# Soroc Gobal Naratives in Art Aucation







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# **InSEA Publications**

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# InSEA

The International Society for Education Through Art (InSEA) is an association on a worldwide basis of those concerned with education through art is necessary in order that they may share experiences, improve practices and strengthen the position of art in relation to all education; International co-operation and the better understanding between peoples would be furthered by a more completely integrated design and permanent structure for the diffusion of beliefs and practices concerning education through art. InSEA has established an international community dedicated to advocacy, networking and the advancement of research in art education providing a world-wide networking platform to the members.

InSEA is a non-governmental organization and official partner of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization UNESCO). InSEA publishes books and catalogues mainly in electronic forms, including the International Journal of Education through Art [IJETA], an English language journal that promotes relationships between art and education. InSEA holds a World Congress during which members come together to share insights and build stronger networks. Between world congresses, InSEA members are invited to regional congresses held in several sites around the world.



## Acknowledgments

This anthology crossed many borders in bringing together the research and voices of seven different countries, including five languages. It was no easy feat, and we (Ryan Shin and Karen Hutzel) are thankful to many who were a part of this journey. While we were co-editors of the Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education, the topic of Borderless: Global Narratives in Art Education became the theme of the third and final edition of the journal under our editorship. The idea to connect to countries across the world was Ryan's, and he reached out and engaged the editors of all the journals represented in this book and a few more that did not make it into this book. As this project took hold into a book, our vision was to capture the voices of the journals that also ran issues within this theme into one place in order to best represent and archive a global perspective on art education. In all of this time, we relied on the expertise of our editorial assistant, Elle Pierman, who started as a graduate student at Ohio State and editorial assistant to the journal and finished with us as editorial assistant and contributing editor to the book. Elle's organizational acumen, willingness to learn, incredible editing expertise, graphic design abilities, and general ability to really make it happen through difficulties might be the only reason this book has come to fruition! We can't thank her enough for her commitment to us, to this project, and to the field. Within the timeframe of all of this, she earned the title Elle Pierman, PhD, and we are thrilled to have her as a colleague. As well, we are so thankful to the editors of the contributing journals first for agreeing to produce a journal issue under this theme and second for then agreeing to work with us and their authors to republish journal articles selected as chapters in this book. Their contributions to this task were immense, requiring a lot of back and forth, further editing, coordination of authors, and in some cases, translation into English. Thank you to Margaret Baguley and Martin Kerby (Australia), Paulo Esteireiro (Portugal), Kallio-Tavin Mira (Synnyt/Origin, Finland), María Isabel Moreno Montoro and Jesús Caballero (Spain), Fu-ju Yang (Taiwan), and Petra Šobáňová and Jana Jiroutová (Czech Republic). As well, we are thankful to InSEA and President Glen Coutts for reviewing our proposal and agreeing to publish this anthology. When we considered the options for a publisher, the theme and premise of the book best fit under InSEA's commitment to global connections in art education. We believe this book represents the value of InSEA in written form, for these connections would have never been made without InSEA's conferences and general existence. And if Covid has taught us anything, it's that our ability to connect with colleagues near and far is so important to our work and our lives. We also wish to thank the authors of the chapters represented in this book, who agreed to feature their chapters, made further edits as requested, and joined InSEA to further support the organization and its work. Their voices are what make this book matter. We only hope that perhaps the conversations started by virtue of this text might continue in person someday. We hope many of these authors might meet each other as a result of the publication of this book.

Karen: Thank you, Ryan, for leading us through this process. Through several position changes and a recent move, my time commitment waned. But you never gave up and kept our momentum going. I'm thankful to you for your generosity of collaboration and spirit and for inviting me to run for Senior Co-Editor of *JCRAE* many years ago! Collaborating with you fed my hunger to remain involved in scholarship despite my pull toward leadership and administration. You are a wonderful colleague and incredible collaborator, and I am grateful to know and work with you. I also want to acknowledge my colleagues at Ohio State University and University of North Texas, who enrich my thinking about the role of arts in society and the promise of art education to impact the world. I have experienced the world and met incredible, caring, creative, and kind people as a result of the field of art education, for which I am most grateful.

Ryan: It has been wonderful to work with Karen as a professional colleague and friend. Without your hard work and vision, this volume would not be possible as we were going through challenges and difficult times, such as the pandemic and supporting international editors and their authors. As we ventured into this new scholarly adventure, your encouragement, support, and availability for many months and years made it possible as we have never seen a prior example of this kind of collaboration in our field. Thank you, Elle, for the amazing support! Karen and I relied on your tirelessly refocusing us on this project. I also thank Cathy Xu, PhD student at the University of Arizona, for designing the cover of this book, as the book looks amazing with your design touch. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the inspiration and support from my colleagues and graduate students from University of Arizona. Particularly, Elizabeth Garber as my mentor and a former editor of JCRAE showed me an ideal example of how an editor should work, both supporting authors and increasing journal's visibility.

# Foreword

# Glen Coutts, InSEA President

Every day, I see great work going on in art education. A great privilege of my current role as President of the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) is the insight it affords into what is happening in the very broad area of education through art in so many countries around the world. I am constantly amazed by the ingenuity, creativity, and sheer dedication of artist-educators, often with very limited resources and all for the benefit of their students. However, as I write this (April 2022), the world has endured more than two years of a global pandemic resulting in so called "lockdowns" in several countries, and so the opportunity to travel, even between local schools or colleges, has been somewhat restricted. The chance to meet, talk, and share has been severely limited. In addition, for many artist-educators, the "doing and making" side of art and art education has always tended to take precedent over the discussing, reflecting, and responding aspects. In my experience, most artist-educators like to be actively making; this does not mean they're not thinking of course, but the *opportunity* to listen to the experience and stories of others is becoming rather a rare thing.

The need for professional development that foregrounds inclusive, sustainable practice and embraces a variety of cultural accounts of art education has never been more pressing. Experiencing and reading the accounts of research and praxis from a wide range of educators and communities of practice and from multiple socio-cultural contexts enriches and enlivens one's own practice. For many, in the age of COVID-19, it may feel like our whole professional territory has been squashed onto the flat screen of a computer. This book, however, allows one to travel around the world, to listen and learn from diverse narratives on art education.

Ryan Shin and Karen Hutzel are well-known international experts in the field of art education. Both are familiar faces at national and international conferences; indeed, it was at one of the InSEA conferences that the original concept for this book took a major step forward. Previously, as Senior Co-Editors of the *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education* (USA), Shin and Hutzel proposed to several editors of national art education journals the idea of producing a themed issue entitled *Borderless: Global Narratives in Art Education*. Editors in seven countries took up the challenge (Australia, Czech Republic, Finland, Portugal, Spain, Taiwan and the United States), and each published a themed issue in their own country. The theme "Borderless: Global Narratives in Art Education" was also the title of a session hosted by Shin and Hutzel, along with several editors of the national journals, at the InSEA World Congress in 2019. Shin and Hutzel's initiative has resulted in this anthology: a collection of articles, some for the first time in English, that enrich our understanding of the state of art education around the world. The word *Borderless* in the title is very apt indeed.

Teachers, especially those in Primary (Elementary) or Secondary (High) schools are just so busy with the day to day delivery of mainly practical lessons that the professionally important

aspects of reflection, discussion, and exposure to new and alternative practices often falls by the wayside. This problem is compounded in many countries by a lack of quality professional development for art educators. After the initial teacher education stage, normally in a college or faculty of education, where do art educators find that crucial professional nourishment that is needed to question, refresh, reflect on, and strengthen pedagogy? As many countries around the world grapple with what to include (and exclude) in a curriculum fit for the twenty first century and in which creativity, problem solving, and team working are often cited as priorities, surely that should be a good thing for art education? However, unless artist-educators have the opportunity and resources to engage effectively with subject-specific research and in-service provision, their potential will be limited. This book offers a valuable window into the experience and practice of others in art education from different countries, cultures, and contexts.

The articles are presented in five thematic sections ranging from *Diversity and Inclusion* to *Meta Narratives,* and the writers offer personal perspectives located in their own cultural and theoretical contexts. Authors of the articles are drawn from a range of professional backgrounds including, for example, teachers, professors, museum educators, and community-based practitioners in art education. Fascinating insights into such thorny issues as *Colonization and Decolonization, Shifting Practices* or *Under and Mis-represented Groups* are recounted and shared by art educators – important narratives in the twenty first century for sure. By bringing the essays originally published in different journals together in a single volume, the editors have revealed multiple perspectives on art education and the chance to compare and contrast practice and theory in different parts of the world. In addition, the collected works in this format will reach a new and perhaps more varied readership than that of the original journal.

This book is a brilliant example of a collection of essays that explore the central thesis of its title, *borderless narratives*: the need for dialogue, critical discussion, research, and debate about art education. As long-term members of InSEA, the editors know well the value of international collaboration, discourse, and the need for diverse accounts to inform educational policy and practice. That can only happen when art educators come together to reflect, research, and celebrate effective praxis for the common good of our subject; this anthology invites art educators to do just that. Perhaps there will be more initiatives such as this book; I certainly hope so.

### **Professor Glen Coutts**

University of Lapland President, International Society for Education through Art (2019-23)



# **Borderless: Global Narratives in Art Education**

Introduction by Karen Hutzel & Ryan Shin

When facing global issues and divisions, contested worldviews, and ontological discourses, art educators are challenged to reflect on established views about and beyond local or regional history, culture, and knowledge. We live in a global world, and while scholars have argued the benefits and drawbacks of globalization as an extension of the Western ideal on Eastern and developing countries, those researching and writing on the topic tend to agree that globalization exists and is therefore relevant to consider as an educational concern (Razak & Abbas, 2011; Sinagatullin & Mesquita, 2006). Consequently, educating students well means preparing them for a global world economically, socially, critically, and culturally.

The current era increasingly demands that school and university graduates become globally and democratically minded citizens of their own countries and the entire world. To achieve this goal, they should succeed in acquiring a global education and intercultural orientation that will increase their global competence and make them skilled in their ability to interact across cultures in their attempts to solve common problems that are global in essence and nature. (Sinagatullin & Mesquita, 2006, p. 33)

Demands for problem-solving for global consequence have been increasingly evident in recent years as the Covid-19 pandemic swept across the earth without regard for geography, cultural identity, or socio-economic status. Such global demands have also revealed fissures across the globe in individuals' sense of shared responsibility and general cultural awareness, a reminder of the need for public education to not only teach science but also teach for cultural and critical competence. Art education in particular has an expressed responsibility to center culture and criticality within curriculum and pedagogy practices and scholarship. However, Sinagatullin and Mesquita (2006) generally question the cultural and critical competencies of teachers and faculty to meet the needs of educating in a global world.

[I]t is essential that we recognize where each individual is in terms of their global competence and global sensitivity. It is also worthwhile to note that today both school teachers and university faculty do not possess a sufficient level of global and intercultural competences required to make an impactful influence on young people in their charge for them to become more capable in their ability to adequately understand human diversity and the phenomenon of globalization. (Sinagatullin & Mesquita, 2006, pp. 33-34)

Expanding individual global competence of teachers and faculty might best start through the analysis and dissemination of individual narratives from across the world. As primary co-editors of this international anthology, we (Ryan and Karen) originally set out to extend and therefore challenge the limited scope of art education research through narrative within our home country of the United States of America while serving as Senior Co-Editors of the Journal of Cultural *Research in Art Education* (USA). As a special issue of this national academic journal, published by the United States Society for Education through Art, we proposed to the editors of multiple academic art education journals internationally to join us in releasing an issue of each of their journals under the same theme of "Borderless: Global Narratives in Art Education." The editors of seven journals around the world responded to our call and released journal issues under this theme within a couple of years of each other; several editors co-presented with us at the International Society for Education through Art conference in 2019 in Vancouver, British Columbia; and the editors of six journals selected articles from their journals to submit to us for the compilation of this anthology. The seven countries represented in this book include: USA, Australia, Portugal, Finland, Spain, Czech Republic, and Taiwan. In total, thirty-one chapters are included here as reprinted articles<sup>1</sup> from their respective national scholarly journals, categorized across five different themes.

Each author explores and presents their own views and perspectives based upon their respective art education theories and practices, delving into such questions as: Who are we in relationship to other cultures and countries? What issues in art, design, and education are potent across the world? How can art educators, museum educators, or community-based practitioners address and teach with a narrative of "being global?" This book offers an opportunity to consider topics and issues of interest to art education scholars and practitioners across seven different countries in an attempt to increase global cultural competence and understandings of the field beyond national borders. In essence, these thirty-one authors provide a global snapshot of art education theories, voices, and narratives, representing their own unique responses toward globalization and beyond Western-centric narratives. The thirty-one authors explore and address emerging themes, globalizing art education issues, shifting art curriculum, and future visions for art education within a globalized world.

Many of the original articles were published in their native language, limiting opportunities to share the work globally across languages and across countries. Here, all thirty-one chapters are offered in English<sup>2</sup> to enhance scholarly exchange and extend global readership. By reprinting and combining the articles as a single edited book, English-language readers ultimately have access to the writings of journals not offered in English. Hopefully, this anthology will symbolically expand national borders of art education, providing a global sense of the theories, practices, and current issues relevant from global and regional conflicts and concerns.

Ultimately, this book may be beneficial in art education classrooms around the world, where graduate and undergraduate students explore and discuss global issues and concerns within the field. Art education scholars might also engage with these diverse and inclusive voices of art education in globalizing their own art education teaching and scholarship. As well, this anthology captures a variety of dialogue present within InSEA discourse and conferences, archiving in text the value of InSEA to the growth and development of the field of art education. Perhaps this also leads to new international collaborations among InSEA organizations and their scholarly research and publications, including books, journals, and research projects.

The five sections below resulted from the analysis and categorization of the articles selected and submitted by the editors of the seven participating journals. These sections include: Diversity and inclusion; Colonization and decolonization in art education curricula; Voices of under- and misrepresented groups; Shifting practices in a globalized world; and Meta narratives in art education. These were not predetermined categories; rather, they emerged from the topics selected in response to the theme "Borderless: Global Narratives in Art Education." Each chapter started as a manuscript submission to a scholarly journal, underwent the peer review process by each journal, and was then selected from those published in the journal under this theme by the editors of the respective journals. Those journals, locations, and editors include the following:

Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education, Ryan Shin and Karen Hutzel, Editors, USA Australian Art Education, Margaret Baguley and Martin Kerby, Editors, Australia Revista Portuguesa de Educação Artística, Paulo Esteireiro, Editor, Portugal Finnish Studies in Art Education, Kallio-Tavin Mira, Editor, Synnyt/Origin, Finland Tercio Creciente, María Isabel Moreno Montoro and Jesús Caballero, Editors, Spain The International Journal of Arts Education, Fu-ju Yang, Editor, Taiwan Culture, Art and Education, Petra Šobáňová and Jana Jiroutová, Editors, Czech Republic

While this collaboration has resulted in expanding and engaging in narrative inquiry across seven countries, not every continent or global region is represented here. Primarily covering North America, Asia, and Europe, significant regions of the world are left out of this global conversation. While it would be easy to make excuses for leaving out large regions such as Africa, South Asia (i.e., India), the Middle East, and South America, this again highlights exclusionary practices embedded in politics, race, and identity that are evident even with attempts like this to be inclusive and accessible. While imperfect, hopefully this international collaboration across journals and the resulting anthology opens the door for even broader and more inclusive global collaborations in the future.

# **Section I: Diversity and Inclusion**

Authors in this section share their narratives around globalized diversity issues and concerns, offering practical and theoretical methods for how they approach and discuss global conflicts and inequity in schools, museums, and other educational settings. They each address diversity and inclusion in their local settings, including interrogating the impact of global media and a networked society on the local. **Shari Savage (USA)** highlights the voices of under- and misrepresented groups in our society by examining the recent #metoo movement, which brought greater attention to sexual abuse from girlhood through adulthood. Savage's narrative inquiry critically examines the culture of contextualizing and sexualizing girlhood through an in-depth

analysis of Lewis Carroll's rabbit-hole as a metaphor for sexualizing girlhood. She uses this metaphor to challenge cultural myths in which girls are blamed and sexualized in society. Gloria Wilson (USA) suggests re-inscribing a Western-dominated narrative imposed by colonial structures. Her narrative challenges the notion of "the othered" through a critical and postmodern framework to more fully examine the culture of othering. Jill Smith (Australia) explores the researcher's experience of witnessing a transition from acculturation to empowerment to inclusion for Asian students in art education in secondary schools in New Zealand. She presents a student-centered pedagogical project, focusing on how a group of Asian art teachers enabled their Asian students to "be themselves," express their identities, and tell their stories through art. Becky Shipe (USA) visualizes how teachers can facilitate productive encounters with difference through art, transforming such encounters into opportunities for growth and counter-learning against stereotypes and misconceptions. Her chapter subsequently implores art teachers to expose their students to various global narratives for empathetic and selfreflective thinking. Diversity and inclusion have remained a significant focus in art education in many countries and across borders, in many ways becoming a catchphrase used and manipulated to portray equity and improvements. They are presented here as the first section of the book as a first step toward further necessary work and research, which does not stop here.

# Section II: Colonization and Decolonization in Art Education Curricula

Chapters in this section challenge a Western-dominated narrative imposed by colonial structures, discussing significant global issues such as cultural appropriation and misrepresentation. These art education scholars emphasize the significance of critical reflection and examination when exploring the visual culture of marginalized groups and cultural origins in the classroom. Confronting the ongoing colonial legacies still embedded in Western society, this section shares ways in which art educators practice global art education as counter hegemonic globalization. Hyunji Kwon (USA) discusses "comfort women" statues in North America, deand re-contextualizing them as non-Western cultural mobilizations through narrative. Confronting the ongoing colonial legacies still embedded in Western society, she shares ways in which art educators practice global art education as counter hegemonic globalization. Laurie Eldrige (USA) challenges dominant histories through Indigenous reframing in an effort to decolonize art education historiography. In her chapter, she focuses on Native American spirituality as a framework for challenging curricular approaches deemed "salvage education," whose problematic practices were meant to rescue Native American cultures. In Rita Luciana Berti Bredariolli's (Portugal) chapter, she revisits Freire's narrative from the Black feminist perspective of bell hooks, examining Ana Mae Barbosa through the reading of Ramon Cabrera Salort about her Abordagem Triangular. Delineating some of the fundamental concepts of these elaborations, she portrays "another globalization" as understood by Milton Santos and the term de(s)colonial not only through the theoretical dimension of Walter Mignolo, Aníbal Quijano, and Catherine Walsh, but also in its poetic dimension through the narratives of Grada Kilomba, Rosana Paulino, and Chimamanda Adiche. Irena Paroubková and Michal Trčka (Czech Republic) discuss anti-immigration rhetoric as part of the contemporary narrative of racism and xenophobia, which stems from the history of European colonialism and Euro-centrism. They outline the narrative of the refugee crisis in the European Union as linked to the mechanism of "moral panic," which, they argue, is one of the most stereotypical and manipulative images of the migration crisis of recent years. Addressing the global narrative of racism and xenophobia as critical processing, they analyze two art projects of the National Gallery in the Czech Republic

and the DOX art centre prepared for the exhibitions of Ai Wei-Wei and Daniel Pešta. Martin C. Kerby and Margaret Baguley (Australia) explore the particular challenges and highlights of working in the New England Regional Art Gallery and Museum (NERAM) in Australia through three interviews conducted with the Director, the Exhibitions and Curatorial Manager, and the Education Officer. They argue that regional art galleries are the cultural heart of communities who have been longtime passionate advocates for their continued existence. Their findings include the importance of historical context, lived experience, expectations of a regional community, and the value of art in contributing to the legacy of quality art education. In the next chapter, Shyue-Ying Chiang (Taiwan) portrays how an art education curricular project for a Secondary Methods art education course offered the potential to critically reflect on how Western patterns of thought and practice re-inscribe a colonialist mindset and privilege. The author discusses limitations of Western critical thought in attempting to understand and center the aesthetic practices of non-Western societies. Tiina Pusa (Finland) describes the Radical Teacher project to address the political role of the teacher through arts-based research within a phenomenological case setting. In this study, art and art education are presented to offer an option for encountering beyond words, creating the hope of finding possibilities to make communication connections between politically opposing parties in current society and ultimately to avoid radicalization. Building upon diversity and inclusion and diving deeper into global issues in art education, exploring the commonality of the impact of colonization and moves toward decolonization further exposes common issues and approaches across countries.

### Section III: Voices of Under- and Mis-represented Groups

This section presents scholarly explorations of minority art educators, defined within each country on their own population and social contexts. This section reveals how minority groups in different countries attend to social, political, and cultural issues through the voices of art educators and their research and classroom practices. Tanya Vaughan and Brian J. Caldwell (Australia) report the impact of the Creative Arts Indigenous Parental Engagement (CAIPE) and its three programs – In-School Workshop, Early Literacy Storytelling, and Creative Community. Employing a mixed methods approach using statistical analysis of data and case studies, this research shows statistically significant increases in attendance at the regional schools, with English grades and literacy outcomes as measured by the National Assessment Program -Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). Sepideh Rahaa's (Sadatizarrini) (Finland) essay discusses the urgency of retelling personal narratives and histories through contemporary art, critiquing singular trauma narratives, victimization, and exotification of the Other in the stories narrated in the West, specifically in art and its knowledge production. The author shares examples of personal narrative in both practice and research, and further critically examines dominant and imposed stereotypical narratives of women of color in Finland, particularly women with Southwest Asian roots (politically known as the Middle East). Abdullah Qureshi (Finland) examines the history of movement within his family by studying his grandparents' passports, situated within the larger context of how the Pakistani passport devolved over the decades through immigration from Pakistan to North America. The author analyzes how that informed the contextualization of identity politics for Pakistanis in the diaspora, in particular through the works of two Pakistani-Canadian filmmakers, Sharlene Bamboat and Arshad Khan. By doing so, the author presents a complicated perspective on movement and national identity through a Pakistani and queer point of view highlighting South Asian artistic investigations into migration. Kate Collins' (USA) chapter provides a context for engaging undergraduates in developing understandings about refugee youth through community-engaged interdisciplinary arts pedagogy. She highlights that art and narrative underscored the process for developing collaborative arts practices. As an alternative submission, **Lourdes Santamaria Blasco and María José Zanón Cuenca (Spain)** analyze and share the works of sculptor Nancy Grossman who performs an artistic and psychoanalytic inquiry into emotional ties and social prohibitions. The authors focus on Grossman's works on psychic pain, the multiplicity of identity, and the ambiguity of sexuality that led her to seek information from both mythology and psychoanalysis, anchoring herself in the social events that marked her time. **Ming-Wu Chou (Taiwan)** shares the "Gender Stereotypes A-R-T Curriculum Program" as a tool to guide fourth grade students, in which they examine, reflect, and criticize gender stereotypes hidden in daily visual cultural products. The students were empowered to express or modify the concept of gender through their art works. The author reports outcomes such as the students' gender consciousness, the process of gender awareness, and the condition and influence of the implemented program. This section further complicates local and regional notions of minority definitions and statuses, further challenging simplistic and narrow perceptions of cultural categories.

