



## **Creative Passion and Cultural Heritage: A Narrative Study of a Filipino Artist's Life and Work**

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### **Abstract:**

This study explores the lived experiences of a Filipino artist and educator through a narrative inquiry approach, focusing on the themes of Identity and Legacy, Resilience and Adaptation, Community and Influence, and Creative Passion. The artist, deeply influenced by his cultural heritage from Iloilo, Philippines, embodies a journey marked by personal growth, professional challenges, and an enduring passion for art. Data were collected through in-depth interviews lasting approximately three hours, allowing for saturation and rich, detailed narratives. The analysis employed Lichtman's 3 Cs method—Coding, Categorizing, and Conceptualizing—to distill 419 units of meaning into four major themes. The findings reveal that the artist's identity and legacy are profoundly shaped by his commitment to preserving traditional practices and showcasing cultural elements in his work. His resilience and adaptability are evident in his navigation of financial hardships, health issues, and reintegration into the art community after a long absence. Community engagement emerges as a significant influence, with the artist actively participating in local art projects, teaching, and mentoring, thereby fostering collaborative creativity and cultural preservation. His unwavering creative passion drives his dedication to art-making, even in the face of challenges such as time constraints and personal responsibilities. This study contributes to the broader discourse on art and culture by highlighting the intricate interplay between an artist's personal experiences and their creative expression. It underscores the importance of individual narratives in understanding the motivations, struggles, and triumphs that shape artistic journeys. The insights gained have implications for art education, cultural preservation, and the development of support systems for artists.

**Keywords:** Narrative Inquiry, Filipino Artist, Identity and Legacy, Resilience, Community Influence, Creative Passion, Cultural Heritage, Art Education

### **Introduction:**

Art serves as a powerful medium for expressing cultural identity, personal experiences, and societal narratives (Al-Zadjali, 2024; Takala, 2023). Understanding the personal journeys of artists is essential to appreciating the depth and context of their work (Zhou & Liu, 2022). This study explores the life of a Filipino artist whose experiences encapsulate themes of Identity and Legacy, Resilience and Adaptation, Community and Influence, and Creative Passion. Through a narrative inquiry, the research aims to uncover how his personal history, cultural heritage, and professional challenges have shaped his artistic expression (Zhou & Chuangprakhon, 2023). Such insights contribute to the broader discourse on the role of artists in cultural preservation and highlight the importance of supporting their development within the community.

International scholarship has increasingly emphasized the importance of narrative inquiry in understanding the complexities of artists' lives and their creative processes (Weiss & Johnson-Koenke, 2023). Researchers have highlighted how personal narratives provide deep insights into how artists construct their identities and make sense of their experiences (Lengelle et al., 2024). For instance, Kadastik et al. (2023) discuss how narrative inquiry captures the interplay between personal history and cultural context, which is crucial in shaping an artist's work. Studies by Dennis and Maudlin (2023) have explored themes of resilience and adaptation among artists globally, noting that overcoming professional and personal challenges is a common thread in artistic development. Additionally, Yao et al. (2014) examine how community engagement and cultural influences impact artists, fostering both individual growth and contributions to cultural preservation. These international perspectives underscore the significance of exploring individual artist narratives to gain a broader understanding of the challenges and motivations that shape artistic expression worldwide.



In the Philippines, there is a growing body of literature that emphasizes the significance of artists' personal narratives in shaping their creative work and contributions to culture. Scholars like Eslit (2024) highlight how Filipino artists intertwine personal experiences with cultural heritage, reflecting themes of identity and community in their art. In his analysis of contemporary Philippine art, Flores (2022) discusses how individual stories and historical contexts influence artistic expression, offering deeper insight into the societal roles of artists.

Research by Alameda et al. (2023) delves into the resilience and adaptability of Filipino artists amid economic and social challenges, illustrating how personal struggles and triumphs are reflected in their work. Guerrero (2021) emphasizes that understanding these personal journeys is crucial to appreciating the depth of Filipino art and the perseverance of its creators. Additionally, Fraser (2023) examines the impact of community engagement and mentorship on the development of artists in the Philippines, underscoring the collaborative nature of the art community and its role in fostering creative passion.

