing the two groups. Although an artistic pathway begins from the initiating phase, the two groups show a different picture: most pathways in GL began early, whereas one-third of the pathways began late in GT. Hence, the two groups also differ in expressing reflective awareness of interest (in an 'a-ha' moment). However, GT and GL participants share more similar patterns in the maintaining phase and the stabilizing phase, and they also demonstrate development of art identity along with artistic interest.

9.6 Summary

In this chapter, I look comparatively into the findings generated from my analysis of art enthusiasts across groups. In Section 9.1, I point out that art enthusiasts in Group Taipei (GT) and Group London (GL) are demographically alike. Despite that participants in GT are slightly younger than those in GL, most participants are predominantly females, holders of higher education credential, aged under 50, and generally of high socioeconomic status. This demographic trend is

consistent with national surveys of similar aims. Participants in both groups also express interest in diverse items, and connections can be found linking specific item of interest with a range of interest-driven pursuits, such as volunteering.

In Section 9.2, I point out that art enthusiasts in both groups, in general, identify similar pivotal influences on artistic interest, although variation exists between individuals. Parents, inspiring teachers, fellow volunteers, and capable friends are considered key figures that play a role in the development of interest in both groups; schools and out-of-school art learning spaces are common places where interest was piqued; and similar activities and practices, e.g. creative practices, learning, traveling, and art-related activities, are considered as having an impact on the developing of interest. However, the two groups diverge slightly on perceiving some influences, for example, fellow volunteers seem to have greater influence on participants in GT than in GL due to different social dynamics within the volunteering communities.

In Section 9.3, I point out that the two groups access similar types of art-related resources, including most venue-based resources (museum collections, lectures/talks, audio guides, courses), relationships and connections with people, and most distributed contents (books, magazines, newspapers, web-based resources, and multimedia). However, they differ in using the libraries, endorsing museums through memberships, and consuming art programs on TV. Some of the differences can be attributed to personal choice, as in the case of using libraries; cultural context, as in the case of museum memberships; or due to lack of supply, as in the case of TV programs.

In Section 9.4, I point out that the two groups share similar sets of value towards museums. Participants perceive the museums as playing the roles in providing learning opportunities, social interactions, relaxation, entertainment, restoration, and cultural and object experience. However, museums are only perceived to meet identity needs for GT participants. These roles are also linked with participants' interest-driven pursuits and hence, they develop along with interest.

Finally, in Section 9.5, I point out that each art enthusiast demonstrates a unique pathway, but together they share three developmental phases of interest:

the initiating, the maintaining, and the stabilizing phases. However, there are variations in the initiating phase between the two groups, and an additional phase, the 'a-ha moment', is exclusively found in GT. These differences can be accounted for by the sociocultural environment in which participants are situated. I also address that in both groups, art identity develops with artistic interest.

Chapter 10

Conclusions

In this final chapter, I draw conclusions from the findings I have presented in the preceding chapters. I organize my concluding thoughts according to two key themes, which correspond to the three research questions that this thesis addresses, including: RQ1 How does an art enthusiast develop artistic interest? RQ2 What roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest? RQ3 How do processes of interest development differ or converge between art enthusiasts in Taipei and in London? Along these two themes, I also discuss the contribution of this thesis, and point out future directions for professional practice and research. In Section 10.1, I summarize findings regarding the development of artistic interest, drawing upon the developmental dynamics identified in my analysis of 28 art enthusiasts. I also summarize the similarities or differences in pathways I found between the two participant groups. In Section 10.2, I review findings on the key roles museums play in art enthusiasts' social lives, as well as in relation to their interest development.

10.1 The development of artistic interest in a pathway to art

Artistic interest is built around and supported by a series of art-related practices and engagements in a development process, which can be understood as a pathway to art. In this thesis, I have shown how art enthusiasts demonstrate diverse and mixed interest in visual arts; some show interest that spans several areas, whereas others show interest that concentrates around specific areas. In Chapters 5 and 7, I illustrated unique pathways, among which participants expressed a variety of interests in visual arts, such as Chinese calligraphy and brush painting, Western

European painting, contemporary art, Islamic art, and modern sculpture. Their pathways to art have been shaped by distinct developmental dynamics of interest, which I conceptualize as pivotal influences, interest-related resources, and perceived roles and values, as explored in detail in Chapters 6 and 8.

Each individual in this project experienced a unique configuration of the above developmental dynamics of interest. As my comparative analysis in Chapter 9 showed, influences and resources identified in the two participant groups were very similar in nature. However, participants demonstrated differences in their perception of certain pivotal influences and prioritization of interest-related resources. These differences, as I argued in Chapter 9, may derive from personal choices and expectations, as in the case of perceiving the influence of the museum volunteer community in relation to interest development. In some cases, different social environments and the objective setting where a certain activity was configured may have caused these differences in perception and prioritization, as in the case of endorsing museums through memberships.

Several key settings where pivotal influences on artistic interest were identified included the home setting, school setting, informal learning setting, community setting, and other social settings where interest-related activities and practices took place, such as volunteering in a museum, pursuing other artistic hobbies, work (although considered a peripheral influence), and traveling (see Figure 10-1 below). I argue that within the pathways demonstrated by the 28 art enthusiasts I examined in this research, artistic interest was nurtured and sustained through these settings.

As Figure 10-1 shows, in each setting, key persons and institutions, as well as relevant practices and activities generated certain influences, sparking or deepening an artistic interest. Pivotal influences identified in my research, such as creative practice during childhood, parental influence (e.g. parental taste and engagement in art or museums), supportive mentoring figures (e.g. an inspiring teacher), school-based learning opportunities, and out-of-school activities (e.g. extra-curricular art lessons) generally aligned with existing research on interest-driven pursuits in other domains (e.g. science, music) (Crowley et al. 2015;

Pitts 2009). My research, however, contributes to an under-explored domain, i.e. art, by identifying specific contexts in which artistic interest is sparked and sustained. For instance, engagement in volunteering, cultural tourism (as the setting of 'traveling'), and collecting practices (as part of the setting of 'pursuing art hobbies') were identified as contexts that are particularly relevant to the development of artistic interest. These contexts in particular emphasize the self-initiating role art enthusiasts play in shaping their own pathways in later phases of interest development (Barron 2006), as compared to home and school settings where external influences (e.g. parents, teachers) were considered more prominent.