# Section IV: Shifting Practices in a Globalized World

This section is a collection of chapters investigating social and cultural challenges and critical selfreflections on local art education practices under the influence of globalization. Authors explore an "in-betweener" status between traditional and foreign cultures and the complication of fixed notions of curriculum and teaching. Jacqueline Macdonald and Eseta Tualaulelei (Australia) describe an action research collaboration with two Queensland-based early years educators and expose how this collaboration facilitated changes to their arts based pedagogical approaches. They explore the perceived barriers to quality arts-based learning for children and potential strategies for overcoming them, arguing that with sufficient support, educators can act as change agents by leading arts-based learning to promote creativity. Julian Meyrick and Tully Barnett (Australia) critically discuss the use of metrics and numerical proxies in the evaluation of arts and culture. They share four "lies" of data-four disingenuous applications of quantitative methods that substitute for the search for a more effective understanding of the problem of value as it appears in the cultural domain and related fields. The chapter concludes with consideration of an alternative approach to the evaluation of arts and culture that resuscitates the notion of their "public good," following political historian Tony Judt's work. Annamari Manninen (Finland) presents a study of pupils' visualizations of Europe in their artworks and the visual means and roles of art used. The project was an action research initiative that brought together teams of researchers and coordinators from six universities with pupils and teachers from 25 schools across Europe. Based on data obtained from the project, this chapter sheds light on the possibilities of art education for addressing the topic of European citizenship. Patricia A. González-Moreno and Rubén Carrillo (Portugal) discuss public policies in Mexico and their social and political contexts that generate high levels of vulnerability, uncertainty, and risk for arts teachers. Their chapter presents an analysis of public policies and their virtues as well as contradictions, exploring how educational context continues to perpetuate the vulnerability of arts teachers. Rita Rodrigues (Portugal) claims that the main purpose of art history should be to unveil a humanistic narrative based on credible written and iconographic resources, and to open critical public debate on historical, social, and cultural outlines through a concept of contemporaneity. Fu-Ju Yang (Taiwan) shares a curriculum project as an action research study on the issue of "Constructing a Green Building," designed to awaken students' concerns for their

environment. The results show that most of the students participated with great interest, portrayed a good understanding of the curriculum project, started to care about their environment, and put their ideas into practice. **Diego Ortega Alonso (Spain)** shares a case study to explore the mechanisms, processes, and results of artistic research in the scientific and technical field, from the commission of a work of scientific illustration. The author examines requests to an artist by a third party (researcher, scientist, editor, or specialist in one of the areas of experimental sciences) to carry out works that allow any of these options: show the results of a scientific investigation, communicate science, or make materials of a didactic or educational nature. The author contends that the coexistence of the artist researcher in the scientific context of research should be considered an essential practice in artistic research. This section pushes the conversation from goals and categories toward actions and practices in pursuing greater global competence within the field of art education.

# Section V: Meta Narratives in Art Education

The narratives examined in this section apply an introspective approach examining the narratives of art education itself. These act, in essence, as a meta narrative, or an examination within. Building on the previous four sections and reflecting back on them, the chapters in this section consider the following large questions: What is the basis of our field? What "stories" is art education based on? Can these "stories" be considered globally valid? What art education narratives can be agreed upon across cultures? Which narratives can be considered as topical today, knowing they are subject to ongoing transformation and are time-dependent? The chapters in this section attempt to reflect on the fundamental narratives of art education. They offer these narratives for further professional discussion in which their validity can be confirmed or questioned globally. The authors focus on traditional narratives, such as modernist or classical narratives like the cultivation of creativity, stimulation of reflection, and creative experience with materiality. The authors in this section also offer an analysis of the transformation of such traditional narratives in the era of new media, information and image congestion, and the birth of post-true, liquid societies that pose new global issues. The path of introspection offered by the chapters in this section is not understood by the authors as building an ivory tower of art education theory, because every reflection ultimately leads to the perception of a human being and the world around them, and every creative act is a sensitive reflection of the inner world of the creator. First, Petra Šobáňová and Jana Jiroutová (Czech Republic) redress the significance of narratives in and of art education as well as other narratives. The authors ask whether classical narratives of art education are changing due to the advent and wide spread of new media, which many consider to be the trigger of a paradigmatic change in a number of areas. Against the backdrop of the new reality brought about by new media, the authors analyze the ways they impact fine art and art production in general, forms of expression, creativity, and creative reflection, and new challenges that new media pose to pedagogical practice. Kateřina Štěpánková (Czech Republic) argues that creativity does not represent only originality, and that the concept of creativity in art education has gone through a fundamental change during the 20th century that continues today. This chapter highlights how concepts of art education represent schools of thought, reflecting on the transformation of the construct that has become a matter-ofcourse and that is tied to the field so closely that it is often considered a synonym of art education. Jan Slavík and Kateřina Dytrtová (Czech Republic) engage readers with Czech art education history, in which in the early 1990s, reflection on expressive artwork was promoted not only as an educational tool, but also as a projection of social development after the Velvet Revolution.

Their chapter discusses the importance of reflection as a safeguard against irresponsibility, seeing it as a general condition of morality. In the next chapter, Adam Franc (Czech Republic) introduces a new artistic creation known as Software Art into art education. Software art is focused on the creation of artworks that expose the ideological and artistic dimension of software and show its creative potential as an independent medium. The author features software art that challenges global narratives about digital technologies in art education and contributes to the formulation of new and more complex narratives that are invisible, original, and alternative. Next, Aurelio Castro Varela (Spain) shares a methodological approach to audience corporeality through two case studies related to "filmic pedagogies," defined as the historic crossroad between ways of seeing and learning which arises from the view of moving images. The author asks, how can an ethnography about an audiovisual learning process which takes place in an urban context and out of a formal institution give an account of that "festival of affects" that, according to Roland Barthes, we call a movie? Diego García-Peinazo's (Spain) chapter discusses different didactic strategies of podcasts in the teaching-learning context of Music History in Graduate University Education. This chapter attends to the pedagogy of music history from a critical point of view, considering both the theoretical framework and the syllabus associated with the degree in Cultural Management, dealing also with the importance of podcasts and PBL in music education. Lastly, Timotej Blažek (Czech Republic) looks into both materiality and working with material as a basis for art education, as a mediator of real experience, as well as an important and necessary counterpart of experience simulated by the algorithm of new media. The author argues that materiality has an active role in the process of artmaking; it actively participates in it, and not only comes into the process of creation itself, but also into the very idea of the work. Further, the author argues that material carries meaning that we can address, analyze, and explore across cultures and history, which brings people and objects together while creating imaginary networks of interrelated relationships.

This final section further challenges the entire premise upon which this book is based, which is inherently grounded in Western thought, practices, and histories. Ultimately, the inclusion of voices from around the world resulted in the questioning of the limitations of narratives as embedded in still dominant discourses of art education. It is obvious there is much more work to be done to further the globalization of art education, and this anthology represents just a small shift, a suggestion perhaps, that this is necessary work for the field of art education to grow as a field, as scholars, and as practitioners in responding to a global world. Retaining scholarship only at a national level is no longer viable for the field or for the potential impact of art education on society at large.

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# Endnotes

- 1 Journals have provided permissions to reprint articles in this anthology.
- 2 English generally serves as a common language across countries; however, this has its own limitations and is embedded in colonialism, further supporting arguments that globalization, too, is rooted in colonial practices. Despite these issues, choosing English as a common language provides greater access to research across the world, even though it does not provide full access.

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# Section I Diversity and Inclusion



How do art educators address diversity and inclusion in their local settings, facing global media and networked society? Authors in this section will share their approaches and projects to address globalizing diversity issues and concerns, sharing how they approach and discuss global conflicts and inequity in schools, museums, and other educational settings. Authors are expected to share these issues within their local art education contexts.



# Down the Rabbit-hole: Girlhood, #metoo, and the Culture of Blame

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**Abstract:** Using narrative inquiry as a methodological tool, I explore how the culture of blame works to contextualize and sexualize girlhood. I dismantle the historical justifications behind Lewis Carroll's controversial relationships with girls and discuss current socio-political movements like #metoo in relation to female agency. The following research story aims to do two things: revel in the rabbit-hole that is research and also allow an accessible examination of how socio-cultural movements and shifting ideologies can bring new questions when analyzing data. By telling my research story, I shed light on how social discourse is always evolving and significantly impacted by the socio-cultural spaces we inhabit. Through narrative inquiry, I hope to encourage readers to challenge the ways in which girls are silenced and blamed by those who contextualize, historicize, or justify their sexualization.

Keywords: #metoo; girlhood; culture of blame; sexualization of girls

You wait little girl on an empty stage For fate to turn the light on Your life little girl is an empty page That men will want to write on (Song lyrics, Rogers & Hammerstein, *Sixteen Going on Seventeen*, 1959)

Art education research is often driven by social issues, activism, and concerns about voices not heard. As art educators, we look critically at how visual culture proliferates myth and upholds dominant ideologies about socio-cultural issues (Durham, 2008; Freedman & Stuhr, 2004; Levin & Kilbourne, 2008). Because my research is centered on issues of girlhood – innocence as a marker of desire and the ways in which popular visual culture contextualizes the sexualization of young bodies – it is important to understand historical underpinnings. While our current socio-political landscape is dominated by the #metoo movement, highlighting the continued lack of female agency, it seems clear that more voices need to be heard. This inquiry aims to do two things: revel in the discursive rabbit-hole of research regarding girls, desirability, and the culture of blame; and also examine how socio-cultural movements can bring new questions to older data. Using the Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (Carroll, 1865) "rabbit-hole" metaphor, I explore the discourse around girlhood to investigate the tacit socio-cultural themes present in visual culture texts (Carroll, 1865; Grant & Waxman, 2011; Mann, 2015; Nabokov, 1958; Newsom, 2011). The texts in question are varied and uphold long-term myths about girls as objects of desire, which add to culture of blame narratives. In analyzing these words and images, I hope to encourage art educators to challenge the ways in which girls are silenced and blamed by those who contextualize and historicize their sexualization.

# **Methodological Intent**

Research is about curiosity, a thought or idea that puzzles us to question further, dig deeper, and look for interesting rhizomes and roots to pull on. Like the rabbit-hole Alice discovers, scholars run, stumble, and fall along the way, pulling and pushing data into neat little piles of maybe's and what if's. As a methodological tool, I find that writing *through* my research helps me better understand my positionality and reveals new ways of seeing data (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). In this article, I analyze discursive spaces by investigating stories, journals, letters, interviews, blogs, and visual texts, looking for identifiable themes and areas of discord and agreement. In this sense, narrative inquiry acts as a type of discourse analysis that recognizes the intertexuality inherent in complex socio-cultural issues (Clandinin, 2007; Goodall, 2008; Rose, 2001). I see narrative inquiry as a purposeful and engaging type of arts-based research, one that lends itself to privileging storytelling as a way to co-construct and share meaning (Goodall, 2008; Leavy, 2015). Narrative inquiry can also be highly personal, allowing the researcher to acknowledge their own bias or intentionality. As a woman, I cannot separate myself from this inquiry – I let it get under my skin at times, revealing emotional ties to what drives my research. Using both words and images, I tell research stories that tend not to be tidy or prettily wrapped up in a conclusory bow. I'd rather leave my reader wondering or thinking more fully about a particular issue that they might not have considered before. Finally, narrative inquiry is accessible research writing, often told with an artistic or literary touch (Goodall, 2008; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005).

I began making mixed-media collages as a way to critically challenge mythic narratives about girls early in my research trajectory. Arts-based research explores meaning making – the social

and cultural understandings ascribed to visual culture—allowing for critical investigations of how culture creates mythic narratives (Barone & Eisner, 2011; Butler-Kisber, 2008; Rose, 2001). Arts-based activities can act as a way to reconsider research images, producing tactile and visually powerful interpretations of data. When I can extend pieces of visual data into arts-based representations that explore, trouble, or alter meaning, it taps into new ways of seeing data. While my arts-based collages reconnect me to my data and help me to look more deeply at girls in visual culture, I also find them to be unsettling. It is their unsettling quality that resonates and hopefully unnerves the viewer as well. One of the arts-based collages I created during my rabbit-hole explorations has been my screensaver for quite some time, a daily reminder of my research topic (see Figure 1).

# Down the Rabbit-Hole

Recent inquiries led to some odd connections between controversial photographer Sally Mann, author Vladimir Nabokov's Lolita (1958), and photographer and author Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, aka Lewis Carroll. I found curious similarities and thematic structures regarding little girls, innocence, and desirability, despite the years that separate these writers and artists (Savage, 2017). It was a deep rabbit-hole, one that left me with a few tantalizing questions still unexplored, including: "could Lewis Carroll have been a pedophile?" Questions around Carroll and his muse Alice Liddell are not new, but they have resurfaced in the literary spotlight thanks to new scholars who dare to push harder at the boundaries of context, asking an important question-and I paraphrase here – can a great work still be great if the person writing it is not such a great person after all (Woolf, 2010b)? Questions about morality and intention are suddenly topical and worth revisiting, as multiple revelations against producers, actors, directors, news anchors and journalists, United States Senators, Judges, and the 45th "that was locker room talk" President fill the daily news. As the hashtag #metoo swept social media, women and girls spoke out in anger against sexually predatory behavior - disgusting in both sheer numbers and range of offenses. Calls to boycott work by famous directors, producers, and actors who used their power to harass or assault are being discussed as an option to push back. One important discussion regarding sexual harassment and abuse concerns silence and the shame and blame placed on women and girls who felt compelled (or coerced) to remain quiet.

Contextualizing why or how something occurred is central to excuses or apologies by the harasser: "Different times ... I thought it was consensual ... she came to my room," to name a few excuses, along with the shifting blame tactic, "Who do you believe? Me or some lies from women I've never met?" In a time when the blaming and shaming of females are go-to offensive strategies, I found myself looking again to the long-held cultural myths and literary histories that support such narratives. Questions are now being raised about Carroll regarding how scholars contextualize his child-friend relationships and nude photographs of girls and their place in normalizing erotic girlhood tropes. My analysis unearthed intertextuality in visual and written texts with enculturated messaging about desiring innocence and the silencing of female agency over time.

The rabbit-hole I fell down is full of scholarship regarding Carroll's actions, literary texts, and photographic images. Scholarly articles and essays concerning all aspects of Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson's life, from childhood to Oxford graduate and math lecturer, children's book author, and photographer, can be found through *The Carrollian*, a periodical published by The

Lewis Carroll Society of England. Carroll's letters and diaries have been cataloged and analyzed in several volumes (Cohen, 1979, 1995; Wakeling, 1994), his photographs archived in books and digital collections (Cohen, 1998; Photographs of Charles L. Dodgson, 1832-1898). Google, my usual rabbit-hole entry point, leads to the strangest places, mirroring the nonsensical dream adventure Alice herself embarked on. For the past two years, I've been engaged in deep interactions with multiple Carroll biographies, primary documents such as his diaries and letters, and critical feminist analysis of his artistic work (Cohen, 1975, 1995; Douglas- Fairhurst, 2015; Gardner, 2015; Grant & Waxman, 2011; Leach, 2005). My decision to pause is directly related to #metoo and the need to start writing through my research now, as this is a watershed moment in our culture.

# **Shaming and Blaming**

My original research area looked at Lolita-like representations in popular visual culture, which includes literature and images related to Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Lolita* (1958). *Lolita*, a narrative by Humbert Humbert, a middle-aged self-professed pedophile, describes his all-consuming obsession with 12-year-old stepdaughter Dolores, aka Lolita. My topic found me through a story that moved me to action. In a course I taught, a student revealed heartbreaking events in a writing assignment about feeling invisible. She wrote, "Invisible is when your Uncle rapes you from ages nine through fourteen, and when you finally tell your mom, she believes her brother's denials over her daughter's story." As I read through my own hot, angry tears, more devastating words followed. *Shame, blame, secrecy*. Her last sentence asked, simply, "Why did he think this is ok?" I wrote back, offering every possible bit of help and empathy I could, honoring her courage and expressing support. The worst betrayal a child could endure is to not be heard and believed by someone who should protect her. I begged her to seek counseling. Her final question haunted me. Why did he think this is ok? Dismantling the culture of blame means looking closely at the discourse that supports tacit agreements about girls, innocence, and desirability, as both words and images work in tandem to create such narratives.

Why did Humbert think it was ok to sexually pursue and molest his 12-year-old stepdaughter Dolores? Why did literary reviews of the Nabokov book fail to acknowledge rape, incest, and kidnapping as part of her story (Davies, 1958; Hollander, 1956; Shelton, 1999; Trilling, 1958)? How did Nabokov, through Humbert's first-person telling, manage to make Dolores blameworthy, silencing her side of the story, pushing her anger and disgust into the margins (Bayma & Fine, 1996; Patnoe, 1995; Shelton, 1999)? How did he invoke Lolita as a blueprint for eroticizing girlhood (Bordo, 2003; Durham, 2008; McCracken, 2001; Shute, 2003; Wood, 2003)? Moreover, how did he convince popular culture that this was some kind of love story for the ages? While *Lolita* (1958) is often seen as the genesis of the erotic girl, these myths began long before Nabokov's Lolita left the pages of his book. His novel accelerated the genre, but Lewis Carroll's controversial photography documents Victorian era obsessions with girlhood innocence.

The Lewis Carroll rabbit-hole is filled with visual and textual gems about girlhood that shimmer with possibilities to analyze and discuss. I also analyzed blogs and website communities that draw people together in forums that discuss child-friends (as Lewis Carroll called his little girls), child-love, or argue that the admiration of nude prepubescent girls as an art form is perfectly acceptable. It is in these online community discussions that Lewis Carroll's letters and diaries are eerily present, as are Humbert's long lists of reasons prepubescent girls are preferable to women.

It is also where photographic images are shared, including those of Lewis Carroll, Sally Mann, Jock Sturges, and others. Defenders of girls as objects of desire use the same arguments we hear in today's socio-political arena, as seen in the recent Judge Roy Moore controversy.

Judge Moore's Alabama senate race, another #metoo moment, consumed the political landscape. Moore was accused by several women of sexual assaults that occurred many years ago. One woman says she was 14 years old at the time of the assault. Contextualizing girlhood is key to Moore's defense. At first, he and his lawyer claimed that it was culturally acceptable at the time for 30-year-old men to date young girls. Moore said he asked mothers for permission (Hannity, 2017). However, the local mall in Gadsen, Alabama banned Moore due to his habit of harassing young shop girls, so perhaps it was not as culturally acceptable as Moore claims (Betha, 2017). I wondered if Roy Moore had ever read Lolita, since he and his spokespeople appeared to mimic Humbert's justifications, both employing cultural narratives normalizing relationships between men and young girls. Alabama state auditor and Moore supporter Jim Ziegler trotted out a biblical reason, using Joseph and Mary as an exemplar for similar relationships (Wegmann, 2017). More women came forward, denying these interactions were consensual. Soon, his justifications were no longer palatable to many voters. Moore changed course, denying he knew any of the girls at all, calling them liars. While the Moore campaign shifted blame to the women, the rest of the U.S. was watching a seismic shift as accused harassers were removed from Congress, news anchor jobs, and fired from movies and television shows.

Newly empowered women spoke out in droves, believed and supported. Many of the men were fired or resigned, except for those who denied, blamed, and shamed their accusers. Seeing the difference between reactions in Alabama and the rest of the U.S. was telling, and a grave reminder that blaming girls for speaking their truth works to silence others from coming forward. Equally distressing was footage of female Moore supporters dismissing other women as liars, liberal agenda-driven pawns in a grand political witch hunt (Live Satellite News, 2017). Watching these interviews, I imagined how devastating this must be to girls and women who have not been able to speak out yet. It was in this socio-cultural milieu of secrecy, of blaming and shaming women, that I dropped back into my rabbit-hole. When I hit the bottom, Alice was waiting.

# The Annotated Girl

Alice Liddell was the muse many believe was the main focus of Rev. Dodgson's obsession with little girls. Writing under the pen name Lewis Carroll, Dodgson's book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was based on a story he created while entertaining Alice and her sisters on a boat trip near Oxford in 1862. The Dean of Christ Church, where Carroll was a math lecturer, was the father of Alice, Edith, and Lorina Liddell. Through that association, Carroll became a trusted family friend, including having unchaperoned access to the girls, often photographing Alice alone or with her sisters – Alice was his favorite. Carroll was banished from seeing Alice after a mysterious falling out with the Liddell family (Cohen, 1995; Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015).

I reread *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, using the annotated version, the one written in honor of the book's 150th anniversary (Gardner, 2015). I was entranced by the ways in which scholars and Carroll supporters have analyzed nearly every possible aspect of *what it all means*. For example, despite Carroll's repeated claims that the book was not based on child-friend Alice Liddell, the book itself is full of dog whistles to the contrary. Freudians delight in the rabbit-hole

metaphor (sex, of course). The annotated edition contains all versions of Martin Gardner's introductions (1960, 1990, 1999, and 2005). Each introduction attempts to contextualize Carroll's friendships with girls, his nude or semi-nude photographs of child-friends, and his misunderstood intentions—and as the years go by—some revisionist history. For example, Gardner claims that although Carroll did photograph nude girls, he made sure all plates were destroyed and none of the images survived (Gardner, 1960). In 2005, Gardner amends his claim, noting that at least four nude images have surfaced in the Rosenbach Foundation collection (Gardner, 2005). Another image recently turned up in France and appears to be Alice's postpubescent sister Lorina, fully nude. Experts are divided on the provenance, but the process and age of the photograph are correct. If proven to be authentic, this image upends the majority of Carrollians who believe Carroll's intentions were pure (Furness, 2015).