Despite the rich tapestry of art and culture in the Philippines, there is a noticeable scarcity of in-depth narrative studies focusing on the lived experiences of individual Filipino artists (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016). Most existing research tends to concentrate on art history, critical analyses of artworks, or the exploration of artistic movements, often overlooking the personal journeys that shape an artist's creative output. Specifically, studies that delve into critical themes such as identity and legacy, resilience and adaptation, community and influence, and creative passion within the context of individual artists' lives are lacking.

The complexity of an artist's personal and professional life cannot be fully understood through quantitative methods or broad overviews alone (Kim, 2016). Qualitative research, particularly narrative inquiry, is essential to capture the nuanced experiences that influence an artist's work and evolution (Clandinin, 2013; Riessman, 2008). This approach allows for a deeper exploration of how personal history, cultural heritage, professional challenges, and intrinsic motivation intertwine to shape artistic expression (Squire et al., 2013). By focusing on individual narratives, researchers can uncover insights into the motivations, struggles, and triumphs that are often obscured in broader studies.

The aim of this qualitative research was to explore and illuminate the lived experiences of an individual Filipino artist through a narrative inquiry approach. By delving into the themes of Identity and Legacy, Resilience and Adaptation, Community and Influence, and Creative Passion, the study sought to uncover how personal history, cultural heritage, professional challenges, and intrinsic motivation converged to shape the artist's creative expression. This research endeavored to provide a nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in the artist's personal and professional life, offering insights into the motivations, struggles, and triumphs that informed his work. Through this in-depth examination, the study aimed to contribute to the broader discourse on art and culture, highlighting the importance of individual narratives in enriching our appreciation of artistic endeavors.

The researchers were motivated to conduct this study by a desire to fill the evident gap in literature concerning the in-depth narratives of individual Filipino artists. Recognizing that the complex interplay of personal history, cultural heritage, professional challenges, and intrinsic motivation in shaping an artist's work was often underrepresented in existing research, they focused on a comprehensive narrative inquiry to provide valuable insights into the artist's journey. Their intention was not only to enhance understanding of the individual artist's experiences but also to contribute to art education, cultural preservation, and the development of support systems for artists. Through this study, they hoped to inspire a deeper appreciation of the personal and cultural factors that influence artistic expression and to encourage further research in this nuanced field.

The artist in this study is a dedicated educator and creator from Iloilo, Philippines—a region celebrated for its agricultural landscapes and traditional practices like the *bahay kubo* (nipa huts) and *patadyong* cloth weaving—that have deeply influenced his art. Despite financial constraints and the loss of his mother to brain cancer, he pursued his passion, winning a scholarship through a poster-making contest and enrolling in a Bachelor of Fine Arts program. Initially focusing on Advertising before transitioning to Industrial Design, driven by a desire to create and invent, he faced challenges such as job instability and health issues—including a stroke that significantly impacted his mobility and cognition. Demonstrating remarkable resilience, he continued to create art, often during sleepless nights due to insomnia, and remained committed to his long-held creative concepts. Incorporating traditional practices and regional distinctions into his work, he aimed to revive and showcase unique cultural elements from his heritage. Currently, he serves as a faculty member in the Fine Arts program at La Consolacion College Bacolod School of Architecture, Fine Arts, and Interior Design, where he mentors students, shares his knowledge of traditional methods, and adapts his teaching to modern learners, reflecting his commitment to fostering appreciation for art and cultural heritage among the next generation.

Operating within the vibrant art community of Bacolod City in Negros Occidental, Philippines—renowned for its rich cultural scene and the famous MassKara Festival, which showcases local artistic talents through colorful masks, dances, and parades (Muzones, 2019)—he blends traditional and contemporary influences. The city's art community draws inspiration from local customs, historical events, and a diverse cultural tapestry (Henares, 2024). By



incorporating practices from his hometown in Iloilo—such as bamboo craftsmanship, traditional weaving, and natural dye usage—into his work, he preserves these cultural traditions and introduces them to a broader audience in Bacolod and beyond.

