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Understanding the Art of Thought: Defining, Rethinking, and Applying Creative Methods and Practices

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Understanding the Art of Thought:
Defining, Rethinking, and Applying Creative Methods and Practices

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at
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Stephen Kuusisto, Director

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Abstract

Creativity, an already elusive term, has further transformed into a conceptual quagmire of numerous open and closed definitions during the course of the past two decades. Although creativity lacks a concrete identification, our society continues to find answers to socially and economically based problems through means labeled as *creative thinking*. This suggests that creativity is structurally linked to discussions on *innovation*—which in its exclusivity yields some positive outcomes—but negates further definitions or explorations of the word.

This thesis compiles a variety of resources from a range of fields related to the subject of creativity to offer a broad viewpoint on its overuse for the purposes of labeling and under-appreciation for the purposes understanding. Through the use of numerous studies on Art Education systems of practice, this thesis aims to demonstrate the importance of fully comprehending both what is known and unknown about human creativity—offering a particularly pragmatic lens into the exploration of this concept. Embracing this duality is crucial to our society's contemporary crossover from the *Information Age*, based in convergent models of thinking and knowledge (and exemplified by subject areas like mathematics and science), into a *Conceptual Age* based on a much more divergent model (Pink, 2005).

Lastly, with the construction of a more cohesive definition for *creativity*, this thesis aims to verify the necessity of its inclusion within our system of education. Arguments will address how both fine art and non-fine art classrooms currently educate students to embrace creative though, but more importantly, how they might improve upon their efforts by redefining prevalent conceptions and challenging common misconceptions about *creativity* and the *learning environment*.

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