Figure 10-1 Influential settings where artistic interest develops

Pivotal influences identified in my research, particularly in the cases of parental influence, school-based and out-of-school learning, generally resonated with cultural sociological observations of cultural participation (Bourdieu 1984; Hsu 2011), in

which the cultivation of artistic interest could be argued to take place during early socialization and formal education. However, a significant finding of this thesis is that art enthusiasts may still develop artistic interest and a taste for art even without the above 'conditions'. As new settings appear that offer new opportunities to engage with art—notably, an unexpected encounter with art in a museum at a later point in life—new artistic interest can be sparked. This finding contributes to understanding how interest can be nurtured across settings and at different life stages (Barron 2006), and points to the need to study interest development where psychological and sociological perspectives on interest development intersect.

A broad range of interest-related resources was identified as the second developmental dynamics pertinent to the development of pathways to art, including: museum- and institution-related resources (e.g. museum memberships), relationship- and connection-based resources (e.g. interest groups), and distributed resources (e.g. art books). These resources were in productive dialogue with the influential settings previously noted. For instance, being a member of an interest group (e.g. book club) was connected to the social setting of the museum volunteer community, and was also considered a peer learning practice developed within a community of practice (Abu-shumays and Leinhardt 2002). For each art enthusiast, a unique configuration of resources was found; these distinct configurations of resources, however, were accessed across settings, highlighting the cross-boundary nature of interest-driven pursuits, which aligns with existing literature (e.g. Barron 2006, Crowley et al. 2015). The identification of interest-related resources, therefore, generates context-specific knowledge about interest-driven pursuits in the domain of visual arts, again, contributing to research practice.

A pathway to art may consist of several phases. As my temporal analysis of the development of artistic interest has shown, common developmental phases through which artistic interest evolves from a less developed form to a stable form can be summarized as: the initiating phase, the 'a-ha moment' (reflective awareness), the maintaining phase, and the stabilizing phase (See Figure 10-2 below). This initial model of artistic interest development, which was informed by but differs from Hidi

and Renninger's (2006) model in that it does not mark the phases by differentiating between situational interest and individual interest, reflects the focus of my research: the specificity of studying interest in more than one setting and over an extended period of time. My model contributes to the current body of research on interest development in an under-researched domain, i.e. art, by generating rich and context-specific descriptions of the characteristics of individuals as they pursue artistic interests, which reflect art enthusiasts' experiences in a pathway to art. For instance, I demonstrate that the stabilizing phase in artistic interest development is characterized by systematic engagement (e.g. volunteering) and habitual involvement (e.g. taking cultural holidays). Moreover, my model has raised the issue/difficulty of identifying environmental stimuli that may have piqued an interest; artistic interest, more than often, may be sparked by early or long-term exposure to art. In this regard, my research points to the need to develop a more context-specific research practice in the study of interest development.

Initiating → Ah-ha moment → Maintaining → Stabilizing

Figure 10-2 Developing phases of artistic interest

In light of the difficulty of studying the temporal and cross-setting nature of artistic interest development, my research, which was carried out in multiple phases, innovates and generates methodological insights for future research on interest development across a longer timeframe and multiple settings. Specifically, my use of a learning ecology map to triangulate data has been effective in linking different contexts that contribute to artistic interest, thereby helping reconstruct a holistic understanding of a pathway to art. However, my research simultaneously spotlights some methodological concerns in the study of interest development. One of the

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methodological issues I noted in the chapters on data analysis was that the environmental stimuli in the triggering process of artistic interest is, in some cases, difficult to capture in retrospective interviews. This suggests the need to develop better research tools to facilitate the study of early phase interest development through retrospective interviewing.

Upon further reflection on my methodology and the data it yielded to, it is noted that the discussions on the development of artistic interest laid out in the thesis, in fact, were predominantly based on participants' sociological process of gravitating toward art, instead of their affective experience. This particular focus on the sociological process, however, is rather driven by the approach I took to address the research questions that this research set out to answer than a result of the methodology I adopted. The methods used to elicit art enthusiasts' responses regarding their experience of a pathway to art, in fact, drew forth a large amount of data, including those with clear reference to the affective experience, which I categorized as 'critiques on art' during data analysis. Participant were, while being interviewed, analytical about why certain type of art/style/artist appeals to them through articulating what art has done to them – in their own words, why some art 'affects one on an emotional level'; in other words, they made sense of their own affective experience of art through expressing how they have felt when engaging with certain type of art. A somewhat considerable number of references (188 references) were assigned to this category, many of which directly indicated how some art has touched the participants (or 'transmitted something' to the viewer, according to GL participant, Alex) through a variety of ways. Hence, it is fair to say that, for the 28 art enthusiasts involved in this research, the affective experience inevitably forms a part of their pathways to art – perhaps equally important as the sociological process. However, because my main research questions: 'how does an art enthusiast develop interest?' and 'what roles do museums and galleries play in the development of artistic interest?' largely deal with the overall developmental process of artistic interest and the role museums play, I engaged with these research questions through applying the framework of the developmental dynamics of artistic

interest (influences, resources, and perceived values that are pertinent to interest development). I felt that addressing one particular dimension (affective experience) would limit the space I have in this thesis to engage deeply and widely with my inquiry regarding how artistic interest is developed and the significance of museums, and, to some extent, deviate from the framework I intended to approach my research questions. Hence, I have consciously placed more emphasis on the sociological – one's sociocultural roots as well as one's role in shaping his/her own pathway – than the affective, and I have excluded this particular set of data in this thesis. However, it may be worthwhile to address the affective experience in a pathway to art, and pursue this avenue of inquiry in future research, for it may yield to new insights for the study of artistic interest.