His engagement with community art projects, festivals, and educational institutions highlights the interconnectedness of the regional art community. Through participation in barangay projects, school murals, and festival set designs, he demonstrates a commitment to collaborative creativity and cultural expression. By adapting traditional methods for contemporary applications, he bridges the gap between past and present, fostering a deeper appreciation for cultural heritage among community members. In his teaching role, he mentors aspiring artists to explore both traditional and modern techniques, addressing challenges posed by changing student attitudes and the impact of technology on attention spans, striving to instill a passion for art and creativity. His experiences with reintegration into the art community after a long absence underscore the supportive yet challenging nature of Bacolod's artistic environment, where rebuilding credibility and navigating established groups are essential for artistic growth and opportunities.

### **Methodology:**

#### **Epistemology**

The epistemology of this study is grounded in the constructivist approach, which posits that knowledge and reality are socially constructed through human interaction and interpretation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). In the context of this research, the constructivist paradigm recognizes that the artist's experiences, perceptions, and interpretations are subjective and shaped by his cultural, social, and historical contexts. By employing narrative inquiry within a constructivist framework, the study acknowledges that the artist constructs meaning through his personal narratives, and these stories are pivotal in understanding his artistic journey. The researchers, in turn, co-construct knowledge by engaging with the artist's narratives, interpreting them, and situating them within broader cultural and theoretical frameworks (Creswell & Poth, 2023). This approach allows for a deep exploration of how the artist's identity, resilience, community interactions, and creative passion are not fixed entities but are continuously formed and reformed through experiences and storytelling. The constructivist epistemology supports the idea that reality is multiple and constructed, aligning with the study's aim to capture the nuanced and complex nature of the artist's lived experiences.

#### **Theoretical Tenets**

The theoretical tenets that underpinned this study were rooted in constructivist theories related to identity formation, resilience, community engagement, and intrinsic motivation within the arts. Erikson's (1968) theory of psychosocial development provided a framework for understanding how the artist's sense of identity and legacy evolved over time through personal experiences and social interactions. Resilience theory (Masten, 2013) informed the exploration of how the artist adapted to and overcame various personal and professional challenges, highlighting the capacity for positive adaptation despite adversity. The concept of communities of practice (Wenger, 1999) underpinned the examination of the artist's engagement with the art community, emphasizing how participation in social and cultural groups influenced learning and identity formation. Additionally, self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) offered insights into the artist's intrinsic motivation and creative passion, focusing on the fulfillment of basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness that drive artistic expression. These theoretical frameworks collectively supported the study's aim to understand the complex interplay between personal history, cultural context, social relationships, and internal motivations in shaping the artist's life and work.

#### **Qualitative Discovery**

A qualitative approach was selected for this study to deeply explore the artist's personal experiences and perceptions, recognizing that quantitative methods, which focus on statistical generalizations, are insufficient for capturing the richness of individual narratives (Creswell & Poth, 2023). Qualitative discovery allows researchers to examine complex social phenomena by identifying patterns and themes that emerge organically from participants' stories. Through in-depth interviews and reflective conversations, the artist revisited his life experiences, enabling him to construct and convey meaning within his cultural and social contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). This method aimed to capture the depth and nuance of his journey, focusing on how he perceives, internalizes, and articulates his experiences. By prioritizing the participant's voice, the study sought to provide a holistic understanding of the factors that shaped his identity, resilience, community engagement, and creative passion.

#### **Methodological Perspective**

The study employed a narrative inquiry methodological perspective to delve deeply into the artist's lived experiences. Narrative inquiry is a qualitative research approach that focuses on the exploration of individuals' stories to



understand how they interpret and make sense of their lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). This methodology was particularly suited to the study because it allowed for an in-depth examination of the complex interplay between the artist's personal history, cultural heritage, professional challenges, and intrinsic motivation. By collecting and analyzing the artist's narratives, the researchers were able to capture the richness of his experiences across the themes of identity and legacy, resilience and adaptation, community and influence, and creative passion. Narrative inquiry facilitated a holistic understanding of how these factors converged to shape his artistic expression, providing valuable insights into the motivations, struggles, and triumphs that defined his journey. This approach also emphasized the importance of context and temporality, acknowledging that the artist's stories were situated within broader social, cultural, and historical frameworks (Riessman, 2022). Through narrative inquiry, the study aimed to contribute meaningfully to the discourse on art and culture by highlighting the significance of individual narratives in understanding artistic endeavors.