Gardner (2005) also rejects a group of scholars belonging to "Contrariwise: The Association of New Lewis Carroll Studies." Contrarians are willing to critically illuminate the sinister undertones of Carroll's relationships. Gardner eviscerates Karoline Leach (2005) and her book In the Shadow of the Dreamchild: A New Understanding of Lewis Carroll. He likens Leach's arguments on Carroll's sexual predilections as "on the same level with the absurd premise in Dan Brown's The DaVinci Code, that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene" (p. xxxii). I've read Leach's book, and like many other Carroll scholars, it's about as likely as anything else written about Carroll, in that Carroll is dead and cannot respond. Ground zero for most Carroll scholars lies in his letters and diaries, as they offer detailed accounts of his life by his own hand. One notable exception is that upon his death, his family removed specific parts of his diaries, including the time period before the mystery surrounding Carroll's dismissal from the Liddell family circle. Mrs. Liddell "tore up" all of Carroll's early letters to Alice, further adding to the ambiguity (Gardner, 1990). Here, in the heavy absence of the known, scholars play in the shadows of what if's. It's a swirling discourse of conjecture and possibilities, myriad theories abound, and everyone is seeking the proverbial smoking gun. Far from locating a bombshell, I simply wanted to revel in the narratives-the he said, she said of what is known-and better understand his obsession with girls.

Before we get much deeper into this rabbit-hole, here are some facts about Carroll that are difficult to place in modern day contexts. Carroll preferred the company of children, girls specifically. His apartment at Christ Church was filled with games, toys, costumes, and books for children. He writes in his diaries of the beauty of nude girls (he found naked boys to be distasteful). Innocence was key to their attractiveness, as was their prepubescent state, which Carroll aligned with purity and Godliness. He wrote to his child-friends, describing wanting to cover them with kisses and touches, addressing them as lovers. He took over 1500 photos of young girls. He wrote a letter begging a mother to allow him to photograph her 6-year-old daughter nude, without chaperone. Friends believed he was sexually repressed or filled with religious guilt over sexual thoughts. Diary entries refer to "white stone" days (a reference to marking a special day or event), which were "almost always ... days he entertained child-friends or made the acquaintance of a new one" (Gardner, 1960, p. xvii). Today, such activities would do more than raise eyebrows, but Carroll defenders point to Victorian beliefs about innocence and purity in children. However, Carroll was subject to rumors and speculation about his relationships with children, Alice in particular (Cohen, 1995; Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015; Leach, 2005). Young Alice Liddell was unknowingly elevated to an object of curiosity and desire and, like Nabokov's Lolita, remains eroticized in visual culture today.

# **Pigtails and Wonderland**

On July 4, 1862, Carroll took Alice and her sisters on a three-hour boat trip, during which Alice asked for a story. The rest is history – contested and partial – or as Burstein writes, "a bit of a palimpsest" to be written over, inked with new theories or possibilities (Gardner, 2015, p. xxxix). Part of my research rabbit-hole led me to blogs and websites devoted to defending Carroll's love of the child-body and his child-friends, which also display resistance to questioning his relationships with girls. The discourse attends to contextualizing or normalizing the desire for girls, adding to the mythologies around the sexualization of young girls. How those myths are enculturated over time is worth dismantling (Grant & Waxman, 2011; Robson, 2001).

Until the Contrariwise movement, little research was devoted to the pedophilic shadows related to Carroll's child-friends or his semi-clothed or nude girls. Instead, many scholars cling to Victorian ideals of childhood innocence, or the ideology that children were without sin and pure in heart. These arguments, which foreground most discussions about his child-friends, are brief in comparison to the amount of disconcerting evidence. Still, such arguments are commonly used to dismiss the rumors surrounding Carroll. Contextualizations like this also fail to address the other side, in that the same ideologies of purity and innocence could not be said of Victorian men (Cohen, 1995; Robson, 2001). Carroll was allowed to photograph girls under twelve, semi-clothed or nude, without chaperone, but when he asked to photograph an eleven-year-old, the mother refused, stating she was too close to the age of consent<sup>1</sup> (12 years) for this to be proper. The contextualization of consent, based *not* on agency or desire for marriage, was largely a societal construct. While notions of innocence and purity supposedly protected the well-born, at the same time, Victorians seemed less interested in this ideology when considering poor children, who were used with regularity in the sex trade (Robson, 2001; Woolf, 2010a).

In Oxford rumors of a "cult of the child" were discussed, and considering some of the men involved, their intentions appear Humbert-like. Writer and art educator John Ruskin,<sup>2</sup> a well-known lover of little girls, and poet Earnest Dowson, who stated it was a pity "the world isn't composed entirely of little girls from 6-12," also spent time in Oxford (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2005, p. 112). Nabokov's Humbert spoke of desirable age ranges and lines of maturity, too (Nabokov, 1958). Dowson wrote an article called "The Cult of the Child" regarding "the ritual adoration of little girls." Similarly, Edgar Jepson spoke of his time in Oxford, describing a "cult of little girls, the daughters of dons and residents: men used to have them to tea and take them down the river and write verses for them" in clear reference to Carroll, Ruskin, and Dowson (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015, p. 111). While online communities would not emerge for another century, it appears Oxford's likeminded child-lovers had managed to locate one another, and Alice Liddell was central to their attentions.

Carroll made note of artworks that celebrated young girls, like Sophie Anderson's *Rosy Morn*, John Everett Millais's *Cherry Ripe*, and work by sculptor Alexander Munro. He reached out to both Anderson and Munro, inquiring about access to the child models they used (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015). Likewise, photographer Sally Mann reveals in her memoir *Hold Still* (2015), that men became obsessed with images of her nude children, writing to her and her children in an effort to make contact. One man in particular wrote of being "bedridden with love sickness for the Mann children" (p. 160). In the same predatory vein, Carroll writes of seeing a child so perfect he followed her to her house (for twenty minutes), as she was "a child of unearthly beauty"

(Gardner, 1960, p. xviii). He wrote poems filled with despair over disappearing youth, passages devoted to slowing time and the ripening of bodies (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015). It is no wonder Carroll's photographs feature illusory moments of girlhood, capturing Alice and other well-born girls frozen in youthful glory. Literature celebrating relationships between young girls and older men also captivated Carroll, according to scholars who cataloged his library (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015; Lovett, 2005). In 1862, he composed a poem entitled "Beatrice" to celebrate Dante and Beatrice's relationship. Fittingly, Humbert also references Dante and Beatrice in his justifications for pursuing girls between the ages of nine and fourteen. In a strange connection, Nabokov was asked to translate *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Russian, his native tongue. Nabokov said this about Carroll:

I always call him Lewis Carroll Carroll because he was the first Humbert Humbert. Have you seen those photographs of him with little girls? He would make arrangements with aunts and mothers and take the children out. He was never caught, except by one girl who wrote about him when she was much older. (Nabokov quoted in *Vogue*, Gilliatt, 1966)

Given the depth of Carroll's activities and desire to have access to girls, it is exceedingly difficult to contextualize as innocent. Law enforcement profilers describe pedophiles as men who tend to pursue work in careers that come with trusted access to children – as teachers, librarians, clergy, coaches, or doctors – allowing for the grooming of children through relationships that begin with gifts, special games, books, or anime with sexual content (Carnes, 2003). They believe the child welcomes their interest, using the same justifications Humbert writes about, that the charming, precocious child possesses identifiable nymphet qualities. Three scholars claim that Carroll was likely a pedophile, but no evidence that he acted on his urges have been proven (Bakewell, 1996; Cohen, 1995; Thomas, 1998). Nabokov's assertions could be tied to child-friend Agnes Hull, who wrote that Carroll's kisses had become sexual in nature (Cohen, 1995). Carroll's relationships with girls are one of the main areas of contention when perusing blogs about Carroll's books and photographs.

During one rabbit-hole session, Google directed me to a site called Pigtails in Paint, a blog "dedicated to the portrayal of little girls in art and media" (pigtailsinpaint.org). I read an impassioned response by one of its moderators, Ron, regarding a post about Carroll's pedophilic tendencies. He uses many of the same contextualizing arguments, but more troubling are the images he uploads. After clicking on the "Lewis Carroll" sidebar, I fell down a disturbing rabbithole of images, the first being several watercolor illustrations by Margaret Tarrant (one of the many Alice's Adventures in Wonderland illustrators), which were sweet and without controversy. But as I fell further, the images became more provocative. Alice with her legs spread, petting a cat lapping milk from a bowl near her thigh (artist Maximillian Esposito, 2013). More Lolita-like images by Esposito follow, which become increasingly difficult to engage with because of the amount of nudity and sexuality. I stopped at an image by Capitolo Primo (1989), afraid to continue. The mission page, which Ron says he was counseled to add so that the site would no longer be flagged for inappropriate content, states: "At first, the idea was to showcase art and media that would be appreciated by those of us tantalized by little girl imagery" (pigtailsinpaint.org). Ron realized his site could do much more to educate viewers, listing three reasons for the site's relevance: one, it's a progressive site that can be used to help educate children on sexuality; two, it is a child advocacy site, and three; it is a feminist site. My analysis

is that it does none of those things, but instead is more closely aligned with co-moderator Pip's statement:

While at the outset battling censorship was only one small part of what this blog was about, towards the end it became increasingly clear to me that I and my sweet little blog were at the very van of the front line of one of the weightiest and hard-fought battles of the Culture War: the rights of artists to depict children in the nude or in erotic contexts, and in that respect, we held a unique status on the internet. Thus, it became one of our central missions. (pigtailsinpaint.org)

As a female scholar who fights in the culture war Pip speaks of, I am angry and disgusted by his rhetoric. I also know sites like these can be used to groom children.

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a major thematic thread in this blog, and discussions about Carroll's books and photographs are prominent, mostly skewing to the provocative side. These are not Carroll scholars, rather they are men contextualizing the eroticization of girls in a forum of likeminded viewers. A side note – Pigtails in Paint is interested in images of girls age 4-16, their preferred age range. I am saddened and upset by the ideas and images Ron and Pip have put forth. Unfortunately, they are not alone. Many blogs exist that invite collaboration on young girls as desirable, which share images of nude girls by photographers Jock Sturges, Sally Mann, and Lewis Carroll – all seemingly legal under the category "art nudes." Something no Carrollian wants to acknowledge is "The Wonderland Club," an extensive ring of pedophiles discovered in Great Britain in 1998. Over 750,000 child pornography images and 1800 videos were shared through their international network of members, using Wonderland as its online identifier ("Wickedness of Wonderland," 2001).

# The Star Trek Theory

I opened this article with song lyrics from popular culture. As I was researching, *The Sound of Music* was on television in the background (December 17, 2017). Rolf and Liesl began singing *Sixteen Going on Seventeen* and it was as if I was hearing it for the first time:

You wait little girl on an empty stage For fate to turn the light on Your life little girl is an empty page That men will want to write on (Rogers & Hammerstein, 1959)

These kinds of narratives about girls are so ubiquitous in our culture that we hardly notice. Between Humbert's prose on the charms of nymphets, Carroll's poems and photographs, and Roy Moore's cultural justifications for chasing young girls are the universal truths behind desiring innocence and purity. For some men, wanting to be the first "to boldly go where no man has gone before" is a large part of the appeal of desiring a young girl. The idea that girls need men to bring them to life, to "write" them into being, to turn the light on, is an enculturated notion. I first encountered this idea in 2008, when I came upon a blog post<sup>3</sup> by a pedophile describing the sacredness of his relationship with a young girl. He wrote of having the great responsibility of introducing her to the world of pleasure, of teaching her his ways, imprinting

on her, that only he could bring her to life. Protecting special relationships requires trust and secrecy, he states. But there is also this, the idea that she herself wants and needs this and that men like him are uniquely qualified to recognize her among other girls. *Blame, shame, and secrecy*. Carroll, Ruskin, and others said the same about Alice Liddell. She had a special quality, a charming way about her that drew them in. She seemed different than other girls, receptive to their attention and even flirtatious; Alice demanded attention in return (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015). Both men courted her, stealing alone time when they could. In a letter to Alice, Ruskin writes, "I am horribly vexed ... it was all your fault," while requesting time to see her (p. 206). Ruskin (the Liddell family art tutor) describes visiting Alice, that she sent him a note about her parents being away. He makes his way through the snow; a warm fire greets him, an armchair, music, laughter, and "Alice bringing the muffins to perfection" (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015, p. 207). Her parents return unexpectedly, disrupting what Ruskin hoped would be a private evening. "'How sorry you must be to see us, Mr. Ruskin!' to which I replied, 'I never was more so.'" Ruskin declares, "The whole incident was like a dream" (p. 207).



Figure 1. "Down the Rabbit-hole" Mixed-media, Savage, 2016

Blame is placed on Alice for her "vexing" personality, her precociousness, her desirability. Alice was a blank page that Carroll wanted to write on. And so he did, sending *Alice's Adventures Underground*,<sup>4</sup> his handwritten and illustrated story, to twelve-year-old Alice Liddell as a gift, despite being banished from her life. He tried to draw her face on the last page, covering over his attempt with a photograph he had taken of seven-year-old Alice (as seen in Figure 1). Just after his diary entries resume, Carroll looks inward, asking for forgiveness for something we cannot know: "I am utterly weak, and vile, and selfish … oh deliver me from the chains of sin" (Woolf, 2010a, pp. 111-112). Cohen (1995) tracked every self-admonishment in Carroll's diaries, and almost all occur after being with Alice or other child-friends. While Carroll supporters see his

prayers as evidence of his determination to repress his abnormal desires, Contrarians are less sure. When comparing the many biographies about Carroll, Cohen's is the most complete and the most willing to share examples of unthinkable activities. Other scholars tend to gloss over specifics or fail to mention many of the more indefensible events, like when 11-year-old unchaperoned Phoebe Carlo spent a weekend with Carroll at his seaside rental (Cohen, 1995; Robson, 2001). Had I not read Cohen's book, I might have been more receptive to the Victorian contextualized leanings Carrollians adhere to. In short, Cohen does not sugar coat what might have occurred; rather, he allows Carroll's damning words to stand alone.

# The Real Alice

Once she became part of popular consumption as the girl in the story, Alice belonged to us all. Fiercely private for most of her adult life, Mrs. Alice Liddell Hargreaves tried to distance herself from the intrigue. In her old age, she was pushed back into the public eye by an "ambitious son" who had interest in the economic outcome of a "The Real Alice" tour (Douglas-Fairhurst, 2015, p. 6). We are still consuming her, making her into sexy Halloween costumes, blogging about and sharing her images, making movies and cartoons, studying Carroll's photographs, dissecting and annotating her images into a million puzzling snippets. I am almost sorry to be adding to the narrative.

Can we still embrace the book, love the story despite the author? The book itself does not promote anything untoward or sinister (other than children should not drink potions or eat unidentified mushrooms). Freudians be damned, the book will not expose children to sexual ideas. However, people who are obsessed with Carroll and his child-love Alice might. Nabokov's *Lolita* (1958), on the other hand, does promote ideas that are worth challenging. Wood (2003) quotes Trent, who says of Nabokov's text, "He did more than investigate the idea that pubescent girls can be sexually attractive, he proves it" (p. 188). Some educators won't assign *Lolita* (1958), or if they do, they issue a trigger warning (Kennedy, 1994; Patnoe, 1995). Thomas Kennedy (1997) asks, "I wonder if *Lolita* is popular for the wrong reasons? I wonder, in fact, if it is even great?" (p. 130). Seeing Alice Liddell's images used to promote the erotic joy of girls' nudity on a disturbing online site is beyond unnerving, surely not something she'd have wanted, but not a reason to admonish the book itself. Instead, I'll acknowledge that there are significant unanswered questions about its author and his obsession with young girls. For Alice Liddell, who became a beloved character, her life is inextricably intertwined with Carroll's, no longer herself, no longer just a girl. Sally Mann's children understand better than most, having also seen their childhoods immortalized:

Those images, our childhood stories, our very characters, were consumed by an outside meaning, which was in a way bigger than we were. As we grew up we didn't just grow into ourselves, we grew into the larger conception of our characters that others projected for us. (Mann, 2006, p. 28)

I still have questions about Alice and hope to locate her voice in the cacophony of Carroll defenders. Of the 117 (and counting) books about Lewis Carroll's life, books, diaries, letters, and photographs, only 4 concern Alice Liddell herself. She remains the entirety of Carroll's success as an author, the central point of discomforting eroticized imagery, the unknowing star of Oxford's cult of the child, and a contextualized marker of desire in popular visual culture.

# Shame. Blame. Secrecy

During the editing stage of this inquiry, the U.S. Women's Gymnastics team doctor was sentenced to life in prison for sexually molesting over 150 females during his time at Michigan State University. Dr. Larry Nassar used his position as medical expert to systematically enact unspeakable abuse on girls as young as six, under the guise of internal pelvic massage treatments. When girls did question his actions (at least 14 girls had reported to an adult), coaches, other doctors, counselors, and some mothers expressed disbelief, choosing to believe Nassar's version of events. More lawsuits are pending concerning who did or didn't report properly. Some of the excuses for ignoring victim reports are untenable. "Girls that young don't know where their vagina is ... they were confused" or, "He's a well-respected doctor, I am sure it was proper." Girls were shamed, silenced, and in some cases intimidated by others to remain quiet for the sport. *Shame, blame, secrecy*. I watched trial footage of many of the victim statements, stories revealing years of abuse and shame, and girls now empowered by the agency to demand justice. As this legal #metoo moment played out, I could not help but think of Alice, the Carroll defenders, of 12-year-old Dolores, of my former student's abuse and betrayal—of all the voices unheard or silenced.

As art educators, we have a duty to challenge cultural myths. By encouraging our students to remain curious about how society contextualizes or normalizes sexualized representations, we can examine and expose cultural tensions. Grant and Waxman's (2011) book Girls! Girls! In Contemporary Art looks at feminist responses to heteronormative myths, using historical and contemporary imagery as cultural criticism of sexualized girlhood. Acting as artistic counternarratives, the artworks<sup>5</sup> featured offer new ways of conceptualizing female agency. Critiques of how advertisers and other image producers depict girls and girlhood can be integrated into our curriculum, opening dialogues that could empower students to speak out and push back. Such discussions are difficult, but necessary for dispelling the culture of blame. Another example is Newsom's (2011) documentary Miss Representation, which breaks down the proliferation of passive, sexualized images of female bodies that consumers are subjected to by media makers. In addition, it addresses representations that are missing in media - strong female roles. Unpacking cultural messages behind gendered media representations promotes critical thinking about female agency. Students can create visual counternarratives, reconceptualize or reimagine images that serve to silence or dismiss. While activities like these are well-suited for middle and high school students, the real challenge is how we address these issues with younger students, the ages most targeted by those looking to shame and blame. I am unsure how we do that, but it will be the focus of my next rabbit-hole.

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# Endnotes

- While age twelve was the age of consent at the time, most men postponed the marriage until at least 1 sixteen.
- Ruskin's quests for young girls are well-established in his writings and through his fated obsession 2 with nine-year-old Rose La Touche (Robson, 2001).
- In 2008 I searched the terms "economics of Lolita porn" and his blog popped up for some reason. He 3 had some thoughts on the money aspect of maintaining pedophilic relationships.
- 4 Alice's Adventures Underground was the original title of Carroll's story.
- 5 Not all images are appropriate for younger students.



# Global Consciousness in Art Education: Utility and Problematics of Curriculum Development within a Critical Postmodern Relational Praxis

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**Abstract:** When we, as practitioners of art education, challenge ourselves to reflect on established views about and beyond local, regional, and national history and knowledge and how these views have necessarily created boundaries, we might think of the utility and limitations of a critical postmodern relational framework. This type of framework allows for the possibilities of thinking through critical and postmodern theories as a starting point for examining and understanding cultures affected by colonial structures, which has resulted in the denial of agency and a flattening of narratives. Often, these "bedrock" views, in their simplistic, one-dimensional, and reductive nature, cast an "othering" on cultures lesser known in contemporary art education. Additionally, this framework exposes the limitation of Western critical thought in attempting to understand and center the aesthetic practices of non-Western societies. To consider how we might address these views within our teaching, research, and artmaking is no small task. In this paper, I present a look at how an attempt at designing a curriculum and art education project for a Secondary Methods art education course offered the potential to critically reflect on the challenges of how Western patterns of thought and practice re-inscribe a colonialist mindset and privilege.

Keywords: art education, curriculum, global consciousness, multicultural, pre-service, postmodern principles, teaching and learning, transcultural

Aesthetics is of necessity concerned with differences in the ways of sensing and seeing that distinguish artists, tastes, and sensibilities. Gaining mastery of the whole of "global aesthetics" may be an unachievable goal – but learning more is not so difficult. (Higgins, 2017, p. 342)

As a former high school art teacher, I am deeply invested in pedagogical practice that reveals the complexity involved with teaching pre/adolescents. I found resonance in my teaching of these youth when I engaged them in meaningful creative acts. Many of my Art I students were merely there to receive an "art credit," so I knew that I needed to provide them with a meaningful experience beyond the basic elements and principles of art (Gude, 2004). As such, in 2014, when I became an educator of pre-service teachers and was tasked with teaching a Secondary Methods course, I aimed to make connections to my prior experiences in 6-12 visual arts teaching. Since leaving the secondary classroom environment in 2008, educational interest has progressed toward issues of global context and relational mobilities (Alice, 2012; Hague, 2014).

To these ends, every Fall semester from 2014-2017, I designed and taught a Secondary Methods in Art Education course for a university located in the Southeastern United States. Pre-service students in this course were tasked with developing a three-week lesson for a secondary classroom environment. I designed this course to explicitly combine three distinct approaches with aims for contemporary curriculum design and teaching and learning within and for a contemporary global art education. It was my hope that these approaches, like the legs of a stool, when combined, provided a framework which I believe allows pre-service art teachers an opening to critically address the utility of a relational scope in transforming intercultural/multicultural global narratives (Dervin, 2015) into a transcultural approach (McLean, 2015). In other words, my aim is to present to students ways in which we might reach a deeper understanding of other human cultures as a means to awaken a global conscience. Through the process of curriculum design, pedagogical practice, and artmaking, my students discovered new spaces to resist a limited trajectory of a Western narrative of dominance.

This paper addresses how I (and subsequently, my students) designed curricula inspired by Anderson's (2004) comparative philosophies of art, a theory of *Art for Life* (Milbrandt & Anderson, 2004), and postmodern principles of design (Gude, 2004) to: 1) advance teaching and learning about non-Western systems of meaning-making; 2) design curriculum, placing the practices of these cultures at the center; and 3) complicate and inform PreK-16 studio practice so as not to advance and reproduce simplistic/reductive narratives of these cultures.

My specific use of the aforementioned texts/scholarship (Anderson, 2004; Gude, 2004; Milbrandt & Anderson, 2004), allowed my students an introduction into concepts and theories through use of accessible language for deeper understanding. Informed by my prior attempts at designing curriculum for this course, I understood that I needed to contextualize the course material based on students' prior knowledge. Many of them had been taught the elements and principles of design during their compulsory K-12 education (Alexander, Day, & Getty Center for Education in the Arts, 1991).

