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# Mentor's Introduction

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Alan Wilson received his art and teacher training in England. For many years he has been an art teacher in Montreal secondary schools. This long experience in art classrooms is the source of his interest in the meaning of art lessons from the students' points-of-view.

In his doctoral studies, Alan found courses in philosophy provided him new ways of looking at his research and professional questions. He was drawn particularly to Husserl's phenomenology, because he found its philosophical grounding satisfied him intellectually, and its method promised practical application to the inquiry of lived experiences. Undaunted by the difficulty of Husserl's writings and the demands of his method, Alan has developed a detailed understanding, as well as a committed enthusiasm for, Husserlian phenomenology.

Alan stands at an advantageous point in the history of phenomenological research in art education. From the late 1960's into the 1970's, Husserl's writings played a central role in establishing phenomenology as a valid alternative methodology for art education research. Many dissertations of that period focused on exposition, explanation and justification of phenomenology as a method. Few of them actually attempted a phenomenology according to Husserl's methods. Those that did most often stopped at description, rarely proceeding to carry through the rigors of phenomenological analysis. The trend to explore methodological alternatives moved so quickly that those initial attempts at Husserlian phenomenology were left at a stage of initial exploration, without further development or critical



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attention. Alan's dissertation addresses this 'unfinished business' in two ways. First, he takes a critical look at existing expositions and applications of Husserlian phenomenology in art education, in light of his own understanding of the method. Secondly, in his phenomenology of the art lesson, he further explores the potential method, beyond description into the steps of phenomenological analysis.