Pathways to art differ between art enthusiasts. This research has identified two general patterns: early pathways and late pathways. Group Taipei (GT) demonstrated both patterns (one-third consisted of late pathways and the remaining two-thirds of early pathways), whereas early pathways were predominant in Group London (GL). A culturally specific finding has been highlighted in Chapter 9: age was found to be a notable factor linked to the initiation of interest among GT participants. I argue that the influence of social milieu in Taiwan (contingent on its political and economic development) has limited autonomy in the exploration of personal interest at a young age among individuals from certain generations; on the other hand, the younger generation's experience of a changing social milieu has resulted in a more open society and a less rigid education system that emphasizes art and culture. This argument is supported by relevant studies in cultural psychology (Greenfield 2000), and echoes the current trend of educational policies in Taiwan, where a balanced development of literacy in the domains of science, language, and arts has gained increasing attention in policy-making. Furthermore, in addressing the penetration of societal-level influences (i.e. social perception of artistic careers, education systems) into individual-level action (the development of interest), my research highlights the role cultural policy may play in building a supportive environment that nurtures the development of artistic interest. Further socially and culturally sensitive studies

focusing on the roles cultural institutions and public sectors play in the development of interest should be carried out to increase our understanding of artistic interest.

Further thoughts on the late pathways emerge upon completing the thesis. Late pathways were illustrated by five GT art enthusiasts, who, before their interest was initiated, had either been non-attenders to museums and galleries, or had shown little interest in art in the formative years of their lives. These pathways, although diverse, were first marked by the appearance of new opportunities to engage with art, which offered participants a 'new social experience'. The social aspect of the experience has made, for example, visiting a museum or attending an introductory art course more appealing and desirable, and further motivated these participants to pursue an interest through continuously participating and seeking for similar experience. Furthermore, some degree of 'self-directness' was found to characterize these new experiences, which perhaps may have encouraged the participants to explore an interest in a supportive environment, which could have been missing earlier in life; among these pathways, this may refer to, for example, the mediation of museum programs (e.g. an engaging guided tour) or learning material (e.g. a well delivered session). It is perhaps fair to say that a new social experience coupled with approachable and supportive learning material and an autonomous environment was sought after by these late pathway participants. Notably, four out of the five participants have joined in the volunteer community and have perceived volunteering as an important influence on interest development, which illustrated the above-mentioned point.

Some further implications could be drawn from examining these late pathways. Individuals may stumble on art in seeking for new social experience, and museums could be a place to offer a unique experience – not only with art but also mixed with inspiring people in a welcoming and supportive environment – for non-attenders. It is perhaps useful to capitalize our innate need for social interaction and museums' potential for facilitating social interaction through delivering events that allow participants to socialize and be around art in a comfortable yet special atmosphere; a notable example would be 'Friday late'/late openings that have become trendy

among museums. Nevertheless, it is needed to evaluate these events in order to understand who come for the events and whether these prompt a second visit. Moreover, individuals may look for opportunities to self-develop and to enrich life as they enter a new life stage. Hence, spaces that promote lifelong learning – community centers, museums, centers for further education – may play a role in sparking new interest, which could lay the groundwork for further pursuit and address the need of those whose pathways took off rather late. It may be useful for policy makers and the above-mentioned institutions to re-evaluate the interdependent relationship between formal and informal learning spaces, and play the role of filling the gap left by early and formal education through providing captivating and self-directed learning opportunities to engage 'late comers'.

10.2 The roles of museums and galleries in the development of artistic interest

Museums and galleries have been given a central place in this research, which is reflected in the research questions as well as the choice of research participants (gallery visitors with a self-defined interest in art). Museums have been directly linked to the development of interest and formed part of the pivotal experiences that art enthusiasts had in a pathway to art. As I summarized in Section 6.2 and Section 8.2, early engagement in museums played a role in germinating interest in art (but not limited to art) in some cases, particularly in a social context. For instance, visiting with family and friends, as Bourdieu (1984) put it, may 'sensitize children with cultural goods'; however, school visits, in some cases, had limited influence on interest. Museums became an increasingly influential setting in later phases of interest development linked to certain interest-driven pursuits, such as volunteering and traveling. Museums were also considered an important interest-related resource, as I summarized in Section 6.3 and Section 8.3, and were used to deepen specific interests by enhancing one's knowledge and experience in a specific topic of interest. Hence, museums' role in the development of artistic interest is explicitly reflected in the two developmental dynamics discussed in the preceding section.

Art enthusiasts' use of museums as an interest-related resource can be understood in relation to a wider context. In particular, my findings draw links between interest-driven pursuits and the perceived value of museums. As summarized in the third developmental dynamics in Section 6.4 and Section 8.4, art enthusiasts perceived museums and museum visiting to represent values of: learning/education, social interaction, relaxation, entertainment, restoration, escapism, cultural and object experience, and identity building. Identifying these perceptions contributes to current knowledge of motivations for visiting museums, and further, to an understanding of the different needs museums can meet. At the same time, these perceptions reflect art enthusiasts' engagement carried out in a pathway to art; for instance, the acknowledgement of a museum's cultural value – its role in providing cultural insights and offering an opportunity to engage with an authentic object – is often linked with art enthusiasts' engagement in cultural tourism, and such engagement is linked to later phase interest. However, some evidence suggests that art enthusiasts may develop new perceptions or values of museums as interest develops. To facilitate a productive dialogue between interest development and the perceived value and roles of museums, further research should be undertaken to study the dynamics between the development of perceived values and different phases of interest development.