When I introduced Gude's (2004) principles, much of the feedback I received illuminated the challenges that my undergraduates faced in understanding postmodern art education principles. Consequently, I acknowledge that these "new-found principles" are in fact not "new," which

highlights a gap in our field that requires discussion beyond the scope of this paper. On a positive note, I found this offering to be most accessible for my population of first-generation college students. Without establishing the foundation that Gude's (2004) framework provided, my students may have been less inclined to fully engage, which may lead to a stagnation in the learning process (Dewey, 1938).

# **Contemplations of the Pre-service Art Teacher**

It is important to briefly note that art education students exist at a unique crossroads. They are, at once, students of visual art who are also early practitioners within the field of education. Uniquely situated at this intersection, they are provoked to consider processes of artmaking alongside theories of learning and instruction. In my class, students began by discussing and reflecting on who they are as artists in relation to what they know about non-Western aesthetics,<sup>1</sup> along with how they might avoid reductionist pedagogical and art-making practices.

Like Anderson (2004), McLean (2014), and Higgins (2017), my students agreed that the Western world does not have a monopoly on wisdom and insight regarding the fundamental nature and value of art. To this end, they began by critically asking: *What motivations prompt works of art in human cultures*? (see Anderson, 2004) and *What might we learn about the visual practices (symbol systems) of cultures of other nations*? While aiming to keep the integrity of non- Western traditions, students placed varied global narratives/stories at the center of their investigation and curricular planning while carefully aiming to avoid a singular and often marginalized re/ presentation of three cultures examined in Anderson's (2004) text, *Calliope's Sisters*: aesthetics of Early India, the San of Africa, and the Aborigines. To examine each of these cultures is beyond the scope of this paper. As such, I highlight an example of a student-planned/ led lesson of Aboriginal aesthetics and practice (see chapter three in Anderson, 2004), which ultimately led to critical self-reflection of the practices of Western *appropriation of creative expression* often critiqued in critical scholarship (Greene, 2008). I offer recommendations for the possibilities and value of considering a "hybrid space of critical postmodern theory" in art education (Stinson & Bullock, 2012, p. 52).

# The Danger of a Single Story

In 2009, the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie gave a wonderful TED talk called "The Danger of a Single Story" (Adichie, 2009). It was about what happens when complex human beings and situations are reduced to single narratives. Whether created by a person, group of people, or popular media, these narratives have the potential to reflect flattened views and ideologies (Pauly, 2016). Ngozi's point was that if we are not attuned to the multi-dimensional nature of humans and cultures, this reduction proves to provide a less-than-holistic narrative of distant cultures, whether intentional or unintentional. Further, these limited narratives contribute to cultural apartheid between indigenous and Western ways of being and knowing, and in the case of the project outlined in this paper, an "aesthetic apartheid" (McLean, 2014).

The process of education, in both formal and informal environments, has been critiqued by scholars (Furnham, 2015; Giroux, 1981, 1995, 2015; Robinson, 2015) who argue that reductive knowledge about other cultures is transmitted both through sanctioned and "hidden" curricula. Literature offers varied definitions for a hidden curriculum, including the significance of how the visual plays a role in determining what becomes understood as a "norm" (Baker, Ng-He, &

Lopez-Bosch, 2008). For instance, Pauly (2016) offers a nuanced look at the ways in which Native American culture has been appropriated and represented, reinforcing singular and storied stereotyped caricatures. These harmful stereotypes, whether consciously or unconsciously shared, reinforce "asymmetrical systems of power and privilege" (p. 71) and have also been applied to peoples of other historically colonized nations (Harris, 2003).

Drawing from Skelton's (1997) view of the potential influences of a hidden curriculum, critical perspective identifies the hidden curriculum with its function to reproduce inequitable perspectives. Its cycle of reinforcement has been explored by a range of educational scholars (Gatto, 2009; Giroux 1981, 1995, 2015; Phillips, 2009; Robinson, 2015;) who contend that significant changes are required in the way we educate young people. The hidden curriculum both reflects and perpetuates beliefs according to ideologies of prevailing political power, often based on an erroneous or skewed understanding of historic and anthropological developments. Herein lies the value of making connections between critical and postmodern theories.

## Toward Building Relational Aesthetic Narratives through Postmodern Principles of Art

In my methods course, students began by examining an *Art for Life* theory and approach (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2004) as critical praxis. This approach, paired with examination of non-Western aesthetics (as in Anderson, 2004) and inspired by contemporary approaches to critical multicultural art education curricula (Acuff, 2012; Jay, 2003), challenged students to find utility in critical engagement with postmodern principles of art (Gude, 2004) alongside contemporary non-Western aesthetics in order to offer a nuanced commentary of the lived human experience through art. Though not "new" to the artworld in general, Gude's (2004) postmodern principles of art (*appropriation, hybridity, layering, reconceptualization, juxtaposition, gazing, interaction of text and image, and representin*'), are presented to the field of art education as a fresh way to engage with 21st century art curricula. To these ends, these concepts push beyond standardization and the use of traditional elements/principles of art and disrupt the essentialist system of logic of designing curricula, which fails to de-center the strict use of traditional elements and principles of art.

For my own pedagogical practice, these principles became provocations for challenging reductionist intercultural views, ideologies, and narratives (Dervin, 2015). Additionally, I wanted my pre-service students to expand a myopic view of aesthetics and make it a priority to pursue global narratives using a critical theoretical art education lens (Acuff, 2012). Understanding how systems of power have worked to maintain reductionist perspectives allows a supporting lens through which to view, challenge, and de-center systems of domination in various forms (McLaren, 2015). To some, this might seem counterintuitive to a postmodern view with aims to reject a fixed truth - that multiple forms of truth are made/remade with/in socio-cultural, - historical, and -political discourses (Foucault & Gordon, 1980; Stinson & Bullock, 2012). The addition of a critical lens allows not only a space for acknowledgement of a history and legacy of colonization and its impact on non-Western and Western culture, but also the tools to intervene with this awareness (McLean, 2014).

I first came to embrace a critical postmodern lens in previous arts-based intra-racial research (Wilson, Shields, Guyotte, & Hofsess, 2016); as a person of color, I saw the utility and necessity of

critiquing systems of power while being provided tools for empowerment (Wilson et al., 2016). As I see it, in the specific case of my Secondary Methods course, the utility and strength of a hybrid critical postmodern lens is that it offers: 1) the space for my pedagogical practice to illuminate, critique, and de-center the static discourse of traditional elements and principles of design; 2) my students' entree to accessible "postmodern language" articulated by an art educator; and 3) a lens through which my students could view and understand non-Western aesthetics.

In what follows, I detail the ways in which a curricular project with aims for nuanced analysis and application of the hybridization of Western and non-Western aesthetics reinforced an imposition of Western appropriation of non-Western expression. Pre-service students were challenged to displace metaphors of primitivism in order to bring attention to how dominant ideologies are shaped by a periphery—by means of appropriation—which has been given less credit (McLean, 2014). Students looked to complicate an examination of these intersections and depart from an ethnocentric gaze/stance in hopes of critical and re-formed understandings that might arise from their investigations of asymmetrical systems of power.

Through close and careful study of non-Western aesthetics, pre-service students in my course were challenged to pull back the curtain to reveal complex narratives of peoples whose cultures have been reduced, marginalized, and submerged. By using Gude's (2004) postmodern principles as a tool for offering a complex view of these cultures, students then designed curriculum for teaching this content within a secondary art classroom. Gude (2004) describes these principles as "a fusion of a visual form and a conceptual art making strategy.... [the] hybridization itself is a hallmark of many postmodern cultural productions, eschewing the boundaries imposed by outmoded discipline-based structures" (p. 8). I found utility in these principles for creating a space for students to find the relational aspects of imagined borders between Western and non-Western aesthetic practices. This was my attempt to de-center an othering of the non-Western practice.

Pre-service students also found utility in how these principles would resonate meaningfully with the lives of pre-adolescent and adolescent students (grades 6-12), realizing the necessity to engage youth in this age group beyond the traditional elements and principles of design (Gude, 2004). Inspired by these "post" principles, my students were then tasked with modeling instruction through in-class group- teaching, which resulted in completed studio projects, a naive attempt at offering more nuanced global/cultural narratives.

## **Critical Praxis: Curriculum Development as Relational Globalizing Narrative**

At first glance, my students were overwhelmed by these "new-found principles." Many of them were puzzled to think that teaching art could conceptualize beyond the bedrock elements and principles of art. In other words, it made them anxious. Many had questions about how to apply the principles in general, and more specifically, about lesson planning and artmaking. The first task I prompted was to thoughtfully engage with each principle by creating a visual resource. In this way, students were provoked to take a deep dive into the possibilities of what these principles could become and how they might use them in their planning and artmaking. Students began by using their own words to define the concepts (see Figure 1). By doing an internet search, they included examples of what this might look like.

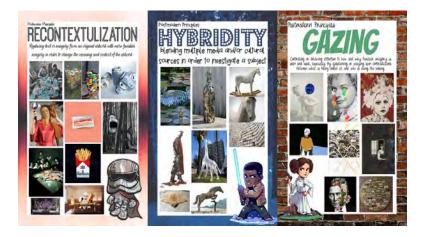


Figure 1. Postmodern Principles Posters (Brigette Adkins, 2016)

Once students were able to define and visualize the possibilities of these principles, their next task was to use these concepts as a provocation for creating a three-week lesson plan. These provocations also served as a means to investigate, complicate, and represent the duality of artist/educator of the pre-service student. Students understood that they could imagine using these principles in any aspect of their planning. Their three-week lessons would become the teaching framework for in-class group instruction.

Divided into groups of three, each group selected a non-Western culture to study, located within the *Calliope's Sisters* text (Anderson, 2004). In order to complicate a global-relational (Hague, 2014) framework, pre-service students needed to address the following in their curriculum: the history of the visual practices of the culture studied, exemplars of contemporary visual art by these indigenous cultures, and reconceptualized meaning-making approaches inspired by traditional and contemporary indigenous visual practices and Western aesthetics.

Pre-service students placed Aboriginal culture at the center of their curricular-planning efforts and aimed to expand on visual practices in Anderson's (2004) text. They encouraged their peers to explore combining dot-painting techniques along with the shared/relational practice of storytelling in Western and non-Western traditions. In observing their teaching/artmaking, I noted that by utilizing "Western aesthetic thought" alongside non-Western visual practices, my students' aims could be critiqued as an imposition of colonialist practice; what was not considered was an alternative way of highlighting a relational aspect and effects of colonialism, which will be discussed in the conclusion.

The lesson designed by pre-service students focused on the Aboriginal theme of storytelling/mapping; students were able to find personal resonance in the relational qualities of this theme and used the aesthetic tradition of "story systems" (Milroy & Revell, 2013). Additionally, using a dot-painting technique, students were careful to acknowledge the relational aspects of this type of mark-making, which is significant to Aboriginal culture.



Figure 2. In-process dot-paintings

Contemporary Aboriginal artist Sarrita King was used as one exemplar and provided initial inspiration for dot-painting techniques (see Figure 2) that pre-service students explored to tell stories, further inspired by the postmodern principles (Gude, 2004). My students used dot-painting techniques to create storied triptychs (see Figure 3). The aim of the final triptych composition was an attempt to keep traditional Aboriginal visual practices intact while working toward a relational narrative. In other words, students wanted to acknowledge non-Western tradition and Western re-conceptualization through development of their own personal stories. The intent was not merely to appropriate the visual practice of another culture. Later, pre-service students were able to reflexively acknowledge the challenges associated with re-inscribing a Western dominance mindset, questioning whether their curricular aims fell short of pushing beyond imitation.



Figure 3. Student example of a storied triptych, 2017

The broader hope of the original curricular strategy was to engage students in critically thinking about the ways in which cultural practices can be acknowledged, preserved, and given prominence in Western thought—a possibility of disrupting aesthetic apartheid without submerging the narratives of "the Othered." My pre-service students were inspired by their new learnings about Aboriginal dot paintings to create symbolic gestural work. Drawing from the postmodern principles of design, they were provoked to complicate their understanding of Aboriginal aesthetics and of human relationality. Using the postmodern principle of *hybridity* (Gude, 2004), for instance, we discussed how representing the complexity of visual practice brings to mind how cultures are inextricably mixed—relational. By first creating postmodern visual

resources (see Figure 1), students could think beyond the "technical" aspects of visual practice and embrace the relational aspects of aesthetics across cultures. Still, though, their earnest aims at creating a three-week curriculum failed to push beyond a flattened handling of the artmaking that would follow (see Figure 2). On a hopeful note, after engaging in post-project discussion, I do believe my students will continue to push the boundaries of what is possible in the realm of a global sensibility in their artmaking/teaching practice.

## **Cautionary Tales: Limitations and Implications for Art Education**

In writing about this curricular project, the existing tensions in my aims at disarticulating a colonialist imposition through Western (critical) thought were brought to my attention; not only do the examples of pre-service students' curricular art-making tasks necessarily (yet, not consciously) re-inscribe an aesthetics of Western dominance, but also that there exist limitations of imposing a critical theoretical framework when considering non-Western ways of being/knowing. While my aims to suggest how a hybrid critical and postmodern theoretical framework (Stinson & Bullock, 2012) may work to help students examine, understand, and challenge systems of power/dominance within Western culture(s), as a Western tradition/ institution, it necessarily falls short of fully supporting them in critical self-reflexivity against a non-Western backdrop.

To these ends, this emerging question: *How might art education simultaneously look outward and reflect inward?* is salient. Since leaving the secondary classroom in 2008, much has changed in the whole of our world and within our own U. S. borders. Most ubiquitous are the technological advancements (social media, for instance) which have allowed us to be "connected" globally; this speaks to the need for art educators in the West to be equipped to examine biases and blind spots (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013) when aiming to address curricular design for transcultural (McLean, 2015) approaches toward teaching and learning. Soberingly, I am also reminded of the many inservice and pre-service teachers who have questions and anxieties about biases and blind spots as they relate to cultural, social, and educational inequities within our own nation. As I mentioned earlier, this work requires accepting that this is no small task, and as Higgins (2017) writes, "Because we know our own culture better than those that are more distant we might conclude that, however positive our attitude toward non-Western aesthetics, it is not our business to discuss it" (p. 342). I would add that perhaps as educators, it is our business to responsibly pursue a deeper awareness and understanding of diverse creative acts beyond our Western borders so as to disrupt a myopic vision of what has historically been deemed "art" (Higgins, 2017).

As a starting point of self-reflexivity, we should ask: *Who are we in relation to other cultures and nations? Why is this important to know/ understand?* To visit these questions is a start toward understanding the relational nature of human existence; we are not divorced from one another, whether global or local. We are connected relationally through educational, social, and political systems.

Art educators are called to serve these relationships through complex intersections of teaching and learning, sometimes as practitioners and facilitators of research and theory, while other times practitioners and facilitators of artmaking. In these times of multicultural and transcultural concern (Acuff, 2012; Dervin, 2015), our role challenges us to provide openings for critical global conversation (Delacruz, 2009). We should be awakened to the role our curriculum plays in this

quest. As a discipline, art education must also ask itself: *What are our aims for the study of other cultures*? Surely, it must be beyond an ethno-tourist approach.

With recent U.S. societal uptake in issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion, we must ask ourselves what role a global discourse should find in our curricula of arts education, and in this case, how we might thoughtfully transmit our learned knowledge and values so as not to repeat a reductive/deficit narrative. My aims for this curricular project were to extend beyond my own critical multicultural pedagogical practice to awaken my students' consciousness of the nuance of ways of being/knowing in human nature. What must also be considered are the limitations of Western theory when attempting a discussion about non-Western cultures and practices.

An *Art for Life* approach (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2004) to curriculum design offered my students a way to bring meaning and relevance of art to humanity by placing the "quest for personal and social meaning" (p. ix) at the center. It allowed these students an opening for a deeper level of engagement by connecting them to the artmaking of non-Western artist exemplars such as Talia Smith, Tia Ranginui, and Te Iwihoko Te Rangihirawea whose lives and aesthetic practice speak directly to colonialism and its structures. Through contemporary practice, these artists challenge viewers to become conscious of social and political issues and systemic inequities affected by colonization. As art educators, it is our role to complicate these conversations, as we must do within our curriculum and the curricula our pre-service students advance, while also being reminded of the rigid structures within imposed limitations created by standardization and policy in K-12 environments (Hughes, 2004).

Finally, with aims to combine these curricular frameworks, the blind spots that are capable of guiding our decisions without our being aware of the consequences (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013) are revealed. A critical relational and pedagogical practice (Freire, 2000; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007) and the possibilities of using postmodern concepts as a means of embracing a critical transcultural educational philosophy broaden a global circle of concern for art educators and students. These practices offer a way to begin a nuanced and complex conversation necessary to work within global narratives and a way to strengthen structural and cultural competencies toward disrupting dominant narratives.

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#### Endnotes

1 The author acknowledges the problematics of using a singular term (aesthetics) to define the whole of all symbol systems of meaning-making across cultures. The author's use of the term aesthetics, when referring to non-Western cultures, is a direct reference to Anderson's (2004) use of the term in his text *Calliope's Sisters*. The author also acknowledges that further development in terms of what constitutes "Western" and what comes to be qualified as "non-Western" aesthetics is sorely needed in K-16 education, yet beyond the scope of this paper.



## From Acculturation ... to Empowerment ... to Inclusion: How Asian Students are Expressing their Ethnic and Cultural Identities through Art Education in Secondary Schools in New Zealand

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Abstract: This study explores the researcher's experience of witnessing a transition from acculturation... to empowerment... to inclusion for Asian students in art education in secondary schools in New Zealand. The study was prompted by research in 2011 with Asian pre-service art teachers which found that Asian art and culture were invisible during their secondary school experiences; they were 'acculturated' into the dominant European culture. A consequent pedagogical approach aimed at 'empowering' Asian pre-service art teachers to promote a stronger Asian presence in schools was implemented in course work in 2014. In 2018, the rapidly increasing Asian population in New Zealand motivated the researcher to investigate how 20 of her former pre-service teachers, currently teaching art in secondary schools in Auckland, are supporting their Asian students in art education. In this qualitative interpretive study, data were collected from questionnaires and interviews, supported with artworks by Asian students. This article focuses on how a sample of four of the Asian art teacher participants are enabling their Asian students to "be themselves," express their identities, and tell their stories through art. The findings suggest that the art teachers' youthful experiences of "acculturation" and subsequent "empowerment" gained through pre-service teacher education have led to them using culturally "inclusive," student-centered pedagogies underpinned by an overarching sense of care for their Asian students.

Keywords: Art education, arts pedagogy, secondary schools, student centered pedagogy

### **Background to the Research**

The research reported in this article is located in my professional field of pre-service art teacher education in the secondary school sector. It is contextualized within the findings of an earlier study in which I investigated Asian pre-service art teachers' perspectives of their own secondary school art experiences (Smith, 2011). Although "cultural diversity" and "inclusion" are among the key principles in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2007) key findings from the 2011 research established that the study of art and culture of the indigenous Māori people and dominant European population were favored. As youthful, mostly migrant secondary school students, these Asian pre-service art teachers said they chose to adapt to a different culture and become "acculturated" into the dominant European society.

My response to those findings was to implement a five-stage pedagogical approach in my preservice teacher education courses aimed at promoting culturally inclusive art teaching in secondary schools (Smith, 2014). The approach was informed by theoretical perspectives on acculturation and adaptation (Jose, Ward & Liu, 2007; Ward & Kagitcibasi, 2010), the increasingly diverse student population in Auckland, New Zealand's largest city (Auckland Council, 2014), and literature on culturally responsive teaching and intercultural identities (Bianchi, 2011; Gay, 2010; Hanley & Noblit, 2011). A particular focus was on "empowering" Asian pre-service art teachers to promote a stronger "Asian presence" by creating exemplars of practice that motivate Asian students in secondary schools to tell their own stories through art. The study reported in this article, which emanates from those above, is presented below.

## **Motivation for the Research**

In 2018, the rapidly increasing Asian population in New Zealand motivated me to investigate whether 20 of my former Asian pre-service art teachers, currently teaching art in Auckland secondary schools, are using culturally inclusive pedagogies with their Asian students. I wanted to ascertain whether they are enabling their students to be themselves (Myers, 2004) and explore issues and ideas that resonate with their cultures and lives (Beyerbach & Davis, 2011; Bianchi, 2011; Hanley & Noblit, 2011). The research was underpinned by Asian population statistics, national curriculum and assessment policies, culturally inclusive pedagogies, literature about Asian students as learners, and how students' artworks can be a potent form of research data.

## The Implications of Asian Population Statistics in New Zealand

The rapid increase of Asian peoples migrating to New Zealand since the 1990s is particularly noticeable in its largest city, Auckland. In 1991, 5.5% of New Zealand's population identified as Asian (Auckland Council, 2014). In 2013 the *New Zealand Census* (Statistics New Zealand [SNZ], 2013) reported that Auckland had a much higher percentage of Asian peoples than elsewhere in New Zealand, comprising 23.1% compared with 11.8% nationally. The largest sub-group were Chinese, followed by Indian, Korean, and Filipino. The Asia New Zealand Foundation (2015) noted that Asian people in Auckland are younger, and the number of Asian-born residents is increasing rapidly. The latest prediction is that the broad Asian population in New Zealand will rise from 540,000 in 2013 to 1.2-1.4 million in 2038 (SNZ, 2017).

The geographical distribution of Asian peoples in Auckland is notable for significant clusters that have arisen in newly developed housing areas across the city. Xue, Frieson, and O'Sullivan (2012) describe these clusters, which are located predominantly in high socio-economic areas, as distinctive "ethnoburbs" which attract particular Asian groups. The Ministry of Education's (2018) *Culture Counts* website reported in 2018 that of 101,956 Asian students in secondary schools in New Zealand, 62,341 were located in Auckland. Furthermore, there is a strong relationship between geographical distribution and the types of secondary schools attended by Asian students. Schools throughout New Zealand are given a decile rating of 1-10 (low to high) that is used by the Ministry of Education as a measure of socio-economic status to support and target funding for more needy lower decile schools. The majority of Asian students in Auckland attend high decile 7-10 schools (MoE, 2018) located in particular ethnoburbs. Pham and Renshaw (2013) and Loh and Teo (2017) note that Asian parents have a preference for schools in which teaching is perceived as aligning with Asian students' learning styles through traditional teacher-directed approaches and an emphasis on examinations.