### **Sampling, Subject, Setting, & Ethical Considerations**

The study employed a purposive sampling strategy, a common approach in qualitative research where participants are selected based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2014). The subject was a Filipino artist and educator whose experiences embodied the themes of identity and legacy, resilience and adaptation, community and influence, and creative passion. By focusing on this individual, the researchers aimed to gain in-depth insights into the complex interplay of personal and professional factors shaping his artistic journey.

The subject of the study was an artist currently serving as a faculty member in the Fine Arts program at La Consolacion College Bacolod School of Architecture, Fine Arts, and Interior Design. To protect his privacy and maintain confidentiality, personal identifiers and sensitive information were omitted or anonymized throughout the research. The artist was selected due to his rich experiences and willingness to share his narrative, which aligned with the study's focus on exploring the lived experiences of Filipino artists.

The setting of the study was primarily in Bacolod City, a vibrant cultural hub in the Negros Occidental province of the Philippines. Data collection occurred in environments familiar and comfortable to the participant, such as his workplace and personal studio. Conducting interviews and observations in these settings allowed for a more authentic and contextualized understanding of his experiences and artistic practices (Creswell & Poth, 2023).

Ethical considerations were of paramount importance in this study. The researchers adhered to the ethical guidelines outlined by the American Psychological Association (Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, 2017) and the National Ethical Guidelines for Health and Health-Related Research in the Philippines (Philippine Health Research Ethics Board, 2017). Informed consent was obtained from the participant after explaining the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and his rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was strictly maintained by anonymizing data and securely storing all research materials. The participant's narratives were presented respectfully and accurately, ensuring that his voice was authentically represented while safeguarding his privacy. Additionally, the study was reviewed and approved by an institutional ethics review board to ensure compliance with ethical standards.

### **Data Collection Methods**

The data collection method for this study involved conducting a comprehensive, in-depth interview with the participant, guided by an overarching research question aimed at eliciting rich, detailed narratives of his experiences. The interview lasted approximately three hours, providing sufficient time to thoroughly explore the four key themes of identity and legacy, resilience and adaptation, community and influence, and creative passion. This extended duration allowed for data saturation, a point at which no new significant information or themes emerged from the dialogue (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Open-ended questions and prompts were used to encourage the participant to reflect deeply and share nuanced insights into his personal and professional life.

To ensure the accuracy and credibility of the collected data, member-checking was employed as a validation technique. After the interview, the participant was provided with the interview transcript and the corresponding thematic coding for review (Birt et al., 2016). This process allowed him to verify the accuracy of his statements, clarify any ambiguities, and confirm that the researchers' interpretations genuinely reflected his experiences and perspectives. Member-checking not only enhanced the trustworthiness of the data but also empowered the participant to have an active role in the research process, aligning with the constructivist epistemology of co-constructing knowledge through collaboration (Creswell & Poth, 2023).

### **Data Analysis Process and Procedures**

The data analysis process in this study involved applying Lichtman's 3 Cs approach: Coding, Categorizing, and Conceptualizing (Lichtman, 2013). Initially, the researchers meticulously transcribed the interview and immersed



themselves in the data by reading the transcript multiple times. During the Coding phase, significant statements, phrases, and ideas articulated by the participant were identified and assigned initial codes that captured the essence of his experiences and perceptions. This open coding allowed for the identification of meaningful segments within the data related to the study's focus.

In the Categorizing phase, these initial codes were examined for patterns, similarities, and relationships. Codes with common themes were grouped into broader Categories that reflected larger concepts emerging from the participant's narratives. This step involved refining and collapsing codes to organize the data into coherent clusters that represented key aspects of the artist's journey.