Following the above two points, this research points to the need for museum professionals to reflect on museum practice from the standpoint of interest development. On a general level, it may be useful for museums to identify potential visitors with a view toward exploring interests, i.e. family visitors or school groups. As I noted before, artistic interest can be supported within and across influential settings in which museums play several roles. The value of museums may be enhanced and maximized while connecting with other influential settings such as homes and schools. For instance, as one of my findings suggests that school visits have a partial influence on early interest, the need to connect museum-based and school-based learning becomes evident as a key to nurturing an early interest in visual arts among children. The creation of school and family programs may produce

early engagement in museums for young minds, and should be given a central place in museum program development.

To curate a museum experience or program for visitors with a view toward developing artistic interest, museums may actively engage in helping visitors explore their interests through the avenues of communication identified in this research, including engaging visitors in compelling exhibitions, inspiring gallery talks, or mutually beneficial volunteer programs. Understanding the developmental phases of artistic interest may be useful, for instance, in developing volunteer programs where volunteers' interest may be sustained by deepening an existing interest through opportunities like regular in-house trainings or peer learning. In a similar fashion, considering the needs of individuals at different phases of interest development may have implications for exhibition or event planning. Exhibition designers may choose to enhance elements of an exhibition to stimulate visitors' interest, while connecting visitors with resources to pursue interests further. The perceived roles and value of museums this research has identified may also inform audience development. Museum professionals may target specific visitor groups based on specific needs; for example, capitalizing upon the value of authenticity to speak to visitors with an object experience perception (Pekarik, Doering and Karn 1999).

Appendices

Appendix 1: List of potential museums and galleries to recruit

1.1 List of potential museums to recruit participants in Taipei

Name of museum	Collection or exhibition type
National Palace Museum	Chinese art; Fine art
Taipei Fine Art Museum	Taiwanese art (20th century onward); International modern and contemporary art
Museum of Contemporary Art	International contemporary art
National Museum of History	Chinese art and artifacts
Hong-gah Museum	Contemporary art; Textile art

Two museums – the National Palace Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art – were selected as candidate museums after initial contact was made via recruit emails.

1.2 List of potential museums to recruit participants in London

Name of museum	Collection or exhibition type
Royal Academy of Arts	Fine art
Tate Modern	International modern and contemporary art
Courtauld Institute of Art	Fine art
Institute of Contemporary Art	International contemporary art
National Gallery	Fine art; Paintings of Western Europe tradition
National Portrait Gallery	Portraits of different medium
Hayward Gallery	International contemporary art
Dulwich Picture Gallery	Paintings of European tradition
Wallace Collection	French fine art; furniture; armory
Victoria and Albert Museum	Fine art; Design
British Museum	World art and artifacts
Ben Ury Gallery	Modern and contemporary art; Artists of Jewish descent

Two museums – the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Tate Modern Museum – were selected as candidate museums after initial contact was made via recruit emails.

Appendix 2: Online questionnaire

The online questionnaire was designed according to the following question categories.

Question category	Example questions
Basic information	o Name o Age o Place of residence o Occupation o Educational qualification
Interest and resources	o Have you volunteered at any cultural institutions? (If yes, where, for how long, and why?) o What art are you particularly interested in? o What/who do you think has influenced your artistic interest? o What resources would you use if you wish to learn about art?
Museum and gallery visiting habits	o How many times have you visited museums and galleries in the past six months? o What is usually the reason of your visit? o Who do you usually visit with? o What do you usually do there?

Appendix 3: Interview guideline

The interview guideline was designed according to the following question categories and suggested prompts, which was tested in a pilot study.

Question category	Example prompts
Area of interest	o What comes to your mind when thinking about art? o Why do you say this? o Can you tell me more about (specific item) you mentioned in the questionnaire?
Initiation of interest Influences on interest	o Did you enjoy art as a child? o How do you find (specific experience related with art) in relationship with your interest?
Resources used to engage with art	o What is your channel of information about art? o What would you do if you want to find out more about (item of interest)? o Why do you prefer (specific resource/channel)?
Values of museums and galleries	o Can you tell me more about (specific museum) you often visit? o What do you usually do when visiting (specific museum)? o In your opinion, what is/are the value(s) of museums?
Experience of engaging with art Identity building	o When/How do you come to realize that you have an interest in art? o Have you come across with any challenge when pursuing your interest?

**Appendix 4: List of participants recruited with different strategies**

For the purpose of addressing the research questions, participants in both groups were labeled as 'central participant' (those with dual identities of museum volunteers/course attendees and regular visitors) or 'peripheral participant' (those who are regular museum visitors). The table below shows the labeling of each participant in GT and GL, as well as the corresponding recruit strategies.

Group Taipei (GT)			Group London (GL)		
Participant's pseudonym	Level of Participation	Recruit strategy	Participant's pseudonym	Level of Participation	Recruit strategy
Lisa	Central	Through MOCA	Pam	Central	Through V&A
Sonya	Central	Through NPM	Helen	Central	Through V&A
Mike	Central	Through NPM	Jo	Peripheral	Through V&A
Amy	Central	Through NPM	Patrick	Central	Through Tate
Iris	Central	Snowballing	Susan	Central	Through Tate
Howard	Central	Through MOCA	Josh	Peripheral	Snowballing
Eric	Peripheral	Snowballing	Stella	Central	Snowballing
Elisa	Peripheral	Snowballing	Paula	Peripheral	Snowballing
Jane	Peripheral	Snowballing	John	Peripheral	Snowballing
Rachel	Peripheral	Snowballing	Jill	Peripheral	Snowballing
Annie	Peripheral	Snowballing	Charlie	Peripheral	Snowballing
June	Peripheral	Snowballing	Maria	Peripheral	Snowballing
Olivia	Peripheral	Snowballing	Alex	Peripheral	Snowballing
Lynn	Central	Through MOCA	Cathy	Central	Through V&A

Appendix 5: Examples of learning ecology maps

The following are five examples of learning ecology maps developed from the interview sessions with five participants (two GT and three GL participants) during data collection in Taipei and in London. Participants' comments and feedbacks were recorded in blue marks (see maps 1, 2, 3 and 5).