# The Characteristics of National Curriculum and Assessment Policies in New Zealand

Art education in secondary schools in New Zealand is founded on *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MoE, 2007). The Arts (visual arts, dance, drama, and music) is one of eight Learning Areas. They are described as "powerful forms of expression that recognise, value, and contribute to the unique bicultural and multicultural character of New Zealand" (p. 20); and that "European, Māori, Pasifika, Asian and other cultures add significant dimensions to New Zealand's visual culture" (p. 21). Cultural diversity and inclusion are among the key principles of the curriculum. A significant feature of the visual arts curriculum is that "content" (i.e., themes, subject matter, art activities) is not specified. Instead, art teachers have autonomy to design programs that are underpinned by four curriculum strands:

- *Understanding the visual arts in context UC* (investigating the relationship between the production of art works and their contexts and influences)
- *Developing practical knowledge PK* (applying knowledge of conventions from established practice, using appropriate processes and procedures)
- *Developing ideas DI* (generating, developing and refining ideas in response to a variety of motivations)
- *Communicating and interpreting CI* (comparing ways in which ideas and art making are used to communicate meaning).

There is further emphasis on students developing "visual literacy and aesthetic awareness" (p. 21). Theorists support the development of these competencies, but recommend that visual arts education should be framed around critical thinking and not focus predominantly on formal art making skills (Alter, 2011; Duncum, 2008; Garcia Lazo, 2018). These authors maintain that inclusion of visual literacy and a critical inquiry framework around images that expose diverse issues are essential for meaningful art making by students. This dimension is particularly pertinent for senior students in secondary schools whose art making processes and final outcomes are assessed through a national framework.

For senior art students, aged 15-18 years, art making is assessed through the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) (New Zealand Qualifications Authority [NZQA], 2018). Underpinned by the curriculum, art teachers in secondary schools design NCEA programs that enable students to meet the achievement standards in the Visual Arts Matrix for Levels 1-3 (see Appendix 1). At successive levels, students are expected to demonstrate understanding of artworks in cultural contexts; develop, clarify, and generate ideas; and produce a comprehensive body of work informed by established practice (the study of "artist models") in one or more disciplines of painting, design, sculpture, printmaking, or photography. The study of artist models is intended to enhance students' understanding of artists' art making processes and outcomes. The aim is not to imitate artists' works, but for students to enquire into issues that artists depict, and draw upon ideas, techniques, and processes to express themselves through making their own art. This approach resonates with advocacy by Bianchi (2011), and Beyerbach and Davis (2001), for the importance of engaging students in global issues through the arts. The non-specified content in the art curriculum, and the standards-based system of internally assessed achievement standards and an external portfolio afford considerable freedom for art teachers to enable students to explore their cultural milieu.

# Imperatives for Culturally Inclusive Pedagogies in New Zealand Secondary Schools

Educational researchers in New Zealand assert that teachers are the most significant factor in student achievement (Alton-Lee, 2004; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Rubie-Davies, 2010). These authors argue that this requires teachers to take responsibility for every student, value diversity, respect students' cultures, have high expectations, build on students' experiences, and see learning through the eyes of their students. International researchers Noddings (1984) and Bingham and Sidorkin (2004) promote "relational ethics" which prioritize concern for relationships, relatedness, and receptiveness to create caring classroom environments and promote student autonomy. Furthermore, Bishop and Berryman (2006) emphasize cultural relationships in the classroom and the importance of how culture speaks.

For many Asian students, whether immigrants or New Zealand-born, there is a history of pressure to conform by fitting in with the dominant European culture and Western pedagogies (Jose, Ward & Liu, 2007; Ward & Kagitcibasi, 2010). The problem is explicated in international literature about Asian students' learning styles and the role played by their culture in influencing learning (Chan, 2001; Loh & Teo, 2017; Pham & Renshaw, 2013). Reports focus on Asian students' lack of critical thinking skills, absence of in-depth conceptual understanding and communication skills, and insufficient student-centered practices that limit their ability to succeed (Chan, 2001; Pham & Renshaw, 2013). Much literature positions Asian secondary school (college) teachers as reliant on traditional teacher-directed approaches, and that Asian students tend to be dependent learners in contrast to countries that encourage more independent learning (Teo & Loh, 2017). Pham and Renshaw (2013) concluded that despite expounded educational ideals and instructional interventions, parents, administrators, and teachers are mostly concerned with students' examination results.

### Theoretical Perspectives on Students' Artworks as a Potent Form of 'Data'

Collecting examples of students' artworks as data was prompted by literature on the theoretical grounding for using the visual as a powerful tool in research. It was influenced by my conviction that meanings can be expressed through images in ways that words cannot. Stanczack (2007) posits that images are not additions to research, but an inseparable part of learning about the lives of participants. Likewise, Weber (2008) maintains that images "evoke visceral and emotional responses in ways that are memorable, coupled with their capacity to help us empathise or see another's point of view" (p. 47). I share Leavy's (2015) stance that "as a persuasive social product visual art is a significant source of information about the social world, including cultural aspects of social life" (p. 227). The purpose of using artworks in this research was to present insights into the worlds of Asian students in secondary schools in 2018 and to offer the possibility that the artworks will convey more than perhaps the students are able to say. My aim is to show the transition I witnessed during this research, from the earlier acculturation to empowerment and inclusion for Asian students in a sample of secondary schools in Auckland, New Zealand.

### How the Research was Conducted

The overarching research question was: "How do Asian art teachers promote an Asian presence in art education in secondary schools?" The participants were 20 former Asian pre-service art teachers, in my courses from 2004-2017, who are currently teaching art in secondary schools in Auckland. In this interpretive qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, 2013) data was collected in two stages. For Stage 1, I invited the 20 Asian art teachers to participate in a five-part questionnaire (see Appendix 2). The questionnaire sought information about the teachers' demographic backgrounds, secondary school art experiences as students in New Zealand, tertiary art school experiences, pre-service art teacher education, and their curricula and pedagogical approaches for working alongside Asian students at their current secondary schools in Auckland. All 20 teachers agreed to take part and provided a plethora of rich data. For Stage 2, I invited volunteers to participate in an individual face-to-face interview for up to three hours at their schools. Eight of the 20 art teachers volunteered and were interviewed in their art departments (see Appendix 3). The questions sought answers to demographic data pertinent to their schools, staff, and students, the school's philosophy, their perspectives on how cultural policy is presented in the national curriculum, how their programs for the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) are structured for 15-18 year olds, and how their disposition and pedagogical approaches support Asian students studying in their classrooms. The teachers were invited to bring to their interviews examples of artworks by their students (15-18 years old) studying for the NCEA. Selection was based on their perception that the examples provided insights into Asian ethnicity. The University's ethics process required students and their parentscaregivers to give consent for the artworks to be discussed, photographed, and used in reporting the findings. Pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of teachers and schools, but students' artworks are labelled with their first name, Asian ethnicity, and age.

Data from the questionnaire and interviews were analyzed thematically to identify patterns of meaning across the dataset that provide answers to the research question, "How do Asian art teachers promote an Asian presence in art education in secondary schools?" I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) guide to analysis, beginning with reading and re-reading the data to become intimately familiar with the transcripts. I then generated codes that identified important features

of the data which enabled me to structure and organize information systematically. From there I identified key themes that encapsulated recurrent features of the participants' responses, asked myself whether my codes supported the theme, and analyzed how they related to each other. An important step recommended by Braun and Clarke is to "identify the 'essence' of what each theme is about" (p. 92). My final step with the interview data involved analyzing connections between the dispositions of the Asian art teachers and the effects of their culturally inclusive pedagogies when working alongside Asian students. The major themes that became evident through the art teachers' voices and the students' images are reported next in the findings, and later in the discussion.

### Findings from the Research: A Focus upon Four Asian Art Teachers

It is beyond the scope of this article to report the plethora of data collected from the Stage 1 questionnaire and Stage 2 interviews. Instead, I focus on four of the eight art teachers who volunteered to be interviewed. All born in South Korea, they have ethnicity in common but have taught for differing periods of time from three to 13 years and have developed personally-driven individualistic pedagogies. The findings are reported through the voices of these four teachers and presented visually through artworks created by one of their Year 13 students. The findings provide insights into how this sample of Asian art teachers are empowering Asian students to "be themselves," explore visual culture, and communicate personal meanings through their art (Beyerback & Davis, 2011; Duncum, 2008; Myers, 2004).

#### Holly and her Student Jeff

Holly, a 26-year-old woman born in South Korea, was seven when her family came to New Zealand. She trained to be an art teacher in 2015 and has taught painting, design, photography, and technology at Years 11-13 for three years. She works at a decile 7 co-educational senior college with a student cohort of 600, of whom 34% are Indian and 31% are of Asian ethnicity (Korean, Chinese, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Thai). The student population aligns with statistics that more students of Asian ethnicity attend higher decile schools, this one located in a newly developed housing ethnoburb (Xue, Frieson & O'Sullivan, 2012). The staff is ethnically diverse, though the majority are European and Indian, followed by Asian. Holly is the only Asian art teacher in the art department. In response to my question about whether she is expected to contribute an Asian perspective to the life of the school, Holly said she was under no pressure but has a passion to do so. She leads the Korean Fan Dance and K-pop groups and runs the Korean food stall.

Holly's school is a modern learning environment that has open classrooms, except for specialist subjects like art. The school's vision is "to prepare and inspire students to achieve their very best in a global society." Holly explained that because many international students come to New Zealand for short-term educational experiences, and arrive at different times of the year, "the school aims to provide personalized learning opportunities that are flexible and authentic and meet each student's aspirations and educational needs." A further complexity is that the international students "are technically proficient, but find compositional ideas, understanding of artist models, artworks and conceptual meanings, and communicating and interpreting art works much more challenging." Holly explained that she often encounters students who, because of the kind of art education they experienced in China or Korea, have difficulty transitioning from highly realistic renderings of subject matter to a more creative stance. She finds that meeting expectations of the NCEA achievement standards is difficult for students "who place more

emphasis on finished products than on understanding why art is made and making artworks that communicate meanings."

During our discussion of the portfolios Holly brought to her interview, we focused on Jeff, an 18year-old Chinese boy studying painting for NCEA Level 3. Holly described how in year 12, Jeff had very limited English. To understand the NCEA art requirements, he wrote the questions Holly had for him in Chinese to help him research artist models. She said,

This is the student I tell not to paint like a maths equation because he likes everything to be very precise! Jeff explained that art education in China focuses on technical perfection. To get things just right he practices several times, and even makes photocopies to practice on first. He is always using those mechanical pencils. For his portfolio artworks Jeff looked at historical figures of China and titled his work *The Birth and Death of China*. He only looked at Chinese artist models such as Wang Guangyi, initially in Year 12, perhaps because they were more relatable to him.

It is evident from his Year 13 painting portfolio that Jeff had begun with traditional source material to denote the "birth" of China, including images of historical figures such as the philosopher-poet Lao Zu and Confucius, one of the most influential figures in Chinese history (Fenby, 2013). The left side of the first board features the lotus flower, a symbol of perfection and purity, and peonies, the unofficial Chinese National flower. Jeff's introduction of a panda warrior, Chinese warrior figures, weaponry, and clowns and monsters in the middle and right-hand boards, hint perhaps at the "death" of China. Here, his interest in anime, manga, and games is expressed through a more animated style.



Figure 1. Jeff, Chinese, 18 years, NCEA Level 3 Painting, three-board portfolio

Holly was a pre-service art teacher three years after I implemented the five-stage pedagogical approach aimed at empowering Asian-ethnic pre-service art teachers to promote a stronger Asian presence in schools (Smith, 2014). In her current teaching, she adopts a student-centered pedagogical approach and encourages her students to explore their cultural backgrounds and identities (Duncum, 2008). She explained that she wanted to become an art teacher because of the absence of a significant Asian adult during her schooling; thus, her pedagogical approach is driven by a desire to fill this gap, especially for second-generation people like herself. She agreed with my hypothesis that her approaches, disposition, and caring attitude toward her students are paramount (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004; Noddings, 1984). It is important to Holly that students can come to her for support and not just see her as their art teacher.

#### Alex and her Student Yixin

Alex, a Korean-born woman in her late 30s, arrived in New Zealand as a 14-year-old. Her family wanted to have a less stressful life in New Zealand. As a secondary school student, Alex was unaware that she could explore her own culture in visual arts. At her interview, she reiterated the response she made in her Stage 1 questionnaire: "Looking back, learning English and learning how to use new art mediums was overwhelming... I did not have time to think about exploring my cultural background. But neither was this mentioned or encouraged by my art teachers at secondary school."

Alex trained to be an art teacher in 2007, the year the national curriculum was published. She teaches at a high decile 9 secondary school for boys, with a cohort of 2384 students of whom 34% are of Asian ethnicity. In addition, the school has approximately 200 international students, including non-Asians, with the majority being Chinese. While the staff is predominantly European, there are a number of Asian-ethnic teachers working across subjects, including four in the art department. Alex explained that many Korean and Chinese immigrants live in this ethnoburb (Xue, Frieson & O'Sullivan, 2012) with parents choosing the school "because it's a high socio-economic decile school and they are attracted to the education system." She elaborated that, "At this school we celebrate success in all its forms and we like achieving excellence in everything we do." Her comment that the school has a scholarship program because "parental expectations are for their sons to do well and achieve high scores in the exams... that is, the Asian parents" aligns with research that examination results are a major concern (Pham & Renshaw, 2013; Teo & Loh, 2017).

When asked whether the art department and school expected her to contribute an Asian presence, Alex said, "Absolutely. We have so many students from all over the world, with so many different ethnicities, and we have a large number of Asian students. My school is all about culturally inclusive education." To address language competencies, international students at Year 11 do not study NCEA Visual Arts, but instead complete a Foundation Visual Arts course where they learn about art language in English and are given the terminology in Chinese and Korean. As Alex said, "I know what they are going through because I was like them many years ago!"

Alex teaches art to Year 12-13 students (16–18-year-olds). In her Year 12 NCEA class, which focuses on painting and sculpture, 13 of the 25 students are Chinese and completed the foundation course in year 11. Within a broad theme of "I Am," the boys have freedom to express who they are in whatever direction they want. Alex also introduces the notion of surrealist ideas and images through still life, an approach influenced by her own practice as a surrealist artist.

The boys have to decide what dreams they want to portray based on the still life she sets up. Alex described their interests:

I don't know if it's a trend, but these boys are just so into graphic novels and anime... Marvel, DC. It's crazy and I'm sick of it, but I have to cater to them and guide them so that they don't produce something too cartoony. I discourage them from replicating or copying those novels; that learning from existing art forms or artist models is one thing, but copying straight out or stealing from a cartoon or found images off Pinterest is a different thing. A lot just copy... I think it's a big problem.

A large percentage of students continue with painting in Year 13. At this level, Alex encourages them to explore and express their culture. She said, "It's all about their identity, who they are and where they are coming from. I tell them to be proud of their culture." Yixin, an 18-year-old Chinese boy, exemplifies exploration of his cultural background in his paintings. Alex said,

Yixin is fascinated with ancient structures and contemporary buildings and wanted to create a fine balance between those two cultures and two different eras. He started with Beijing with its big motorway and classical pagodas, then the Great Wall of China. He then transitioned into creating his own "perfect world" containing different architectural structures, past and present. It became quite surreal. He looked at beautiful patterns from fabrics, the golden threads of the dragon, and created a dreamy floating city idea hovering over the landscape. The ghost-like buildings in the background are from ancient times.

Yixin told me, "They are the spirits of ancient buildings." In the final panel, he depicts himself looking through a camera and adds figures as if to introduce people to a perfect futuristic world.



Figure 2. Yixin, Chinese, 18 years, NCEA Level 3 Painting, three-board portfolio

When asked whether this portfolio encapsulates how Alex helps students to achieve success, she said that because the boys are familiar with "really famous Western artists," she introduces them

to contemporary Chinese and Korean artists. They often say, "I had no idea about these Asian artists." Above all, I could see that her student-centered approach and obvious care for her students were significant dimensions of her pedagogy (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004; Noddings, 1984; Rubie-Davies, 2010).

#### Louise and her Student Christine

Louise, a South Korean-born woman in her late thirties, came to New Zealand as a 15-year-old. Her father had previously visited this country before deciding to bring the family here. Louise reminded me that I had said, "You are my first Korean student" when she trained to be an art and art history teacher in 2005. She has taught for 13 years at the same secondary school she attended as a student. This high decile 9 girls' school has a cohort of 2500 students, of whom approximately 10% are Korean. Louise explained that the school has "a very high population of Asian students because this is an area where many Asian-ethnic people live." The majority are Chinese, who come here from China, but there are "more and more Korean students born and raised in this area" (Xue et al., 2012). The teaching staff is ethnically diverse overall, including four Asian art teachers, but is less so at senior management level.

Louise said, "I think we have a nice culture in the school that supports cultural diversity, including events like the Chinese night and Korean night which attracts involvement from the community." The school's vision emphasizes achievement. As Louise said, "Our parents expect a lot from us in terms of academic achievement." Music is very strong at the school, with the majority of music students being Asian. Louise recalled that her early experience of music in Korea "was theoretical, much like art was, rather than playing music or making art." Sporting achievement is also emphasized, with students supported with "very expensive and amazing facilities." Every staff member has to be involved in a sporting or extra-curricular activity. In response to my question about whether art is valued at the school, Louise considered that it is "quite well respected and recognized, and we have tried very hard to be seen to have a presence in the school."

Louise's school attracts many different types of international students for periods ranging from one, to two, to six months or a year. The art department offers an international art class from midyear, so that students can experience art at NCEA Level 1. At Level 2, with 16-17 year-olds, the whole class is given the same theme, such as "My place in the world," which students interpret in their own way using a range of art practices including sculpture and printmaking. At Level 3, the large art department is able to offer all five of the NCEA disciplines – painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, and design.

During our discussion of portfolios Louise brought to her interview we focused on Christine, an 18-year-old Korean-born girl studying painting for Level 3. Louise said she had many conversations with Christine "because she wanted to talk about this sense of her being in an inbetween kind of place because she doesn't see herself as a full Korean person nor a New Zealander... so she wanted to talk about being confused." She began the year exploring the subject of food.

Christine identified food as being herself because 'you are what you eat' kind of idea. At first she looked at sesame oil which is frequently used in Korean food... and rice and dumplings. There's classical 'kiwiana' food like marmite, kiwifruit and cereal.

On the second board, the compositions are more complicated. Christine set up still life arrangements that included traces of Korean and European culture. The Korean dolls were given to her mother when she got married, the hanbok is the traditional South Korean dress, and there's a pouchimani. It's a pocket you attach to your hanbok to hold things given to you at New Year by your grandparents for good luck... and sometimes it's money or little lollies.

Louise explained that in her second and third boards, Christine struggled to marry the Korean and European elements. To solve the problem of things not fitting well together, she used a consistent color scheme. The red and blue on the Korean flag together with yellow and gold "because she wanted happy colors" provide a unifying effect. The impression I gained was that the portfolio, with its jostle and tumble of items and images, was a vivid expression of Christine's self-proclaimed confusion and questions about her place in the world.

Louise describes herself as "quite confident and competent," though admitted that she "could do with a change after sustaining art and art history teaching for so long." The impression I gained was of a very caring person who fits in beautifully with the culture of this school and has her students' best interests at heart. Her approach reflects how Noddings (1984) and Bingham and Sidorkin (2004) promote relational ethics which prioritizes concern for relationships, relatedness, and receptiveness to create caring classroom environments and foster student autonomy.



Figure 3: Christine, Korean, 18 years, NCEA Level 3 Painting, three-board portfolio

#### Harvey and his Student Bianca

Harvey, a 29-year-old male born in South Korea, was nine when he came to New Zealand. He trained to be an art teacher in 2012, a year after I implemented the pedagogical approach aimed at empowering Asian pre-service art teachers to promote a stronger Asian presence in their programs. Harvey has taught visual arts, design, and photography for six years. He teaches at a Year 1-13, high decile 10 co-educational school with a student cohort of 1600, of whom 50% are of Asian ethnicity. This aligns with statistics that the greatest numbers of students of Asian ethnicity attend high decile schools, predominantly located in an "ethnohub" popular with

Chinese and South Korean immigrants (Xue et al., 2012). The staff is ethnically diverse in the senior school, although European teachers dominate. Harvey is the only Asian teacher in the art department. He noted that more Chinese and Korean teachers work with younger students because the Asian population is much higher in the junior school due to rapidly increasing immigration and settlement of Asian families in this particular ethnoburb.

When asked about the school's philosophy, Harvey stressed the emphasis on academic achievement identified by Loh and Teo (2017): It is driven by external examinations and is based around the learner profile that teaches students to be life-long learners, risk takers, and a kind of value-focused education. The school offers NCEA Levels 1-3 at Years 11-13, although there are plans to reduce assessments in all subjects at Year 11 to best prepare students for even higher achievement at Years 12-13.

There are numerous cultural activities and opportunities for Asian students via the Chinese Club, Korean Club, and Japanese Club. There is no pressure on Harvey to contribute an Asian perspective to the life of the school, but he manages the Korean Club. A highlight of the year is the annual International Peace Night event, at which all cultures come together to perform.

Harvey teaches NCEA Levels 2 and 3 painting and photography. He explained that "Because we don't have a huge number of students, only 15 students in photography at Level 2 this year, it's really advantageous for us to let the students drive the investigation, and for it to be individualized. We are all about the students' inquiry into their own ideas." He added, the students "learn all sorts of things that they didn't know about their family, their culture."

During our discussion of the portfolios Harvey brought to his interview, we focused on Bianca, an 18-year-old Chinese girl studying for NCEA Level 3 photography. He described her as "the most hard working and diligent student you could get." For her portfolio, Bianca explored cultural stereotypes, using a friend as the model. Harvey said,

The starting point shows Bianca's model wearing a brocade Chinese 'Cheongsamstyle' costume, emblazoned with a circular red motif rather like an ancient Chinese medallion. A lot of Westerners associate 'red' with China's Revolution or political system, but in China colors are based on the five elements (Metal, Fire, Water, Wood, and Air)... like red is a symbolic color of Fire. Bianca's images then move into cultural stereotypes associated with bowls of Chinese food, like rice, noodles, pork, and dumplings. Bianca started playing with dumplings, coating them with the color red... and then the same thing on her model's face, as well as noodles and blossoms.

Using different media to represent sauces, she painted a Chinese character denoting her surname, part of the word for "direction." She cut out the character multiple times to create a kind of text, much like Zhang Huan, one of China's best-known performance and conceptual artists who has calligraphers progressively writing messages on his face about himself and cultural issues. Bianca started morphing the face into jars, then arranging these with bottled sauce and other ingredients such as on a pantry shelf. She wanted to talk about the stereotype of associating Chinese people with "Chinese takeaways," a link that many Europeans make when they hear the word "Chinese."