Finally, the Conceptualizing phase involved synthesizing these categories into overarching Concepts that encapsulated the main themes of the study: Identity and Legacy, Resilience and Adaptation, Community and Influence, and Creative Passion. This interpretative process required the researchers to delve deeper into the data to understand the underlying meanings and connections between categories. By employing Lichtman's 3 Cs, the researchers systematically transformed raw data into meaningful insights, ensuring that the analysis remained grounded in the participant's narratives while constructing a comprehensive understanding of his lived experiences.

## Findings and Discussion:

### Emerging Themes

The data analysis revealed four major themes that encapsulate the essence of the artist's lived experiences: Identity and Legacy, Resilience and Adaptation, Community and Influence, and Creative Passion. Identity and Legacy emerged as a dominant theme, highlighting how the artist's personal history and cultural heritage profoundly shaped his artistic identity and fueled his commitment to preserving and showcasing traditional practices from his heritage. The theme of Resilience and Adaptation reflected his ability to navigate professional challenges, financial hardships, health issues, and reintegration into the art community after a long absence, illustrating his adaptability and perseverance in continuing his creative pursuits despite adversity. Community and Influence underscored his engagement with community art projects, teaching roles, and social interactions, emphasizing his commitment to collaborative creativity and educational influence within his community. Lastly, Creative Passion captured his intrinsic motivation and unwavering dedication to art-making, reflecting how his passion for creativity drove him to persist in his artistic endeavors despite various challenges. These themes collectively provide a nuanced understanding of how personal, cultural, and social factors intertwined to shape the artist's journey, offering valuable insights into the motivations, struggles, and triumphs that defined his path.

### Data Coding

The data analysis transformed the artist's narratives into meaningful themes through a meticulous coding process. Initially, 419 units of meaning were identified from his personal and professional experiences. These units were organized into 30 coded clusters, which were then refined into 13 first-level codes and grouped into 6 second-level codes, representing broader thematic categories.

| Themes                    | Second-Level<br>Coding:<br>Broad<br>Themes | First-Level<br>Coding:<br>Clusters<br>Codes | Coded Clusters | Units of Meaning |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Identity and Legacy       | 2                                          | 5                                           | 12             | 190              |
| Resilience and Adaptation | 2                                          | 5                                           | 10             | 149              |
| Community and Influence   | 1                                          | 2                                           | 5              | 50               |
| Creative Passion          | 1                                          | 1                                           | 3              | 30               |
| <b>Totals</b>             | <b>6</b>                                   | <b>13</b>                                   | <b>30</b>      | <b>419</b>       |

Ultimately, this hierarchical process led to the identification of 4 major themes that encapsulated the essence of the artist's journey: Identity and Legacy, Resilience and Adaptation, Community and Influence, and Creative Passion. The theme of Identity and Legacy emerged as the most prominent, with 190 units of meaning, highlighting how his



personal history and cultural roots profoundly shaped his artistic identity and fueled his commitment to preserving traditional practices. Resilience and Adaptation, comprising 149 units of meaning, reflected his ability to navigate professional challenges, financial hardships, health issues, and reintegration into the art community after a long absence.

The theme of Community and Influence, with 50 units of meaning, underscored his engagement with community art projects, teaching roles, and social interactions, emphasizing his commitment to collaborative creativity and educational influence. Creative Passion, though smaller in volume with 30 units of meaning, was significant in capturing his intrinsic motivation and dedication to art-making, reflecting his unwavering passion for creativity despite challenges.

This systematic and hierarchical coding process—from units of meaning to coded clusters, then to first-level and second-level codes, and finally to overarching themes—allowed for a nuanced interpretation of the data. By meticulously organizing his narratives, the researchers captured the complexity and depth of the artist's experiences. The emergent themes provided a comprehensive understanding of how various aspects of his life intertwined to shape his artistic journey, offering valuable insights into the motivations, struggles, and triumphs that defined his path.