Learning ecology map 1: Amy, GT
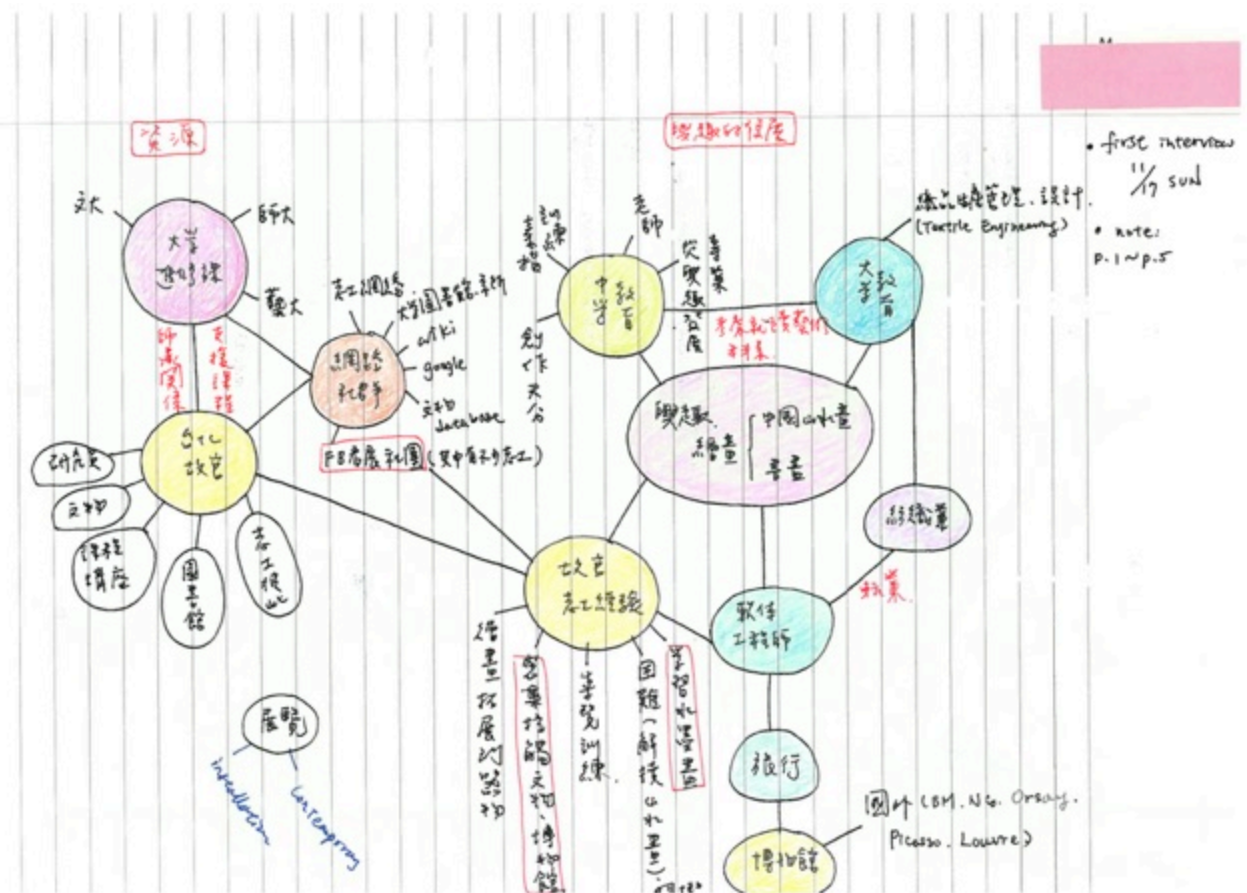
Learning ecology map 2: Iris, GT
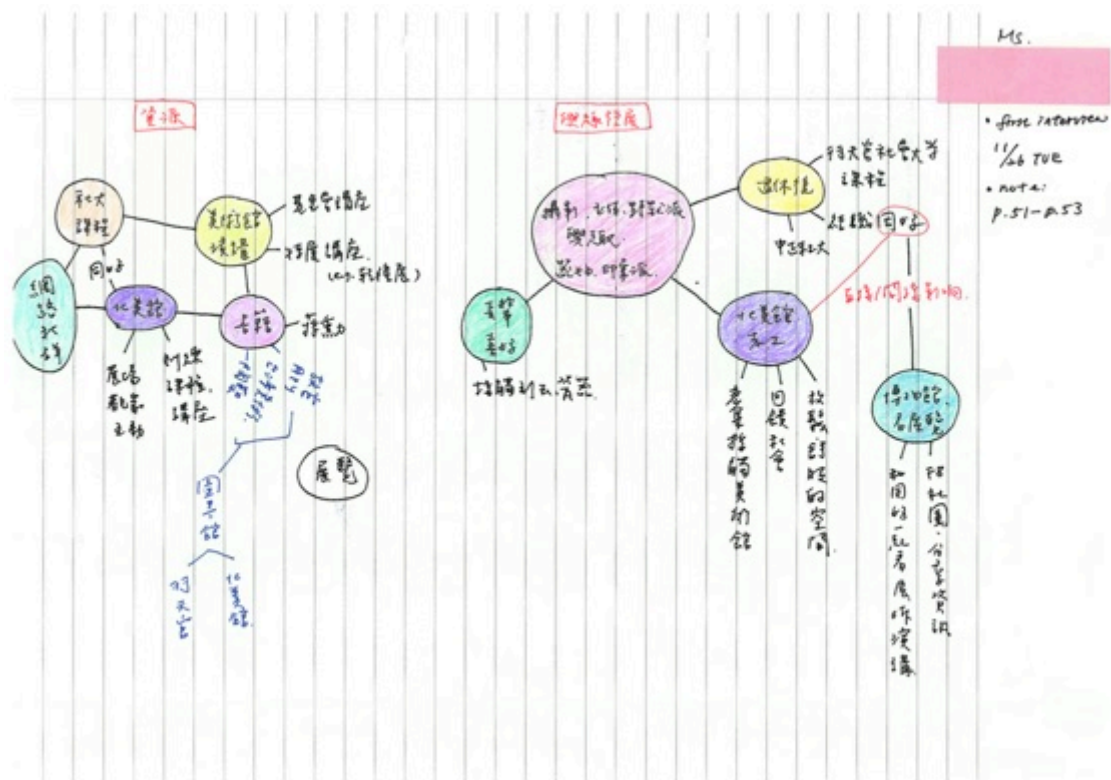
Learning ecology map 3: Helen, GL
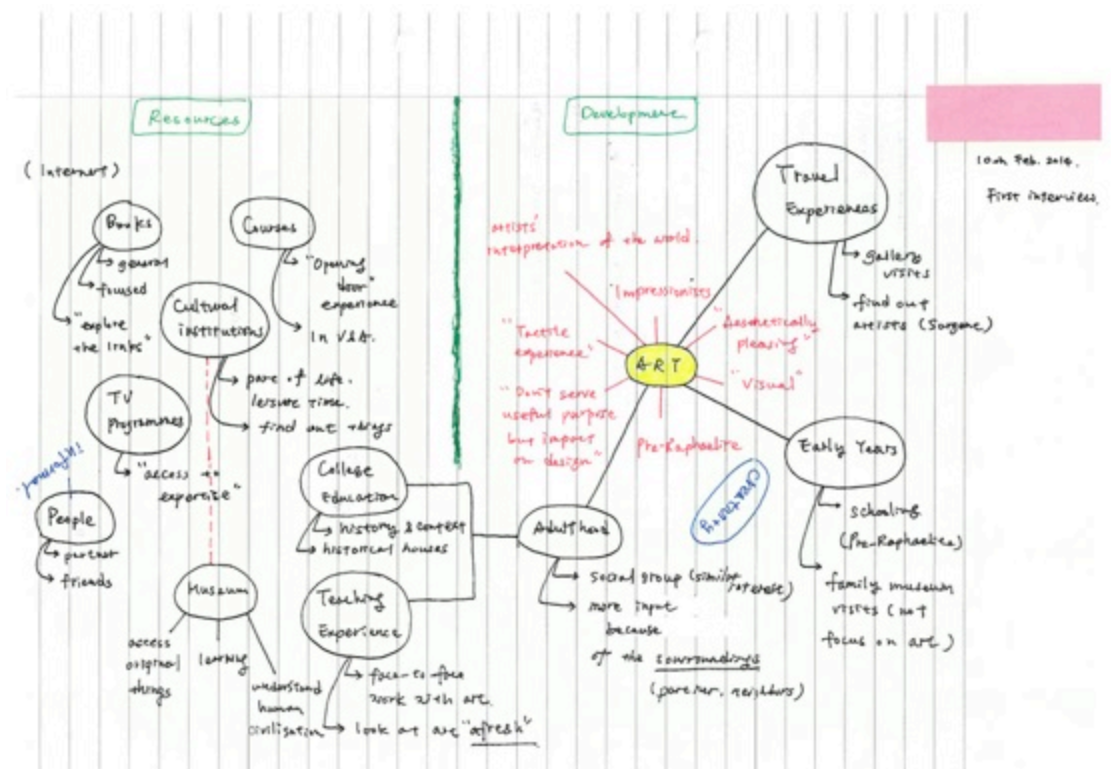