Figure 4. Bianca, Chinese, 18 years, NCEA Level 3 Photography, three-board portfolio

Harvey's pedagogical approach is student-centered. From this portfolio, it is evident that a striking feature of his work with Asian students is encouraging them to pursue their individual interests and ideas, supporting them to engage with artist models, and emphasizing exploration of pertinent cultural issues (Beyerbach & Davis, 2012; Bianchi, 2011). Harvey and I recalled the "culturally inclusive senior art unit" he completed as a pre-service art teacher in 2012. In this work, he visually explored cultural stereotypes and racist inferences such as Asian people being mocked for pronouncing rice as "lice," being offered green tea instead of coffee, and how his classmates called him "noodle brain" because of the contents of his lunch box! Actual rice and noodles, inscribed with text and the colors of the Korean flag, were among his potent images. I could see that Harvey's experiences of being a young non-English speaking immigrant child have shaped his pedagogy for working effectively alongside Asian students.

## Discussion

The findings presented in this article draw upon data collected from four Korean teachers who volunteered to be interviewed, along with examples of their students' artworks. They provide insights into how these teachers are supporting their 17-18-year-old Asian students to find a place in art education in secondary schools. A number of themes emerged from the study including: implications of the Asian population and schooling statistics, influences of the national curriculum and assessment policies, outcomes of the teachers' curriculum and pedagogical approaches, and the role of students' artwork as a potent form of data.

#### Implications of the Asian Population and Schooling Statistics

It was apparent that statistical data about the rapidly increasing Asian populations in Auckland (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2015; Auckland Council, 2014; Ministry of Education, 2018; Statistics New Zealand, 2017) is being realized in secondary schools. Data confirmed that all four art teachers taught in high decile 7-10 secondary schools in higher socio-economic ethnoburbs.

The participants did not mention the percentage of Asian students studying NCEA Levels 1-3 art at Years 11-13 in relation to their school's Asian population. However, I perceived that there were comparatively few. Harvey, who taught at a school with a student cohort of 1600, of whom 50% were of Asian ethnicity, cited 15 students studying photography at NCEA Level 2. This suggests, perhaps, the supposition by Pham and Renshaw (2013) and Teo and Loh (2017) that Asian students tend to be dependent learners within a teacher-directed framework, enroll in so-called "academic" subjects, and their parents are predominantly concerned with examination results. A further implication could be that as the Asian population increases, the impact of experiencing more independent learning styles in this country may result in greater numbers of Asian students, supported by their families, electing to study NCEA art as 15-18-year-olds.

#### Influences of the National Curriculum and Assessment Policies

The open-ended nature of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MoE, 2007) and NCEA achievement standards, which are "content free," means that art teachers have immense freedom with curricula choices. At NCEA Level 1, where there is a single art field of Visual Arts, Alex chose a whole-class theme of "I Am." At NCEA Levels 2 and 3, most students choose their own themes and subject matter but, due to practical considerations such as staffing and student enrollments, not all the disciplines of painting, design, printmaking, sculpture, or photography are offered. Painting and photography prevailed at the four schools featured in this article.

#### **Outcomes of Curriculum and Pedagogical Approaches**

The four Asian art teachers revealed that their own experiences as youthful immigrants attending secondary schools in New Zealand have influenced their current curricula and pedagogical approaches. Holly said she was concerned to "fill the gap," especially for second generation people like herself. Louise supports her NCEA Level 2 students with the open-ended theme of "My place in the world." Alex ensures that her Asian students discover Asian "artist models" rather than depending on Western examples. Harvey's personal experience with racial inferences, as a young immigrant, informs his aspiration for his students to "speak up" through their art making. A student-centered approach is a key feature of the curriculum and pedagogical approaches of all these teachers. Without exception, their 17-18-year-old students were encouraged to express their ethnic identities through exploring their own lives, visual culture, or issues pertinent to their cultural contexts (Beyerbach & Davis, 2011; Bianchi, 2011; Duncum, 2008). Each teacher stressed that students had a free choice with subject matter or themes. This is reflected in the artworks. The teachers saw their role as guiding students about potential artist models from which to draw ideas, media, and techniques. In three examples, artist models were implicit rather than explicit. Jeff (see Figure 1) makes general reference to anime, manga, and games, Yixin (see Figure 2) draws upon classical Chinese pagodas and historic architectural forms to inform his work, and Christine (see Figure 3) references a range of still life traditions. The most explicit use of an artist model was by Bianca (see Figure 4), who drew upon the ideas and techniques of contemporary Chinese artist Zhang Huan. The artworks of these four students reflect how their teachers encouraged experimentation and innovation in an environment where they were free to take risks. They demonstrate assertions by educational researchers in New Zealand (Alton-Lee, 2004; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Rubie-Davies, 2010) that teachers are the most significant factor in student achievement.

#### The Role of Students' Artworks as a Potent Form of Data

The students' portfolios provide important data about their artistic journeys through explorations of their ethnic backgrounds and cultural connections. The artworks in Jeff's portfolio exhibit a political edge, Yixin's depictions hint at the future of China, Louise's images suggest she is caught between two worlds, and Bianca's powerful images speak clearly about cultural stereotypes. In these students' artworks, the visual is a powerful form of data. The stories told by these four Asian students reflect Stanczack's (2007) view that images are not additions to research, but are an inseparable part of learning about the lives of participants.

### Conclusion

This qualitative study set out to understand and describe the world of human experience — in this instance, how Asian art teachers working in secondary schools in Auckland are supporting their Asian students to strengthen their voices and subsequently their cultural identities through their art practice. The data from four interviews provides evidence of how teachers are supporting their Asian students to express their individual identities through art. An overarching sense of care for their students was a hallmark of the pedagogical practices of these teachers. There was evidence of what Noddings (1984), Bingham and Sidorkin (2004), and Rubie-Davies (2010) advocate as "relational ethics" which prioritizes concern for relationships, relatedness, and receptiveness to create caring classroom environments and foster student autonomy.

The shape and form of this small-scale study highlights potential limitations. First, the four Korean art teachers who volunteered to be interviewed, along with examples of students' artworks, undoubtedly did so because they had a particular interest in the research question. Another potential limitation is that they were all pre-service art teachers in my teacher education programs, in which there is strong emphasis on culturally inclusive pedagogical practices. A further limitation is that the voices of their art students were not sought. The foremost limitation could be perceived as the issue of validity, especially since validity of interpretations and meanings has long been questioned in debates over the legitimacy of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In this study it was impossible to escape the subjective experience. I acknowledge that this small-scale qualitative study is not generalizable in the traditional sense. Rather, it has verisimilitude through "the creation of a realistic, authentic, life-like portrayal" (Leavy, 2015, p. 57). It has features that make it highly valuable to the art education community.

The knowledge generated by the study is significant in its own right. The stories told through the voices of these Asian art teachers and visualized through examples of artworks by their Asian students encapsulate the importance of building relationships between Asian (and non-Asian) teachers and the rapidly increasing number of Asian students, not only in art education but also in other curriculum areas. Albeit small in scale, the study has the potential to make an innovative contribution to the field, particularly given that it fills a significant gap in the literature. It has the potential of transferability of the rich and empowering experiences of these art teachers to similar settings elsewhere in New Zealand, in other Western nations with increasing Asian populations, and in Asian countries themselves.

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## Appendix 1: NCEA Visual Arts Matrix Levels 1-3 and Achievement Standards (NZQA)

Level 1 AS90913 1.1 Demonstrate understanding of art works from a Māori and another cultural context using art terminology.		Level 2			Level 3		
		AS91305 AS91308 2.1 AS91306 AS91309 AS91307 Demonstrate an understanding of methods and ideas from established practice appropriate to design/painting/photography/printmaking/sculpture.			AS91440 AS91443 <b>3.1</b> AS91441 AS91444 AS91442 Analyse methods and ideas from established design/painting/photography/printmaking/sculpture practice.		
4 credits	Internal	4 credits		Internal	4 credits		Internal
AS90914 1.2 Use drawing methods and skills for recording information using wet and dry media.		AS91310 AS91313 2.2 AS91311 AS91314 AS91312 Use drawing methods to apply knowledge of conventions appropriate to design/painting/ photography/printmaking/sculpture.			AS91445 AS91448 <b>3.2</b> AS91446 AS91449 AS91447 Use drawing to demonstrate understanding of conventions appropriate to design/painting/ photography/printmaking/sculpture.		
4 credits	Internal	4 credits		Internal	4 credits		Internal
AS90915 Use drawing conventions to dev one field of practice.	AS91315 AS91318 2.3 AS91316 AS91319 AS91317 Develop ideas in a related series of drawings appropriate to established design/painting/ photography/printmaking/sculpture practice.			AS91450 AS91453 3.3 AS91451 AS91454 AS91452 Systematically clarify ideas using drawing informed by established design/painting/photography/printmaking/ sculpture practice.			
6 credits	Internal	4 credits		Internal	4 credits		Internal
AS90916 Produce a body of work informe practice, which develops ideas, media.		AS91320 AS91321 AS91322	AS91323 AS91324	2.4	AS91455 AS91456 AS91457 Droduce a su	AS91458 AS91459	3.4
media.		Produce a systematic body of work that shows understanding of art making conventions and ideas within design/painting/photography/printmaking/ sculpture.			Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within design/painting/photography/printmaking/sculpture practice.		
12 credits	External	12 credits		External	14 credits		External
AS90917 1.5 Produce a finished work that demonstrates skills appropriate to cultural conventions.		AS91325 2.5 Produce a resolved work that demonstrates control of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.			AS91460 3.5 Produce a resolved work that demonstrates purposefu control of skills appropriate to a visual arts cultural context.		
4 credits	Internal	4 credits		Internal	4 credits		Internal

## Appendix 2: Email Questionnaire

**Research Project Title:** Asian art teachers in New Zealand: How do they promote an Asian presence in visual arts education in secondary schools?

**Researcher:** Associate Professor Jill Smith <u>j.smith@auckland.ac.nz</u>

#### EMAIL QUESTIONNAIRE

You may choose not to answer these questions [\*optional]

Your real name, any personal information, and the names of educational institutions you attended, will not be identified or divulged to any other person

*Please provide as much information as you wish in this word document. When completed, please convert it to PDF and return it to me by email* 

#### PART 1 - PARTICIPANT'S DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- 1 NAME
- 2 First name PSEUDONYM (*pseudonym/alias/fictitious name for reporting the research*)
- 3 Your ethnicity/ethnicities
- 4 Country in which you were born
- 5 How old you were when you came to New Zealand (if not born in here)
- 6 Why you (and/or your family...) came to New Zealand [\*optional]

#### PART 2 - PARTICIPANT'S SECONDARY SCHOOLING INFORMATION

- 7 Name of the secondary school you attended
- 8 At what year level did you enter a New Zealand secondary school? (e.g. years 9-13)?
- 9 What approximate percentage of students at your secondary school were of Asian ethnicity? (e.g. 10%, quarter, half, more, etc...)
- 10 How many of your art teachers were of Asian ethnicity?
- 11 In year 9-10 art, what opportunities did your class/classes have to learn about Asian art and culture?

12 In year 9-10 art, what opportunities did you have to express your Asian ethnicity or culture in any art units, lessons or art activities?

13 In year 11-13 art, what opportunities did you have to express your Asian ethnicity or culture in coursework or art portfolios?

- 14 What Asian 'artist models' were you introduced to in art?
- 15 Did you choose not to make art that expresses your Asian ethnicity? [\*optional]
- 16 Why did you decide to go to a tertiary art school?

#### PART 3 - PARTICIPANT'S TERTIARY ART SCHOOL INFORMATION

- 17 Name of tertiary art school you attended
- 18 What art field/s or discipline/s did you major in at art school?
- 19 How many students in your year group at art school were of Asian ethnicity?
- 20 How many of your tertiary art school lecturers were of Asian ethnicity?

21 What encouragement did you receive from lecturers/tutors to express your Asian ethnicity or culture during your time at tertiary art school?

22 Did you choose not to make art that expresses your Asian ethnicity while at tertiary art school? If not, why not? [\*optional]

23 What was your career aspiration/s when you graduated from art school?

## PART 4 – PARTICIPANT'S VISUAL ARTS PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION INFORMATION

24 How many pre-service visual arts teachers in your year group were of Asian ethnicity?

25 What opportunities did you receive to include your Asian ethnicity or culture in your planning of art units, lessons or art activities?

26 What opportunities did your peers have to learn about Asian art and culture and possible teaching approaches?

27 On your practicum placements in secondary schools what opportunities did you have to teach art units, lessons or activities which focused on aspects of Asian art and culture?

28 How knowledgeable/confident did you feel about the prospect of teaching secondary school students about aspects of Asian art and culture?

## PART 5 - PARTICIPANT'S SECONDARY SCHOOL VISUAL ARTS/ART-RELATED SUBJECTS TEACHING INFORMATION

29 Name of secondary school in which you teach

30 What is the total student population at your secondary school?

31 What approximate percentage of students at your secondary school are of Asian ethnicity? (e.g. 10%, quarter, half, more, etc...)

32 What art or art-related subjects and year levels do you teach?

33 In year 9-10 art, what opportunities do you give students to learn about Asian art and culture?

34 In year 11, art and year 12-13 specialist art fields, what opportunities do you give students of Asian ethnicity to express their ethnicity or culture in their workbook/s and/or art portfolios?

33 Is there any expectation from the art department and/or school for you to contribute an Asian perspective to the life of the art department and your school?

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS [\*optional]

#### Thank you very much for your participation in this questionnaire

Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 24 May 2018 for three years. Reference Number 021263

## **Appendix 3: Interview Questions**

**Research Project Title:** Asian-ethnic art teachers in New Zealand: How do they promote an Asian presence in visual arts in secondary schools?

**Researcher:** Associate Professor Jill Smith <u>j.smith@auckland.ac.nz</u>

#### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

For Asian teachers of visual arts in Auckland secondary schools

#### **INTRODUCTION - general questions**

• Aim of the research

#### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- What do you know about the population / census statistics for Asian groups in New Zealand adult and youthful population?
- What do you know about the population / census statistics for Asian groups in Auckland adult and youthful population?
- What is the ethnic make-up of the adults at your school principal, staff, visual arts department?
- What is the ethnic make-up of the students at your school? What percentage are of Asian ethnicity?

#### SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY / VISION STATEMENT

- What are the key beliefs / vision / philosophy of your school?
- How do these beliefs this play out in the life of the school?
- What attention / emphasis is given to students of Asian ethnicity?

#### THE NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM & VISUAL ARTS

- What do know about the general philosophy /direction of the curriculum / general expectations?
- What do you know about curriculum statements that refer to 'cultural diversity'?
- What do you know about how the visual arts curriculum is framed? References to 'culture'? 'cultural diversity? Particular ethnic groups? Reference to 'Asian'?

#### TEACHING PROGRAMMES AT THE SCHOOL

- How are year 9-10 programmes structured? Is there any focus at year 9-10 art on students learning about Asian art and culture? Opportunities that enable Asian students to express their culture/s?
- How is year 11 NCEA structured? Class theme? Individual choice? Opportunities that enable Asian students to express their culture/s?
- How are years 12-13 NCEA structured? Individual choice? Opportunities that enable Asian students to express their culture?

#### **TEACHING APPROACHES / PEDAGOGIES**

- What teaching approaches / pedagogical practices inform your teaching?
- How do you use the visual arts to take into account the increasing Asian population in your school?

#### **TEACHER DISPOSITION**

- How important do you think your role is in supporting responsiveness to cultural and ethnic diversity? For all students? For Asian students?
- How important is teacher disposition? attitudes? actions?

#### USE THE STUDENTS' ARTWORKS TO GENERATE DISCUSSION

- Why did you choose these examples?
- In what ways did you find out more about these students through their artworks?
- What enabled the students to express their ethnicity/ethnicities? What was your role?
- In what ways do these examples reflect your responsiveness to promoting an Asian presence in your school?

Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 24 May 2018 for three years. Reference Number 021263



## Facilitating Productive Encounters with Difference: A Visual Essay

Becky Shipe, Rhode Island College (USA)

\*Originally published in Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education

**Abstract:** Advances in technology and global migration continue to provide people from all over the world with greater access to a diversity of personal and collective narratives. Children and teenagers are becoming more aware of how people in faraway places live, and they are more capable of sharing their narratives with one another. If students consciously choose to consider these different ways of knowing, or "difference," the experience can potentially enhance self-awareness, promote creativity, and generate a more compassionate perspective on human similarities and diversities.

AUTHOR NOTE: In this visual essay, the term "difference" is broadly defined and should provoke multiple interpretations. Nevertheless, relating this term to specific topics such as differing value systems or socio-cultural characteristics positions the audience to consider how perceptions of "difference" can impact our visual and collective beliefs and behaviors. Insights presented in this visual essay reflect the author's personal understandings which have been greatly influenced by the literature listed in the references section.

## Facilitating Productive Encounters with Difference: A Visual Essay

Advances in technology and global migration continue to provide people from all over the world with greater access to a diversity of personal and collective narratives. Children and teenagers are becoming more aware of how people in far away places live, and they are more capable of sharing their narratives with one another. If students consciously choose to consider these different ways of knowing, or "difference," the experience can potentially enhance self-awareness, promote creativity, and generate a more compassionate perspective on human similarities and diversities.

PLEASE NOTE: In this visual essay, the term "difference" is broadly defined and should provoke multiple interpretations. Nevertheless, relating this term to specific topics such as differing value systems or socio-cultural characteristics positions the audience to consider how perceptions of "difference" can impact our individual and collective beliefs and behaviors. Insights presented in this visual essay reflect the author's personal understandings which have been greatly influenced by the literature listed in the references section.

Encountering differing global narratives can potentially confirm pre-existing assumptions or perpetuate stereotypes, but it can also open our eyes to a new point of view. Engaging with difference can potentially provide positive learning opportunities that inspire curiosity, imagination, empathy, and self-reflexivity. If educators encourage students to be self-reflective and aware of the way in which they respond to difference, these experiences might become opportunities for positive growth. Furthermore, when a child or teen makes a personal connection with a global partner whom they perceive as different, they might recognize and more fully appreciate the characteristics that define our shared human condition. In other words, engaging with difference also impacts our perception of sameness.

Engaging with global narratives through experiences with art naturally involves metaphorical thinking. Choosing to think metaphorically, or perceiving one thing in terms of another, helps us to comprehend how different people make meaning and share ideas in different ways. Encountering differing global narratives provides opportunities to consider how knowledge is individually constructed and contextually specific. Sharing personal narratives using visual metaphors can also enable alobal partners to build personal connections with those who speak a different language. Overall, creating and interpreting visual metaphors with others has the potential to transform encounters with difference into valuable learning experiences.

The following visual essay illustrates the process of encountering difference, and it describes how engaging with art and metaphorical thinking can promote imagination, empathy, and self-reflexivity.



The following series of visual metaphors intentionally simplifies the complexities of encountering difference by representing several intra- and interpersonal experiences that often occur during this process. Viewing this interaction through the lens of a bird and fish intends to provide an opportunity for the audience to think divergently while addressing topics that often evoke strong emotional reactions. Although their dyadic relationship can be interpreted as two individuals from different parts of the world, the audience is encouraged to consider the multiple ways that this interaction might represent the experience of encountering difference.



the Real

Encountering difference can be both affirmational and transformational. It can evoke feelings of...

# fear,

I can't imagine being suspended in the air. I would certainly fall! I would never last under the water. I would surely suffocate!



## curiosity,

Maybe I could leave the water if I jump high enough? I wonder what the world is like out there?

I could use this ge**a**r to ' see and breathe under the

water.

e I wonder ike what I will ? find down there?



## or envy.

I wish that I could soar above the clouds. What an amazing view that would

be!

I wish that I could dive deeper and explore life under the Sea.

Encountering difference opens our eyes to other ways of exisiting and provides an opportunity to imagine seeing the world from a different point of view. "Playing" with different perspectives and identities can reveal unending possibilities as we realize our power to define who and what we want to become.

Considering new perspectives can lead to feelings of self-abandonment or betrayal. It might cause us to address why we share similar perspectives with those we choose to interact with, and recognize the benefits and disadvantages of sticking with our "kind."

Encountering difference can stimulate our desire to learn about the origin of our differences. We might wonder how our ancestors have responded to their environment over time. How have historical events, influential figures, and contextual circumstances contributed to their worldviews?

I understand Look at me! how it feels I am no to be a fish. longer a I see like a fish! I am now I am a fish! a bird!

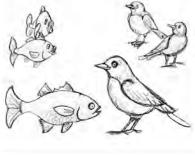


fish.

Furthermore, we might reconsider who or what determines our identities and group affiliations, recognize the power of self-determination, and question whether we really need to be defined!

We travel in groups and go with the flow. It is necessarv for our survival.

We do too - especially when we migrate to new places.



why must we travel in groups? Does it protect us from preditors?

Wow, some birds don't have to migrate because they adapt to their changing environment.

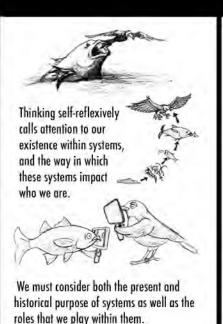


In addition to looking critically at our past, we should apply these new understandings to our present lives and future goals.

Encountering difference gives us opportunities to become more self-reflexive. Self-reflexivity involves acknowledging how our presence and our interactions within a particular environment impact the way that we interpret what is going on around us.

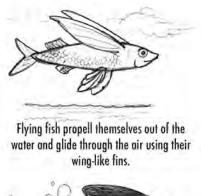
Encountering difference can help us to avoid becoming too rigid. Rather than drying into fixed, impermeable stone, we should aim to maintain our integrity while adapting to the dynamic environment that we share with our local and global neighbors.

Engaging with difference can open our eyes to new perspectives and possible ways of living. This can potentially release our imagination, promote self-reflexivity and empathy, and help us to be more adaptable and receptive to our environments. This can be a transformational experience if we are open to the idea of transforming.



How do we want to be remembered? What characteristics and values do we want to pass along to future generations? How might they interpret our stories?



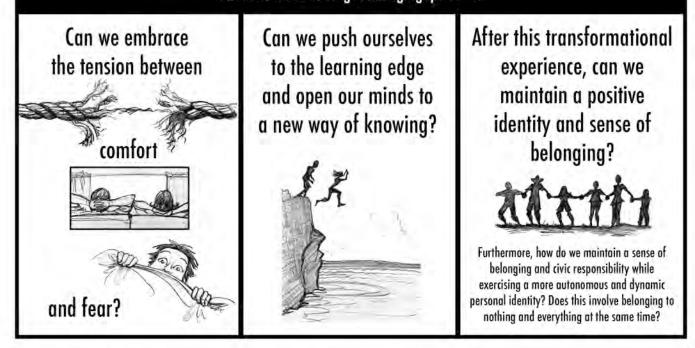




Puffins' short wings enable them to swim underwater using an adapted flying technique.