### **Participant Narrative**

The artist reflected on the divergent paths he and his peers took after graduation. While his friends and fellow creatives advanced in their artistic skills through continuous practice, he engaged in various non-artistic endeavors. Immersing himself in farming, multiple activities, and experimenting with different business ventures in Iloilo, he later realized that these diverse experiences enriched his artistic foundation. These everyday experiences provided valuable inspiration, grounding his artworks in the realities of life.

Reminiscing about his early artistic development, he began with simple sketches of patterns and forms. These initial efforts sparked his desire to replicate the world around him, leading him to create forms and figures inspired by his surroundings. Childhood influences significantly shaped his creativity; exposure to comic books and shows like "Star Rangers" fueled his imagination and inspired his creative endeavors.

Peer influence played a crucial role in his artistic growth. Feeling both pressure and motivation from his classmates, he was determined to reach their level of skill. He dedicated himself to continuous improvement, turning setbacks into catalysts for further effort and transforming disappointment into determination.

Deeply connected to his cultural roots, the artist integrated elements of his heritage into his work. Observing unique methods from his homeland, such as the construction techniques of *bahay kubo* (nipa huts), which differed from those in Negros, he felt compelled to revive and showcase these distinctions in his art. His works often reflected traditional practices absent in his current environment, aiming to preserve and highlight his cultural heritage.

Respect for cultural ownership informed his artistic approach. Understanding that certain traditions and designs were sacred to specific communities, he emphasized the importance of honoring these cultural boundaries. His art became a medium for preserving traditional craftsmanship; passionate about materials like bamboo, he incorporated traditional techniques into his work, thereby sustaining them and educating others.

Art also served as a bridge between his past and present, allowing him to capture memories and emotions. After years away from his hometown, he experienced a deep sense of longing, which he channeled into drawing and painting. His work became a reflection of his life experiences and a means to remember significant moments. With a family history of dementia, the urgency to preserve memories intensified. He captured moments like his father's newfound devotion, creating paintings that held precious memories and ensured they would not be forgotten.

Childhood nostalgia permeated his art, motivating him to recreate memories of places like his grandmother's house, which no longer existed. By replicating these memories through his creations, he aimed to keep them alive. Contemplating his legacy, he shared a deeply personal wish with his children, intending to create a tangible connection for future generations through his art. However, he humbly acknowledged that his legacy was not solely his to define, viewing his accomplishments as part of a broader journey and considering participation in competitions and exhibitions as milestones in his career.

The artist's journey is a testament to his unwavering resilience and adaptability in the face of numerous challenges. Upon graduating, he confronted the realities of the professional world, finding limited opportunities in his field, especially in Bacolod. He explored various avenues for sustenance, including applying to different jobs outside his discipline. His initial interest was in industrial design, with a desire to create and invent. Gaining valuable experience



working as a graphic artist for a paint company, he faced instability due to the nature of contractual work, which led him to adapt swiftly and explore various fields to sustain himself.

Returning to Iloilo marked a pivotal decision. Seeking guidance from family members, he ventured into farming despite lacking personal experience. Farming presented its own challenges, leading to financial setbacks. Undeterred, he attempted to establish his own art studio and gallery, but market conditions proved difficult due to low appreciation in the area. Despite these hurdles, he persisted, demonstrating commitment to his craft and determination to overcome financial obstacles.

Throughout these challenges, he exhibited remarkable adaptability in his creative practices, remaining flexible with the materials available to him. Early in his career, acquiring art supplies was a struggle, but support from mentors significantly impacted his work by providing high-quality materials. As circumstances improved, he invested in better supplies, understanding the impact of material quality on his work and viewing high-quality materials as a worthwhile investment despite rising costs.

He also adapted his work to meet audience expectations, acknowledging that the local art scene favored polished, visually appealing works. Despite a personal appreciation for natural and organic materials, he realized that such art might be less impactful or recognizable to the local audience. After a significant hiatus from the local art community, he sought reintegration, understanding the need to rebuild his credibility. Through persistence and leveraging professional connections, he gradually regained his footing, engaging in local art activities, contributing to community needs, and accepting inherent challenges.