Learning ecology map 4: Maria, GL
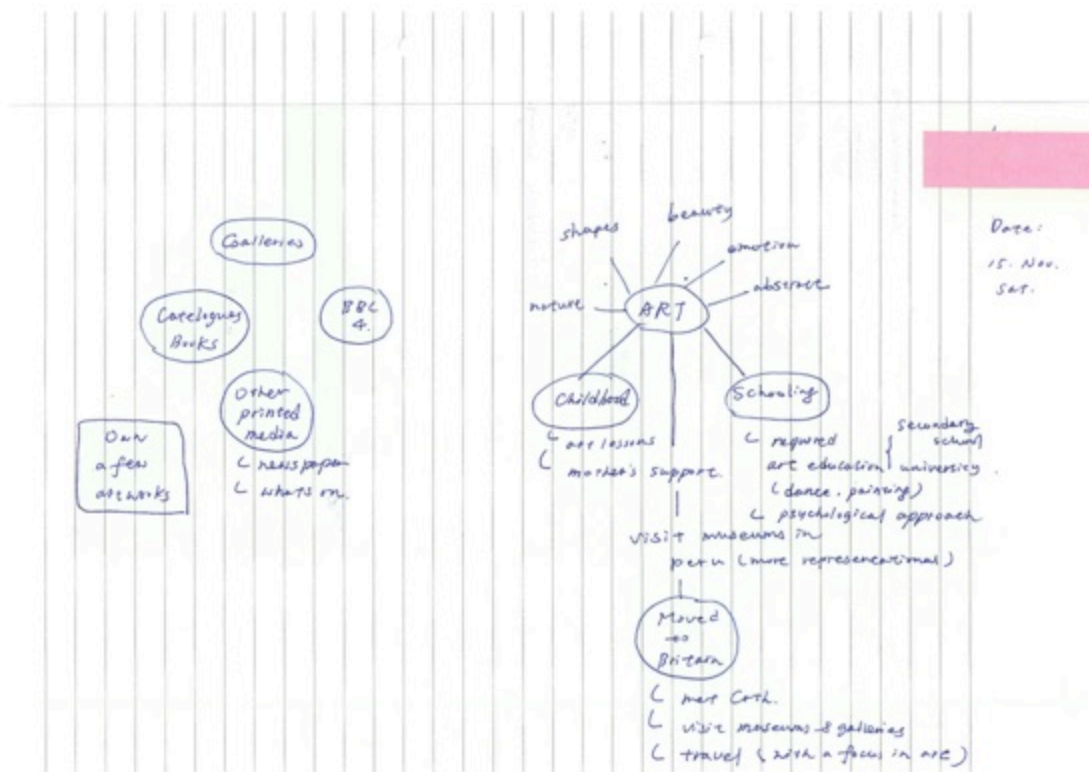
Learning ecology map 5: Stella, GL
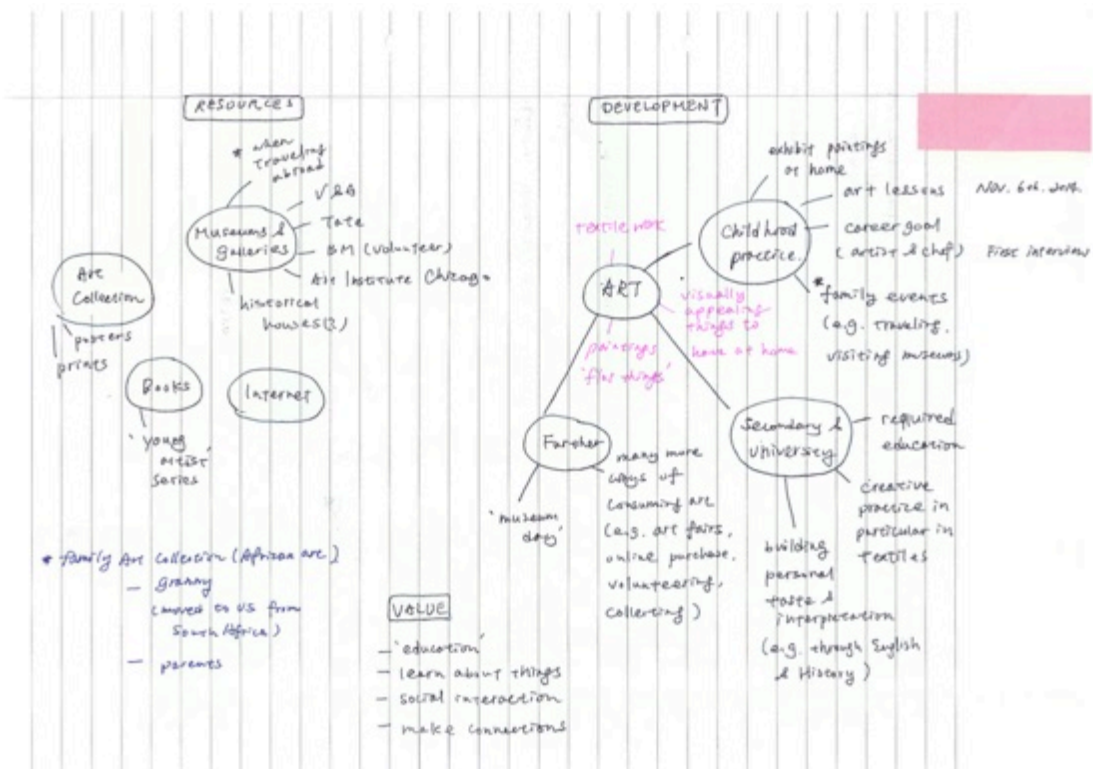
Appendix 6: Thematic categories and subcategories