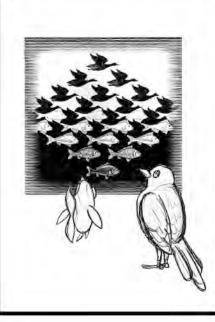
## How does this relate to art education?

How might teachers facilitate experiences with art that will help students to transform encounters with difference into opportunities for productive growth? In order to avoid perpetuating stereotypes or unexamined beliefs that confirm existing generalizations, teachers must help their students to become self-reflexive and aware of the following challenging questions:



Interpreting works of art employs metaphorical thinking because we construct personal meaning from images rather than from language. Sharing our interpretations with others gives them a window into our imaginations. Encountering difference in this way can promote empathy and creative thinking. Art educators can provide opportunities for their students to encounter and interpret one another's personal narratives by exchanging pictures rather than words. Students in different parts of the world can create visual responses to a given theme, and then share these metaphorical representations with global partners.

Students would then create individual visual responses to this theme that reflect their personal narrative.





Students might begin by discussing the theme with their local peers in order to broaden their individual understandings.

Creating a visual metaphor to represent an idea requires divergent thinking and imagination. Rather than drawing commonly used symbols to represent ideas, teachers could introduce students to creative thinking strategies that would help them to generate more personal visual responses.



Students would then use technology to share their visual responses with partners from a different part of the world. Exposure to this potentially different global narrative provides opportunities for productive tension to occur. Teachers can help guide students through this process by encouraging empathetic and self-reflexive thinking.

As students generate, share, and interpret one another's personal responses to the given theme, their existing understandings expand as they consider new points of view. This ultimately increases the number of metaphors that they can pull from while making meaning of this theme. As shown in this visual essay, educators can promote healthy encounters with difference through experiences with art. Proactively soliciting and engaging with diverse global narratives can promote empathy, self-reflexivity, and creativity. This is just one example of how creating, sharing, and interpreting visual metaphors with others can potentially lead to both affirmational and transformational learning experiences.

Encouraging students to consider differing perspectives can potentially counteract their tendency to make quick judgements. These conversations might involve investigating their personal biases in order to become more self-reflexive and empathetic toward others. Specific instructional strategies would depend on contextual circumstances such as the students' developmental levels and other distinctive conditions which define the learning environment.



Facilitating this type of exchange can feed students' innate curiosities and fuel their desire to engage with difference. In addition, establishing this type of personal connection during their formative years can potentially increase their willingness to appreciate "difference" later in life.





How might the art education field validate the claims proposed in this visual essay? Can research prove that this type of experience does, in fact, lead to greater empathy, self-reflexivity, and creativity? In order to further investigate these questions, art educators and researchers must create and monitor this type of visual art exchange and document the outcomes. Are these collaborative efforts worth pursuing?

Let's work together and find out!

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# Section II Decolonization in Art Education Curriculum



This section will challenge and re-inscribe a Western-dominated narrative imposed by a colonial structure and mindset. Authors also address complicated global issues such as cultural appropriation, bias, and misrepresentation. Readers will find how art educators emphasize the significance of critical reflection and examination when exploring the visual culture of marginalized groups and cultural origins in the classroom. In this section, the authors will share ways in which art educators practice global art education as counter-hegemonic globalization.



# Dis/locating Comfort Women Statues: Reflections on Colonialism and Implications for Global Art Education

Hyunji Kwon, University of South Carolina (USA)

\*Originally published in Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education

**Abstract:** In this paper, I discuss how comfort women statues can promote non-Western cultural mobilization and globalization as well as pedagogical implications. "Comfort women" is a euphemism for the girls and women who were forced into sexual servitude by the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) during WWII. By using Chandra Mohanty's concept of the contextual understanding of cultures and Uma Narayan's feminist methodology to dislocate cultures, I dis/locate comfort women statues in Atlanta, GA and San Francisco, CA as the grounds for a critical approach to global art education. I then suggest ways in which global art education can embody dis/located statues as renditions of counterhegemonic globalization.

Keywords: Comfort women, statues, colonialism, globalization, global art education

Over the years, the issue of comfort women has received increased attention. "Comfort women" is a euphemism for the girls and women who were forced into sexual servitude for the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) during WWII. Although this issue may seem to be a unique historical experience in East Asia with Japan as the perpetrator and Korea as the victim, the intricate intersectionalities of imperialism, colonialism, sexism, and violence are rooted in the system that created comfort women. In this regard, statues commemorating former comfort women have been erected to embody these intersectionalities. In particular, statues erected in Western Countries, including the United States, have situated this issue in a global context.

In this article, I present how comfort women statues in the U.S. can promote non-Western cultural mobilization and globalization alongside their pedagogical implications. More specifically, I begin by introducing former comfort women and statutes dedicated to them. I also review the discourses of postcolonialism and globalization in the field of art education to provide insight into a critical global art education. By employing Chandra Mohanty's (2003) theoretical framework and Uma Narayan's (1997) feminist methodology, I dis/locate two particular comfort women statues within Western, non-Western, and global contexts to examine how their cultural mobilization can provide the grounds for global art education. Lastly, I propose practical art projects that engage with these statues as a critical approach to global art education.

# **Comfort Women and Statues**

Before the outbreak of WWII, "Japanese commanders had received 223 complaints of rape of local women by Japanese troops" in the Shanghai area (Kristof, 1995, para. 14). In order to decrease rape, improve relations with civilians, and protect Japanese soldiers from Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), the authorities decided to build a military-run "brothel" called a comfort station. During the Asian and Pacific War (1937–45), a part of WWII, comfort stations were systematically established in occupied Asian countries including Korea, the Manchurian region of China, the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, Indochina (present-day Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos), and Myanmar (previously Burma).

Although these comfort stations were labeled as brothels filled with comfort women, in reality, they were prison-like institutions for sex slaves. The majority of comfort women were young, unmarried, and uneducated working-class girls in their early teens who were forcefully coerced through various means (Min, 2003). Considering these racial and sexual victims of the IJA, "the vast majority were Koreans since Korea was Japan's most strategically important colony" (Herr, 2016, p. 43). Due to the destruction of official Japanese military documents after WWII, the precise number of comfort women is still under debate but is believed to have been between 80,000 and 200,000 (Herr, 2016).

According to the testimonies of former comfort women collected by the non-profit Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (Korean Council, 1993), the conditions in which they lived were inhumane. In addition to constant rape, ranging from 6 to 100 men per day depending on the population of "visitors," they suffered a lack of medical care, involuntary drug addiction, and gynecological consequences including STDs, hysterectomies, pregnancies, childbirth, and abortions. Some of them recounted their experiences of witnessing the death of other comfort women, which taught them to obey utterly in order to survive.

After the end of Japanese colonial rule in 1945, public recognition of the history of comfort women was deterred during the Korean War in the early 1950s and during the subsequent military dictatorship until the 1980s. With the advent of democracy, former comfort woman Hak-sun Kim (1924–97) came forth to testify in August 1991. Her testimony encouraged 237 other women to register with the Korean government, and 30 of those have publicly testified about the IJA's sexual exploitation (Soh, 1996). Since then, South Korea and Japan have experienced political tension on this issue.

Multiple reconciliatory attempts have been made at the individual, collective, and governmental levels. In most cases, Japan's monetary compensation was considered to be sufficient reparation (Park, 2010). This may seem to be an effective means to help the women who have lived impoverished pre- and post-comfort women lives. However, the lack of critical questions regarding the discourse on reconciliation (i.e., its meaning, goals, methods, and perception) often creates a misleading binary between shame and dignity that monetary restoration can only restore sexually violated women's dignity while the "absence of it allows women to remain shamed" (Kwon, 2017a, p. 606).

Besides monetary attempts at reconciliation, there have been social and cultural efforts to address the exploitation of comfort women. Unlike monetary compensation, the socially and culturally responsive movement has prioritized Japanese acknowledgement of responsibility for their crimes and attended to the subject positions and subjectivity of former comfort women (Kim, 2014). A few examples of such efforts include visual arts (House of Sharing, 2000; Kwon, 2017a), literature (Chang, 1997; William, 2016; Yoon, 2016), film (Cho, 2016; Kim-Gibson, 1998; Lee & Kim, 2017; Shin & Byun, 1995; Shin & Byun, 1997; Shin & Byun, 1999), and plays (Kim, 1999). Without reducing these women to shameful agents, this movement aims to promote their visibility apart from being victims.

Among these efforts, I focus on statues dedicated to comfort women. These statues are known as *Pyong-hwa-bi* or *Pyong-hwa-ui So-nyeo-sang* in Korean, meaning the "Statue of Peace" and the "Girl's Statue of Peace," respectively. As the latter indicates, comfort women statues are often in the shape of a girl. The most well-known comfort women statue is a standard design commissioned by the Korean Council and created by Seo-gyeong Kim and Woon-sung Kim. The Korean Council initially planned to erect a stele in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, South Korea to commemorate their 1,000<sup>th</sup> Wednesday Demonstrations, ongoing weekly protests demanding Japan's official apology (Korean Council, n.d.). However, the local municipal government of Jongno-gu recommended that the Korean Council erect "artwork" instead of the stele (Song, 2013). This situation shows how art can blur the demarcation between the private and public spheres, while making political aims achievable through their visual rendition. Supporters have treated the statue as if it is alive by sitting next to her, dressing her in winter clothes, and holding an umbrella over her. The Korean Council (n.d.) describes the meaning behind the statue on their website as follows (see Figures 1 and 2):

The girl who was abducted to become a comfort woman stares at the Japanese embassy.

Her hair seems to be roughly cut, illustrating the suffering of a comfort woman. The little bird on her left shoulder is a psychic symbol to connect life and death and to honor other comfort women who have passed away. Her clenched fists show her anger and resentment.

Her heels that don't touch the ground symbolize her life without a sense of belonging.

The empty chair next to her can be for other deceased comfort women and allies, or the restful world of which they dream.

The shadow on the ground gives a sense of the time that former comfort women have waited for justice, or the act of engraving comfort women in history.

The butterfly in the shadow on the ground is a symbol of liberation.

The engraved sentences on the ground denote the 1,000<sup>th</sup> Wednesday Demonstration.



*Figure 1. Kim, S., & Kim, W. (2011). The statue of peace [Sculpture]. Seoul, Republic of Korea: The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. Retrieved from <u>http://www.womenandwar.net/</u> <i>Reproduced with permission.* 

These empathetic, multilayered, and communicable visual symbols of the statue have directed more attention to the issue of comfort women. People from all strata of society began forming a continued engagement with the issue, and this has therefore led to an increasing number of statues. Domestically and internationally, the number of statues is estimated to be over 80 (Korean Council, n.d.). An accurate estimation is difficult due to different organizations' growing efforts to erect more statues. These organizations vary from a high school history club to a government district office, but are mainly local, civic, and non-profit organizations in South Korea.



*Figure 2. Kim, S., & Kim, W. (2011). The statue of peace [Sculpture]. Seoul, Republic of Korea: The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. Author photo.* 

# Postcolonialism, Globalization, and Global Art Education

Within the context of art education, multicultural art education has been discussed in relation to globalization (Davenport, 2000; Desai, 2000; Garber, 1995; Shin, 2016). According to art education scholar Melanie Davenport (2000), multicultural art education addresses cultural diversity within society, while global art education considers "all of the forces that shape cultural differences across humankind" (p. 365). Rather than a simple comparison between different cultures in a global context, Davenport's (2000) approach to global art education is concerned with the impact of global systems on power relations and the order of cultures throughout history.

The discussion of global art education has begun to merge with the discourse on decolonization (Alexander & Sharma, 2013; Ballengee-Morris, 2002, 2010; Ballengee-Morris, Mirin, & Rizzi, 2000; Ballengee-Morris, Sanders, Smith-Shank, & Staikidis, 2010). While "postcolonialism and decolonialism have been similarly understood and used interchangeably in visual art," theoretical differences exist (Kwon, 2017a, p. 574). Since the "post" in postcolonialism indicates both the "end of classical colonialism and postmodern form of analysis" (Crossley & Tikly, 2004, p. 148), this may imply that colonialism is no longer existent, whereas many countries still live under the indirect influences of their colonial experience. Thus, art education scholar Christine Ballengee-Morris (2010) refuses to use "postcolonial theory because American Indian Nations are still under colonial rule" (p. 287). Considering the independence of Korea in 1945, I use a postcolonial approach in this article; however, my approach identifies the struggles against persistent colonial domination in a global world instead of remarking on the advent of a new era.

The integration of decolonization into global art education denotes a linkage between ongoing colonial legacies and globalization. In the 1970s, postcolonial theorist Edward Said (1978) identifies the Orient as the "other" and the Occident as the "self," thereby providing the idea that

modernity (progress, development) is only implicated in the maintenance of a colonial worldview. In a global era, when considering how postcolonial countries are situated, with their subjects still seeing and perceiving themselves within a colonial worldview, globalization precipitates the distribution of Western knowledge, aesthetics, and culture. This analysis of the origin and process of globalization as relevant to Western-oriented colonialism leads to the proposal that globalization needs to be understood in the context of colonialism, and therefore, an anti-colonial and counterhegemonic form of globalization is necessary.

By attending to the inseparable relationship between colonialism and globalization, education theorist Fazal Rizvi (2007) encourages more research on the relationships between postcolonialism and globalization in education. Despite the increasing amount of research on multiculturalism, postcolonialism, and globalization, Rizvi (2007) argues that postcolonial approaches to globalization have not been sufficiently discussed. More specifically, "recent postcolonial studies [mainly] center on apolitical analyses of literary texts" (Rizvi, 2007, p. 260). If globalization is researched and taught without addressing its critical association with colonialism and power hierarchies, unequal power relations may be perpetuated through global education.

In this context, the anti-colonial approaches by Christine Ballengee-Morris and other scholars in the field of art education are critical to global art education. Postcolonialism in global art education aims to avoid the un-situated perspective of globalization while critiquing the power imbalance fabricated in the global order of art and its resultant art education. This is in accordance with how critical multicultural art education scholars have cautioned against the apolitical and celebratory inclusion of diverse cultures in art education (Acuff, 2018; Desai, 2000). Because "cultural colonialism is not an ivory tower theory but a very real force which impacts millions of people over the world" (Ballengee-Morris, Mirin, & Rizzi, 2000, p. 112), an anti-colonial approach to global art education is both urgent and necessary.

According to critical pedagogue Paulo Freire (1974/2013), decolonization begins with "self-awareness...and a new cultural climate where some intellectual groups see themselves from their own perspective" (p. 10). Following Freire, it is possible to challenge the hierarchy inherent in modern knowledge and aesthetics through cultural mobilization and education. In this context, I consider comfort women statues in the US as postcolonial attempts to enact cultural mobilization and globalization.

# Theoretical Framework and Methodology: Dis/locating Comfort Women

According to postcolonial feminist and educator Chandra Mohanty (2003), education is often assumed to be a site of harmony. In this harmonious arena, the history and cultures of marginalized peoples are often considered as "legitimate objects to study or discuss" (Mohanty, 2003, p. 203). Although this may influence the way in which students think about and perceive marginalized people, it may only cause attitudinal or interpersonal changes while maintaining the harmony of an educational site. When education contributes to "racial management under the name of harmony" (Mohanty, 2003, p. 204), education becomes a site of colonization.

The harmonious inclusion of cultures, which is oblivious to power hierarchy, is based on the depoliticized and de-historicized idea of culture, against which critical multicultural and global

art education scholars have cautioned. Instead of an un-situated understanding of cultures, Mohanty (2003) suggests that we "take seriously the different logics of cultures, as they are located within asymmetrical power relations" (p. 204). In line with Davenport (2000) and Rizvi (2007), Mohanty's suggestion to politicize and historicize cultures in education indicates that the contextual understanding of cultures in relation to power can be a postcolonial attempt to decolonize educational practices.

In an effort to decolonize educational practices, Mohanty (2003) suggests the politicization of the experience of both marginalized and privileged people. A relational understanding of people necessitates inquiries regarding the center and margin, colonizer and colonized, as well as the West and non-West, which in turn can deconstruct hierarchy in Western knowledge and history. When students' knowledge is challenged and transformed into something that is counterhegemonic and oppositional, a postcolonial approach becomes actualized in education (Mohanty, 2003). Instead of a harmonious site, education therefore becomes a site of political struggle and transformation toward a more equitable society.

In this regard, I consider the experience of comfort women as lived culture while reflecting on statues dedicated to them as the visual rendition of lived culture. By using Mohanty's contextual understanding of cultures as a theoretical framework, I evaluate the global mobilization of comfort women statues within the power discourse as a postcolonial attempt toward globalization. Methodologically, I have analyzed photography and video recordings of the statues, interviews from newspaper articles, and my visit to the statues (one in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul and another in Atlanta).

In order to apply Mohanty's contextual understanding of cultures to statues dedicated to comfort women, I use feminist philosopher Uma Narayan's (1997) means of dislocating cultures as a methodology. Narayan (1997) comments how "idealized pictures of different cultures and cultural values" (p. 15) do not present actual institutional practices and social life. Locating cultures outside the context in which they seem to belong is necessary to question the cultural authenticity and hierarchy associated with West and non-West relations. Narayan's specific means to dislocate cultures requires

analyzing ways in which related issues have been shaped in Western national contexts; second, examining the life these issues have in non-Western national contexts that can provide a variety of contextual information; and third, the decontextualization and recontextualization that accompanies these issues on their travels across national borders. (Narayan, 1997, p. 104)

By applying Mohanty's concept of the relational understanding of cultures and Narayan's feminist methodology to dislocate cultures, first, I locate the statues in a Western context and a domestic context, respectively. I then dislocate the statues from both contexts in order to de- and re-contextualize them in a global context, in a process that I term "dis/locating" comfort women statues. Dis/locating comfort women statues as non-Western cultural mobilizations may allow the cultures involved in the issue of comfort women to be contextually politicized and historicized in a global context. In doing so, the ongoing colonial legacies embedded in Western globalization may be confronted (Grosfoguel, 2011).

## **Two Comfort Women Statues in the US**

The history of the Japanese occupation of Asian countries and comfort women during WWII makes the installation of comfort women statues welcomed in Asian countries. However, the political tension increases when these statues are erected in the U.S. This is because the denial of the Japanese government and revisionists of the forceful recruitment of comfort women deflect Western attention from the issue (Wingfield-Hayes, 2015). Also, the complex historical and political relationship between the U.S. and Japan due to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor (1941), the surrender of Japan after the U.S.'s atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945), and the U.S.'s post-war economic aid to Japan has hindered any formal investigation by the U.S. into the history of comfort women (Kim-Gibson, 1998). Among the statues erected in the U.S., I introduce two particular statues that were recently constructed-one in Atlanta, Georgia, and another in San Francisco, California.

#### Atlanta, Georgia

The Atlanta Comfort Women Memorial Task Force (Task Force), a civic and non-profit organization formed by the Korean-American community, has led the memorial effort in Atlanta. They collaborated with the city council of Brookhaven, about 10 miles from Atlanta, to erect a statue at Blackburn Park in 2017 (S. Kim, 2017). A former comfort woman, Il-chul Kang, known for her painting, *Girls on Fire*, depicting the IJA's murder of comfort women following the end of WWII, tearfully attended the unveiling ceremony (S. Kim, 2017).<sup>1</sup>

Like most other cases, the Korean-American community commissioned this statue and reproduced the standard design by sculptors Seo-gyeong Kim and Woon-sung Kim. Thus, my effort to dis/locate the cultures surrounding this statue tends to be general and applicable to many other cases in the U.S. I first examine how similar issues concerning comfort women have been shaped in a Western context. According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey in the U.S., among 100 women and 100 men, 20 women experience completed or attempted rape and 7 men are coerced to penetrate someone as a form of completed or attempted rape, and 44 women and 25 men have experienced some form of contact sexual violence in their lifetime (Smith et al., 2018). This shows that "sexual violence victims are mainly women and a more extensive definition of sexual violence addresses a wider range of victims" (Kwon, 2017b, p. 23). Despite the prevalence of sexual violence, the "dismissive culture toward sexual violence in the U.S. makes sexual violence a highly secretive, private, and shameful experience" (Kwon, 2017b, p. 16). This raises the question of whether colonial sexual violence is different from contemporary sexual violence in the U.S. However, when considering the U.S.'s ongoing colonial influence over American Indian Nations (Ballengee-Morris, 2010) along with the sexual violence committed against American Indian women by white men throughout history (Smith, 2005), sexual violence is not exclusive to former colonies or Third World countries.

Secondly, I examine the cultures relating to comfort women through Confucian gender values in the South Korean national context. During the postcolonial era since 1945, Confucian gender values first led to former comfort women being regarded as ashamed prostitutes but later as nationalist heroines who sacrificed their bodies for the nation. Such patriotic accounts of comfort women are not uncommon in their testimony (Kim-Gibson, 1998). While the logic behind these labels (prostitutes, national heroines) is problematic, Confucian gender values may not be unique to formerly colonized or Third World countries. Instead, the female purity narrative is also

implicated in Western cultural practices in how female sexuality is considered taboo or obscene (Wanzo, 2018). The resemblance between these two cultures may complicate the exclusivity of non-Western cultures while questioning the cultural hierarchy between the West and non-West.

Lastly, I de-contextualize and re-contextualize the issue of comfort women through this statue in a global context. As seen from former comfort woman Il-chul Kang attending its unveiling ceremony, transnational solidarity is formed between non-profit comfort women organizations in Western and non-Western countries (Herr, 2016). The advent of such global solidarity symbolizes non-West-oriented knowledge and movement, which designates the former colony as the "self," not the "other." Additionally, the fact that Brookhaven was the first city to join *We're Not Buying*, a national initiative to end sex trafficking, forms a global connection between these cultures (Bagby, 2017). Dis/locating the cultures revolving around comfort women through this statue dismantles the hierarchy between cultures by revealing how colonialism is rooted in both the issue of comfort women and contemporary sexual violence in the U.S. A contextual understanding of cultures through this dis/located statue can therefore contribute to a non-Western-oriented cultural mobilization.