In addition to professional hurdles, he faced significant health challenges, including a stroke that profoundly impacted his abilities. Despite these personal struggles, his determination remained steadfast. Shortly after his stroke, he was scheduled to participate in an exhibition. Adapting his work processes to accommodate his new limitations, he demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity. Traveling to the exhibition posed additional challenges, but his commitment to his art and refusal to let physical limitations deter him exemplified his adaptive spirit.

He navigated emotional challenges as well, particularly heightened sensitivity following his stroke. To cope, he consciously avoided stimuli that might trigger strong emotions and practiced compartmentalization to maintain focus on his art. Immersing himself in his work provided solace and a sense of normalcy, though he acknowledged the fragility of this focused state. Family responsibilities served both as motivation and a source of emotional complexity. Financial stability became crucial for himself and those he supported, with income from competitions and artwork sales essential to meet these responsibilities. His commitment to family extended to his legacy, as they were the ones who witnessed his enduring contributions.

The artist's journey was profoundly influenced by his interactions with the community and the mutual impact they had on each other. After more than a decade away from the local art scene, he returned with the intent to reestablish himself. Recognizing the advancements his peers had made in his absence, he sought guidance from trusted colleagues to reconnect. Reintegration required patience and effort, and he gradually found his place again through support from educational institutions and professional networks.

Embracing invitations to participate in local art activities, he was driven by a desire to contribute meaningfully. Understanding that working within a community came with challenges, he remained committed to collaborative efforts despite occasional difficulties. He continued to showcase his work through various exhibitions, appreciating the efforts of others in promoting art, even if he was not proactive on social media or in organizing personal exhibitions. He maintained a clear understanding of artistic autonomy, emphasizing the importance of respecting an artist's current creative direction.

Beyond exhibitions, he engaged in larger community projects such as festival productions, which required extensive collaboration and coordination. His involvement enriched the cultural fabric of the community and provided a platform for mutual influence between himself and collective artistic expressions. His engagement with educational institutions was multifaceted, providing services ranging from murals to subject-specific art projects. Participating in barangay projects, he leveraged community connections and exceeded expectations through his contributions.

He developed a personal process that he imparted to his students, believing that they appreciated traditional methods for their educational value. Valuing shared artistic experiences, he saw them as influential in his students' learning and respected individual interpretation and learning pace. Adapting to changing attitudes and attention spans of modern students, he noted differences in dedication and focus over time. Despite these challenges, he remained committed to nurturing their appreciation for art, employing time management and creating comfortable environments for sustained engagement.

Social interactions with colleagues also influenced his journey, fostering camaraderie and easing professional tensions. He recognized the impact of lifestyle choices on health and discussed with his students how creative thinking



could be stimulated in social contexts. His exploration of various art forms included a fondness for watercolor and airbrush, embracing multiple disciplines by practicing both sculpture and painting. He had a personal preference for sculpture due to its tangible and realistic representation, valuing the precision and lifelike qualities it offered.

Often working outdoors, he used sketch pads to capture and preserve personal experiences, understanding the importance of mastering materials to reach the potential of a painting. His artwork served as a means to preserve memories and capture the essence of important individuals. Adapting to limitations, he sometimes joined two watercolor sheets to achieve the desired size for his work, keeping his artworks and sketches at home as personal treasures with significant meaning.

At the core of his journey was an unyielding creative passion that propelled his every endeavor. Art was the essence of his existence, a constant thread throughout his life. His days were defined by a relentless pursuit of creativity, whether through daily practice, revisiting long-held concepts, or finding solace in the quiet hours of the night. He firmly believed in the power of daily practice, understanding that consistent effort led to significant growth over time.

Determined not to let any idea slip away, he often returned to concepts from his college days, valuing the continuous learning that art provided. Despite time constraints and the demands of daily life limiting his ability to execute his concepts, his commitment to the quality of his work remained steadfast. Having clear objectives fueled his motivation, and art-making was his driving force, propelling him forward even after experiencing a stroke.