The following table presents the codes – thematic categories and relevant subcategories – created for data analysis. Codes were created through analyzing different sources of data; in the case of this research, interview transcriptions and observation notes were used as primary and secondary sources.

Categories	Sources	References
Areas of Interest		
a. Personal Association of Art	26	49
Influences		
a. Activities & Practices		
i. Aspiration	10	18
ii. Creative activity	20	55
iii. Formal learning	18	49
iv. Informal learning	16	28
v. Leisure/hobbies	23	48
Collecting and buying	16	36
Art fairs and art shows	8	13
Decorating	10	14
vi. Travel	26	57
vii. Volunteering	11	17
viii. Work	11	21
b. People		
i. Family	22	54
ii. Peer and Mentor	21	37
c. Places		
i. Museums and Galleries	21	57
ii. Neighborhoods	9	12
iii. Other institutions	3	3
iv. Trip-overs	11	20

Resources			
	a. Membership & Interest groups	13	25
	b. Multimedia	13	16
	c. Museums and related resources	29	60
	i. Multimedia guides/guided tours	13	13
	ii. Lecture & Talks	18	36
	iii. Museum libraries	7	12
	d. People	33	83
	i. Special relationships	3	9
	e. Print publication	30	72
	f. Structured course	14	27
	g. Online resources	24	40
	h. Other	9	14
Perceived values			
	a. Identity	4	4
	b. Learning/Education/Participation	29	51
	c. Entertainment	12	15
	d. Escapism/Restoration	4	6
	e. Relaxation	9	12
	f. Therapeutic	1	1
	g. Place		
	i. Object experience	20	30
	ii. Cultural experience	16	31
	h. Social interaction	16	26
Development of pathways			
	a. Key moments about phases of interest development	34	119
	b. Viewpoints about learning	17	59
	c. Future plans	17	60
	d. Competence		
	i. Activeness	7	9
	ii. Appreciation	20	35
	iii. Knowledge	10	14

	iv. Skills	4	8
	e. Self-understanding	15	23
	f. 'Art identity'	21	38
	g. Challenges & Strategies		
	i. Appreciation	21	55
	ii. Knowledge	15	37
	iii. Creative skills	8	22
	iv. Guiding	8	26
General critiques			
	a. Art	39	188
	b. Museums & Exhibitions	33	157
	c. Resource & Approaches	41	271
	d. Systems & Environments	15	26

Institute of Archaeology

Information Sheet for Participants in Research Studies

You will be given a copy of this information sheet.
Title of Project: Art Museum as Learning Space: Developing Interest and Learning Identity in Art Museums and Galleries in Taiwan and UK
This study has been given clearance by IoA Ethics Committee that it is exempt from UCL Research Ethics Committee approval.

Name   Carol Lo-Yun Chung

Work Address   University College London, Institute of Archaeology
                              31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY

Contact Details   Tel: Researcher's mobile numbers in Taiwan and in UK
                              Email: lo-yun.chung.12@ucl.ac.uk

I would like to invite   to participate in this research project.

You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research investigates how adult art learners develop interest and construct learning identity – an understanding of what kind of learner individual is, and his/her position in relation to art – through various learning opportunities, particularly in using museums and galleries. The purpose of the research is to find out how museums and galleries can facilitate learning better by catering for visitors with different learning identities and levels of interest. For this purpose, the researcher will work with adult museum users with an interest in art, studying interest development and the path of learning collaboratively with participants, and attempt to define the role that museums and galleries can play in supporting adult learning.

Who can take part in this research?

Participants involved in this study are adult museum and gallery users residing in Taiwan and UK, who visit museums and galleries for the purpose of learning and developing their interest in art.

What will happen if you take part in?

If you take part in this research, you will be able to get actively involved in many stages of the research process, from data collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and the dissemination of results. For this purpose, I will have interviews in multiple sessions with you at a time and place that suits you and does not affect your work schedule. Interviews will be in the form of conversations/informal exchange of ideas and discussion, and will preferably be recorded. All recorded interviews will be transcribed (written up) and reviewed by you before they are in use. All the transcriptions and recorded files will be protected in secure storage. However, if you feel uncomfortable with the idea of being recorded, I will take notes instead. Lastly, I will have multiple observations of learning activities that you engage in when developing your interest, and you can collaboratively decide with the researcher which activities are relevant to your learning process and interest. In the observation, I will accompany you as a participant of certain learning activity, and take notes to record the information necessary for the study.

What are the possible benefits of participating in this study?

By contributing in each stage of this research project, you will be able to produce in partnership with me, a reflection of your own learning process and share your views about art learning that could lead to self-analysis and awareness of the changes you made as a learner. In addition, your learning experience and concerns will provide meaningful information and data for both museum and gallery community and art education community that you are also likely to benefit from their improvement of learning service.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All data obtained during the study will remain confidential and used for research purposes only. I will not disclose your name or any identifying characteristics in this study and this information will not be available to anybody at any point other than me and my supervisor.

It is up to you whether to take part or not. If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

o   This information sheet is translated into Chinese for participants in Taipei.

Institute of Archaeology

Informed Consent Form for Participants in Research Studies

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

Title of Project: Art Museum as Learning Space: Developing Interest and Learning Identity in Art Museums and Galleries in Taiwan and UK

This study has been given clearance by IoA Ethics Committee that it is exempt from UCL Research Ethics Committee approval.

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Before you agree to take part, the person organising the research must explain the project to you.

If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you to decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

Participant's Statement

I

- Have read the notes written above and the Information Sheet, and understand what the study involves.

- Understand that if I decide at any time that I no longer wish to take part in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw immediately.

- Consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study.

- Understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

- Agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I

agree to take part in this study.

Signed:

Date:

o   This informed consent form is translated into Chinese for participants in Taipei.

Appendix 9: Demographic features of art enthusiasts in Group Taipei

Participant		Gender/Age	Education/Subject	Occupation
Lisa	Volunteer/ Central	F/45	University/ History	Freelance Translator
Sonya	Volunteer/ Central	F/47	Postgraduate/ Management	Senior Manager
Mike	Volunteer/ Central	M/68	University/ Chemistry	Retired Senior Manager
Amy	Volunteer/ Central	F/37	University/ Textile Engineering	Engineer
Iris	Volunteer/ Central	F/55	University/ English	Retired Teacher
Howard	Volunteer/ Central	M/25	University/ Business	Administrator
Eric	Visitor/ Peripheral	M/30	Postgraduate/ Management	Engineer
Elisa	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/28	Postgraduate/ Management	Manager
Jane	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/35	University/ Library Studies	Manager
Rachel	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/26	University/ Language	Sales
Annie	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/38	Postgraduate/ Finance	Manager
June	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/20	GCSE/Japanese	Student
Olivia	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/55	University/ French	Housewife
Lynn	Volunteer/ Central	F/40	University/ Business	Sales Specialist

It should be noted that:

- June was in her junior year at university at the point when I met her, and was in the process of completing her BA in Japanese. There is strong evidence supporting the fact that she is going to complete university in due course.
- Lisa and June were acquaintances. June has referred to Lisa many times

during the interview sessions, as a close family friend who has played a role in building her interest. Lisa also referred to June many times during the interview sessions, and confirmed that she has traveled with June and her family many times, and that she was a close friend to June's mother.

Appendix 10: Demographic features of art enthusiasts in Group London

Participant		Gender/Age	Education/Subject	Occupation
Pam	Volunteer/ Central	F/72	Postgraduate/ Art History	Retired senior manager
Helen	Course/ Central	F/59	University/ History	Freelance educator
Jo	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/54	Postgraduate/ Law	Retired lawyer
Patrick	Volunteer/ Central	M/63	University/ Art	Retired teacher
Susan	Volunteer/ Central	F/60	University/ Art	Retired teacher
Josh	Visitor/ Peripheral	M/33	Postgraduate/ Marketing	Advertisement specialist
Stella	Volunteer/ Central	F/27	Postgraduate/ Archaeology	Full-time student
Paula	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/31	University/ Dentistry	Dentist
John	Visitor/ Peripheral	M/40	GCSE	Security engineer
Jill	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/30	Postgraduate/ Digital design	Designer
Charlie	Visitor/ Peripheral	M/31	Postgraduate/ Law	Paralegal
Maria	Visitor/ Peripheral	F/33	University/ Education	Full-time student
Alex	Visitor/ Peripheral	M/33	Postgraduate/ Physics	Researcher
Cathy	Course/ Central	F/65	Postgraduate/ Islamic art	Retired dentist

It should be noted that:

- o Two couples took part in this research: Maria and John, and Jill and Charlie. Jill and Charlie's pathways were discussed both as two individuals in Chapter 7, and as a couple's joint pathway, whereas Maria and John's pathways were analyzed only as two individuals.

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