He aspired to broader horizons, such as live performances and solo exhibitions, but balancing these aspirations with life's responsibilities was challenging. He valued the importance of a dedicated creative space and was inspired by the dedication of other artists, although he acknowledged the constraints imposed by personal and professional obligations. Utilizing his insomnia as productive time for creativity, he turned sleepless nights into a sanctuary for uninterrupted work. Despite the challenges this lifestyle presented, he persisted, driven by his passion.

Throughout his journey, the artist grappled with the tension between his creative desires and the realities of life. His dedication to art was unwavering, yet he was acutely aware of the sacrifices and adjustments required. His story is one of relentless pursuit, balancing inspiration and obligation, where art remained both his solace and purpose. Despite obstacles, his creative passion burned brightly, inspiring those around him to find joy and meaning in the creative process.

## **Conclusion:**

This study employed a narrative inquiry approach to delve into the lived experiences of a Filipino artist, uncovering how his personal history, cultural heritage, professional challenges, and intrinsic motivation have shaped his artistic journey. Through meticulous analysis, four major themes emerged: Identity and Legacy, Resilience and Adaptation, Community and Influence, and Creative Passion. These themes encapsulate the complex interplay of factors that define his path as an artist and educator.

The theme of Identity and Legacy highlighted how deeply the artist's cultural roots and personal history influenced his artistic identity. His commitment to preserving and showcasing traditional practices from his hometown reflects a desire to honor his heritage and leave a lasting impact on future generations. This finding underscores the significance of cultural heritage in shaping an artist's work and the role of art in preserving cultural identity. Resilience and Adaptation emerged as a testament to the artist's ability to navigate numerous challenges, including financial hardships, job instability, health issues, and reintegration into the art community after a prolonged absence. His perseverance in continuing his creative pursuits despite adversity illustrates the crucial role of resilience in sustaining an artistic career. This theme sheds light on the personal sacrifices and determination required for artists to thrive in the face of obstacles.

The theme of Community and Influence emphasized the mutual relationship between the artist and his community. His engagement in community art projects, teaching, and mentoring roles highlights how artists both shape and are shaped by their social environments. By adapting traditional methods for contemporary applications and fostering appreciation for cultural heritage among students, he contributes to the cultural enrichment of his community. This finding illustrates the importance of community engagement in the development of artists and the propagation of cultural values.

Lastly, Creative Passion captured the artist's intrinsic motivation and unwavering dedication to art-making. His daily practice, commitment to revisiting long-held concepts, and utilization of personal challenges as sources of inspiration reflect a profound passion for creativity. This theme highlights how intrinsic motivation drives artistic expression and the significance of personal fulfillment in the creative process.





### Implications for Practice and Research

The insights gained from this study have several implications. For art education, understanding the artist's approach to mentoring and adapting teaching methods to modern learners can inform pedagogical strategies that balance traditional practices with contemporary relevance. For cultural preservation, the artist's efforts to integrate traditional elements into his work highlight the role artists play in maintaining and revitalizing cultural heritage.

For researchers, the study underscores the importance of narrative inquiry in capturing the depth of individual experiences. Future research could expand on this work by exploring the narratives of other artists from diverse backgrounds, allowing for comparative analyses that further elucidate the universal and unique challenges faced by artists.

### Limitations

While the study offers in-depth insights into one artist's experiences, its findings are based on a single case study, which may limit the generalizability of the results. The subjective nature of narrative inquiry means that the interpretations are influenced by both the participant's and researchers' perspectives. Additionally, cultural and contextual factors specific to the Philippines may not be fully applicable to artists in different settings.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies could involve multiple participants to explore a broader range of experiences within the artistic community. Comparative studies between artists from different regions or cultural backgrounds could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how various factors influence artistic development. Longitudinal research could also examine how artists' experiences and themes such as identity, resilience, community engagement, and creative passion evolve over time.

### Final Reflections

This study highlights the profound impact of personal history, cultural heritage, and social context on an artist's work. By bringing to light the narratives of individual artists, we gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities of the artistic journey and the myriad factors that contribute to creative expression. Recognizing and supporting these narratives is essential in fostering a vibrant and resilient artistic community that honors both tradition and innovation.

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