*Figure 3. Whyte, S. (2017). Comfort women memorial [Sculpture]. San Francisco, CA: The city of San Francisco. Courtesy of Mobile Studio. Reproduced with permission.* 

## San Francisco, California

The second statue is the work of sculptor Steven Whyte, erected on September 2017 in St. Mary's Square Park near Chinatown in San Francisco. While primarily Korean-American communities have led the campaigns for these memorial statues, in this case, two retired Chinese-American judges, Lillian Sing and Julie Tang, founded the Comfort Women Justice Coalition (CWJC). With then-Mayor Edwin M. Lee's approval, this unique statue became a municipal memorial in San Francisco (CWJC, n.d.). Unlike other identical statues, this statue depicts three girls—representing Korea, China, and the Philippines—holding hands on top of a cylinder while Haksun Kim, the first Korean comfort woman to publicly testify, watches them (Kang, 2017; see Figure 3).

Unlike most of the other statues, this statue was commissioned by a multi-ethnic and transnational organization for its unique design; thus, my attempt to dis/locate comfort women through this statue addresses how globalization is involved. I first investigate how the issue of comfort women has been shaped relating to globalization in a Western context. The striking visibility of young peasant girls in the statue may engender a distorted understanding of colonized bodies. However, the posture of the women holding hands stands for the active solidarity between former colonies within and beyond the U.S. national context. As Tang, the co-founder of the CWJC, commented, this statue is a symbol of "human rights and a global women's issue to fight against sexual violence" (Sernoffsky, 2017, para. 9). Thus, the issue at stake is not only about comfort women, but also the global solidarity regarding the women and sexual violence.

The global solidarity formed in the West questions the roles of a South Korean-based global solidarity. Thus, I analyze the multiple consequences engendered by a South Korean-based global solidarity for comfort women. Initially, the debate of whether or not to accept private Japanese compensation caused dissension between the nationalistic Korean Council and its transnational solidarity with other Asian countries. This dissension within a global solidarity, which hindered the possibility for significant reconciliation, also highlights how including only women's voices against oppression may not be sufficient to enable reconciliation (Herr, 2016). However, the recent increase in efforts by the Korean Council to extend their advocacy to include the rape of Vietnamese women by Korean soldiers during the Vietnam War alongside global cases of wartime sexual violence seems to be less nationalistic and thus more cognizant of their global relations.

Lastly, the enhanced visibility of this comfort women statue and its global solidarity may form a viewpoint that empowers former comfort women as survivors and activists. However, that may also make it difficult to generate varying perspectives about comfort women. In order to de- and re-contextualize the issue of comfort women, I situate it apart from the global solidarities that originated in Western and non-Western contexts by placing it in a wider global context. More specifically, nationalism in many former colonies has shaped their subject positions as "colonized" with others as "colonizers." When applying this binary to the statue in San Francisco, the absence of Japan indicates both Japan's disregard to be fully accountable for the issue as well as its stance as a perpetrator. However, when the Japanese are considered only as colonizers, their history of oppression where "more than 110,000 of Japanese ancestry were forced into internment camps in the U.S." is not highlighted (Fortin, 2017, para. 10). The ambiguity of the binary in this case uncovers how the subject positions of "colonizer" versus "colonized" and "other" versus "self" can be reinforced by global solidarity. Nevertheless, these subject positions should not be definite, but rather may need to be changeable and fluctuate depending on the context.

Dis/locating comfort women through the statue in Atlanta disrupts the hierarchy between cultures by revealing how colonialism is incorporated in both cultures' incidence of sexual violence. Moreover, dis/locating comfort women through the statue in San Francisco denotes the ongoing efforts of a global solidarity toward reconciliation, but also the necessity of a contextual understanding of subject positions affected by this global solidarity. Since my attempt to dis/locate the cultures of comfort women through these statues politicizes and historicizes the issue of comfort women in relation to power discourses in a global context, my analysis itself may become a form of anti-colonial and counterhegemonic globalization.

## **Conclusions and Implications for Global Art Education**

Through the use of Mohanty's theoretical lens and Narayan's feminist methodology, I have analyzed how some comfort women statues in the U.S. can expose cultural hierarchy, contest globalization, and precipitate non-Western cultural mobilization and globalization. In this section, I propose a conceptual understanding and practical application of the statues as a critical approach to global art education.

As for the conceptual discussion, when it comes to postcolonial art that embodies different cultures, it is necessary to dis/locate cultures in relation to the power discourse. The general understanding of Western and non-Western cultures is totalized, but only advantages a few privileged groups in the West (Narayan, 1997). For example, non-Western cultures are seen as less civilized and unequal, while Western cultural values are seen as "liberty, equity, and superiority without unveiling their foundations as colonization and slavery" (Narayan, 1997, p. 15). Similar to how the dis/location of comfort women statues leads to in-depth discussions of cultural hierarchy and contesting globalization, postcolonial art needs to be contextually analyzed in Western, non-Western, and global contexts in relation to power dynamics. For example, comfort women statues and other postcolonial art should not be reduced to "South Korean," "Asian," or "Confucian" art. Instead, they need to be situated within the self/other and center/margin binaries to understand the implicated cultural and power hierarchies, all of which persist in the multiple forms of violence and uncritical education in the U.S. Since these statues and other postcolonial art as cultural mobilization attest to the intricate power relations in a global context, teaching about them can serve as a postcolonial effort to promote critical global education.

As for practical applications, art teachers can include comfort women statues as a form of memorial art in their curricula. In the field of art education, memorial art and its pedagogical implications have been discussed through the analysis of monuments (Blandy, 2008; Buffington, 2017; Chanda & Basinger, 2000) and non-monumental art as a memorial site (Darts, Tavin, Sweeny & Derby, 2008). In these discussions, art educators' emphasis on the role of memorial art in attending to untold history and voices seems to be the case for comfort women statues. In the context of appreciating and criticizing comfort women statues as memorial art, a contextual approach can enable students to appreciate the multi-layered symbols used in art in a global context. For example, discussion of how the statues depict the age, gender, and posture of comfort women (i.e., whether passive statues are the manifestation of a purity narrative or whether the statues' association with sexual violence is necessary) and how those symbols would be different in terms of similar cases in the U.S. may help disrupt the hierarchy between the West and non-West. Also, the question of whether these statues should be identical or site-specific can engender discussion on standardized versus multifaceted approaches toward globalization through art. The replication of identical statues around the world may limit the diversity of approaches to globalization as it does not consider specific issues in local sites and the power discourses involved in these issues.

As an extension of art appreciation, new statues can be designed or created. This suggestion is inspired by how the CWJC called for a site-specific statue design in San Francisco (see Figure 4) and how a South Korean undergraduate student named Se-jin Kim intimately painted the relationship of the sites to comfort women statues (see Figure 5).



Figure 4. Comfort Women Justice Coalition. (n.d.). The making of the monument [Captured image from the webpage]. San Francisco, CA: Comfort Women Justice Coalition. Retrieved from <u>http://remembercomfortwomen.org/the-making-of-the-monument/</u>

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*Figure 5. Kim, S. (2017). The statue of peace in Jecheon, North Chungcheong Province, South Korea [Painting]. Watercolor on paper, 10.7" x15.5". Copyright 2017 by Se-jin Kim. Reproduced with permission.* 

Similarly, students can propose works based on their discussions about the multi-layered symbols of memorial art, the relationship between local sites, relevant issues and their power discourses, and globalization (i.e., Brookhaven advocating against sex trafficking, the Center for Civil and Human Rights' refusal to erect a statue in Atlanta, Asian countries depicted in the San Francisco statue and their contribution to the global perspective on the issue of comfort women, and possible cultural binaries that these statues may produce). When students articulate their ideas and create their own visual symbols as diverse means to approach globalization, they can contribute to anti-colonial and counterhegemonic forms of globalization.

Living in a globalized world, one of the many roles expected and encouraged of art educators is to become a leader of global art education. Ballengee-Morris (2010) suggests it is necessary to know "when and how to mediate and appreciate justice and power" (p. 280) in relation to globalization instead of only including various cultures and their artworks. When the discourse of power is removed from the understanding of cultures, it is "non-cultural, which is another form of culturecide" (Ballengee-Morris, 2002, p. 241). This suggests that the un-situated and hegemonic Western globalization can be another form of colonialism. In this paper, by dis/locating the cultures revolving around comfort women statues, I have examined how these statues, as cultural mobilizations, can interfere with cultural hierarchy and contest globalization and thereby contribute to a non-Western and counterhegemonic globalization of knowledge and aesthetics. When art teachers utilize this approach by teaching postcolonial art with a focus on its historical, political, and cultural contestation, their teaching can be a postcolonial effort to promote global art education.

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# Endnotes

1 In collaboration with the Task Force, the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta initially announced the erection of a statue in spring 2017. However, after the consequent objection from the Japanese consulate general, the center overturned its initial decision (Constante, 2017). This seems to contradict the museum's pride in being "one of the few places in the world educating visitors on the bridge between the American Civil Rights Movement and contemporary struggles for Human Rights around the world" (Center for Civil and Human Rights, n.d.).

By visiting the site, I also learned that the statue had been relocated from Blackburn Park II, a newly built residential neighborhood, to Blackburn Park. Although the current site seems to be more accessible, "the relocation followed threats of lawsuits by Blackburn Park II residents over a lack of input in the memorial's placement" (Bagby, 2018, para. 4). The Task Force's struggles with the installation reflect the multifaceted regional, national, and global conflicts involved.



# An Indigenous Reframing of Art Education Historical Research: Acknowledging Native American Spiritual Values

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**Abstract:** Including historical art education curricula for Native American students in art education history has potential for assisting decolonizing efforts and expanding art education historiography with new insights. The 1934 art education curriculum framework titled "Art for the Schools of the Southwest: An Outline for the Public and Indian Schools," written by Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, is an example of what the author calls salvage education, the underlying concept of which was to rescue Native American cultures. This is compared to efforts of early art educators Reel and Dunn to "save and improve" Indian art through instruction to Native American students. These ideas are intertwined with the history of suppression of Native American religions. Colton's curriculum has not been previously examined in the field of art education history. This article continues to decolonize art education historiography through Indigenous reframing, particularly in reference to Native American spirituality.

Keywords: Native American, Indigenous reframing, spirituality, Mary- Russell Ferrell Colton, art education history

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In June of 2017, I participated in the Cherokee ceremony known as Going to Water. I stepped into the cool creek water in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. My feet hurt from the sharp stones in the creek bed. Led by Cherokee traditionalists, I stumbled my way through the motions as I prayed and symbolically washed away negative thoughts and feelings.

The history of art education has been repeatedly critiqued for lack of inclusion of diverse cultural voices (Acuff, 2013; Acuff, Hirak, & Nangah, 2012; Bey, 2011; Bolin, Blandy, & Congdon, 2000; Slivka, 2011). Early art education historians' primary task was to investigate information and corroborate the actions of prominent people in the field of the past (Daichendt, Funk, Holt, & Kantawala, 2013). This was in sync with other early historians' focus on the elite and powerful and events recorded by them (Burke, 2001). However, views on analyzing history have broadened since then. Influenced by postmodern thought, some twenty-first century historians of art education are using new frameworks for examining histories of art education. One such framework is Indigenous reframing.

# **Indigenous Reframing**

In Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (1999) groundbreaking treatise *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, she states that Indigenous researchers are engaged in exploring themes such as cultural survival, self-determination, healing, restoration, and social practices through a diverse array of projects. In tune with Smith's (1999) categorization of Indigenous research studies, I found that for this study, I needed to concentrate on Smith's concept of *Indigenous reframing*. *Indigenous* centers on politics of Indigenous identity and Indigenous cultural action. *Reframing* occurs within the ways Indigenous people themselves write or engage with theories or accounts of what it means to be Indigenous. *Indigenous reframing*, therefore, is an effort to take greater control over the ways that Indigenous issues are discussed and conducted (Smith, 1999). I interpret the term *Indigenous reframing* as infusing Native knowledge and perspectives, including spirituality, into research about Native peoples.

Central principles of Native identity are multidimensional, can include notions of land, family, language, and spirituality, and are complex in that sacred and secular interests are often intertwined (Ballengee Morris & Staikidis, 2017; Mithlo, 2012). Because Native artists may work on several levels within one piece of work, including conceptual, realistic, and spiritual, it makes sense to view their works on these levels (Ballengee Morris & Staikidis, 2017). The distinction between secular and ceremonial objects is hard to make because the sacred/secular dichotomy is a Western imposition of thought on Native forms of thinking (Berlo & Phillips, 1998).

However, there is no one way of creating in Indian Country. I personally know a Native artist who paints realistically in oils and prays over her works, and of Native artists who create traditional art forms but do not invoke higher power in the creative process. A multidimensional world view, however, can mean that artistic creation involves the use of materials in which spiritual power resides, including wood, stone, and pigments. When a person transforms these power-filled materials for another purpose, they are engaging in a relationship of reciprocity with these powers, which can make it impossible to divide the sacred and the secular (Berlo & Phillips, 1998).

When the ceremony is finished, you are supposed to walk away from the running water without looking back. As I turned in the water and walked to the bank of the creek, I felt lighter in spirit. However, because of the interruption of the boarding school experience in my family, it was a shame that I had not been able to share this experience with them. My father had been in the Murrow Indian Orphanage from the age of five. He attended Bacone Indian School in his younger years and Chilocco Indian Boarding School for middle school and high school. A quiet man, he rarely talked about his youth, and when he did, it was with bitterness at his educational and life experiences at these institutions. He had been separated from his Cherokee culture and family, and therefore was not able to pass on many traditional Cherokee teachings to his children. This sorrow over the loss of culture and the mistreatment of family members is deep within me. It will take more than one immersion in cleansing waters to ease this generational trauma.

I feel a personal obligation to assist in the reframing efforts of Indigenous people and also address my obligations to my family and larger Native community who continue to suffer the effects of boarding school experiences. I utilize mainstream historical research methods as a background for my presumption that some Native American people would like to practice spiritual ceremonies in the creation of art forms, and that these practices have historically been severely limited in the United States by education and Indian policy.

In a brief overview of four art education efforts from 1901 to 1937, I include government policy concerning education of Native students and the practice of Native religions. I attempt to bring a narrative of the past that has been largely overlooked in art education history to light through an Indigenous lens that emphasizes the importance of spirituality in the creation and use of Native art forms.

Three of these art education efforts were selected due to their significant historical influence on the art education of Native American students. One curriculum, written by Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton and published in 1934, has not been examined in historical art education literature previously. As little has been written about historical art education curricula in the Southwest, I am choosing to bring Colton's work to the attention of the field now.

## Indian Policy Focused on Native Religions and Education of Native Students

The United States has a history of overt and covert policies designed to destroy or impede the practice of Native religions and their intertwining with Native art forms. American society's ignorance of and animosity toward Native religions is longstanding and multilayered. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) from its inception turned to Anglo churches for administrative, personnel, and financial support in their efforts to acculturate Native people (O'Brien, 1995). Shared assumptions that Christianity and civilization coexisted helped forge strong alliances between Christian missionaries and federal officials. They thought that conversion of Native Americans to Christianity and civilization would happen simultaneously (Heise, 2017). In 1819, the U.S. government established the "Civilization Fund" to fund Christian missionary schools within Indian Territory. This was before the majority of the western territories became states and

before much of the public school system that we know was created. The goals of the missionary boarding schools focused on civilizing and Christianizing Native students as much as their education (Noel, 2002).

In 1865, a Congressional Committee recommended the creation of boarding schools away from Indian communities (Noel, 2002). These residential schools were designed to take Native children from their families and villages, train them for marginal participation in the labor market, and turn them into industrious Christian citizens (Cervera, 2014; Lentis, 2017).

When children arrived at the boarding schools, they faced de-Indianizing treatment (Noel, 2002). Boys' long hair was cut, and traditional clothing of all genders was often burned (Adams, 1995). Richard H. Pratt, who established the first off-reservation boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, insisted that the best way to civilize the Indian was to "immerse him in civilization and keep him there until well soaked" (Utley, 1964, xxi). Indian boarding schools were fundamental to the process of cultural genocide against Native people and were designed to physically, ideologically, and emotionally remove Indian children from their families, homes, and tribal affiliations. Students were not allowed to express themselves culturally, artistically, spiritually, or linguistically in any way that was considered to be Indian (Archluleta, Child, & Lomawaima, 2000). In many cases, children were punished severely for any act or comment that would associate them with their ethnic identity. The academic training was substandard; children attended school less than half the day and spent the larger half laboring to maintain the facilities and grounds, often providing much of the necessary income needed to support the schools (Adams, 1995; DeJong, 1993; Lomawaima, 1994; Marker, 2000). As part of the training thought necessary to create willing workers, the schools were organized into military units with students participating in marching drills, militaristic rules, harsh discipline, and compulsory attendance (Adams, 1995; DeJong, 1993; Lomawaima, 1994; Noel, 2002).

The schools did not entirely meet their stated goals of saving Indian children from their cultural practices; Indians continued their traditions and religions in secret, often against the law. Interior Secretary Henry Teller promulgated the Code of Indian Offenses in 1883, which squarely attacked Native religions, banning traditional dances, healing rites, and other rituals (Heise, 2017). This did not completely stop Native people from practicing their traditions and religious rites, so in 1892 Thomas Morgan, Commissioner of the BIA, directed the Indian Courts of Federal Offenses to enforce a series of laws outlawing religious practices, including dances and ceremonies by medicine men, among other cultural expressions. Violators were punishable by imprisonment or denial of rations (O'Brien, 1995).

### Course of Study for Indian Education: Estelle Reel

It was only eight years later that Estelle Reel designed a uniform course of study in 1901 that was indicative of Indian policy at the time. Reel attempted to revive basket weaving among Indians as a way to salvage what was considered a dying art and bring much needed income to Native communities; she recommended the same rationale and treatment for weaving, pottery, and beadwork (Slivka, 2011). Reel thought that the guidance of an "intelligent white teacher" (Reel, 1901, p. 57) was needed to make decisions regarding authenticity and the use of modern designs for the market. The idea that a Native teacher would be used was not considered.

Reel saw herself as someone who permitted Indian students this small area of cultural expression – an expert on Indian art and the reasons behind making it. She did not see herself as a colonizer who divorced Native art forms from their emic, internal meanings for Native people. Because the teaching of Native art forms in Indian schools was emptied of their intrinsic epistemologies, the use of Native art forms in schools was an attempt to colonize the consciousness of the students and make them fit into dominant society (Lentis, 2017). If the art forms were dying, Indian schools' assimilation practices had caused this disruption of intergenerational teachings, including the prayers and ceremonies as well as the construction and use of traditional objects.

However, children and adults resisted assimilation in hundreds of creative and subtle ways, finding private corners away from Anglo surveillance to affirm their identity, epistemology, cosmology, and history (Marker, 2000). Dances and ceremonies were held sub-rosa, which in turn prompted BIA Commissioner Charles H. Burke to issue Circular 1665 in 1921, amended in 1923, urging the suppression of Native dance and ceremony (Heise, 2017). These acts of resistance comprised an early form of Indigenous reframing.

## Course of Study: The Department of the Interior

In 1922 the Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs issued another uniform course of study for Indian schools; the mention of using Indian teachers for traditional craft education was not included. Discussion of "native industries" was limited to two short paragraphs, mentioning that "Indian methods of hand weaving" should be used for seat work instead of paper weaving.<sup>1</sup> This course of study recommended that native industries be developed for economic gain or as a way of keeping Native people busy "during odd moments of time" (Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, 1922, p. 8). Instead of recommending courses of study in traditional crafts, a plan for art training was now in place. The curriculum included drawing, imaginative drawing, paper cutting, pasting, clay-modeling, weaving, and picture study, among other activities, with a decided focus on European art and American themes. The rationale was not salvaging dying Native art forms, as it had been earlier, but instead to primarily develop manual dexterity in preparation for vocational courses.

Art was believed to train the head and the hand, instilling a sense of dominant society aesthetics and teaching order, industriousness, and self-sufficiency (Lentis, 2017). By refocusing art education away from traditional Native arts, Indian education policymakers possibly hoped to circumvent any sub-rosa activity on students' parts of passing on traditional worldviews and values to one another.

# The Effects of the Meriam Report

*The Problem of Indian Administration* of 1928 (commonly called the Meriam Report) came about from pressures from Indian advocacy groups (Watras, 2004).<sup>2</sup> It stated that Native Americans endured harsh conditions, and the report blamed the federal government for these abuses (Watras, 2004). The education section of the report stated unequivocally that the U.S. Department of the Interior, which oversaw Indian policy, had to change its prevailing policy of education and adopt a more progressive view that children should be raised within the natural settings of home and family life. The Meriam Report stated that the education branch should adopt a more modern understanding of human growth and development; thus, education should focus upon activities that the child was familiar with at home (Adams, 1995). Therefore, the report recommended the

establishment of more day schools. This brought about a reduction in the number of boarding schools, an increase in day schools, and greater numbers of Indian students enrolled in public schools, which was about 48,000 by the end of 1932 (Watras, 2004).

The Meriam Report did note that some traditional arts instruction happened in the Indian schools, mostly in the Southwest, where the production of rugs and pottery and the drawing and painting of traditional designs was encouraged by teachers. However, they found such instruction scattered and sustained by a few individuals and not the result of any educational policy (McLerran, 2009).

The Meriam Report found that traditional handcrafts flourished in places where Native religions were strongest, but these places were few (McLerran, 2009). Traditional religious practices and ceremony had waned due to the vigorous efforts of the government and missionaries. Consequently, the creation of the arts interconnected with these practices had also decreased. Early Christian reformers had justified the suppression of traditional arts because traditional spiritual practices were important in the production of Native arts, which they thought should be discouraged.

After the Meriam report, changes in policy did allow more Native cultural influences in schools; however, only those cultural aspects perceived as nonthreatening, such as art forms unconnected from their ceremonial or spiritual aspects, would be incorporated into school life (Cervera, 2014).

# The Indian New Deal

In January 1934, John Collier (then U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs and long-time Indian advocate) began a campaign to obtain passage of the Indian Reorganization Act, also known as the Wheeler- Howard Act. This act, which became the basis of what was called the Indian New Deal, was signed into effect in June 1934 and profoundly changed Indian policy. The act ended a system of individual allotment of Indian lands, and it gave Native Americans the right to organize into self-governing bodies. The original proposal called for appropriation of funds for schools to teach Indian children and adults about Indian tribal cultures as well as traditional arts and crafts; however, the final act only provided funds for vocational education. Collier brought anthropologists into the U.S. Office of Indian Affairs beginning in 1935 to assist in helping American Indians understand and profit from the Indian Reorganization Act. Additionally, the anthropologists helped White teachers in the Indian schools to better understand the cultures of their students (Watras, 2004). Although Commissioner Collier ended the BIA's overt repressive policies, mainstream society's failure to understand the tenets and needs of Native religious practices caused persecution to persist (O'Brien, 1995).

The Johnson-O'Malley Act, also passed in 1934, provided additional educational assistance to Native Americans. It also provided other social reforms and was central to the drastic reduction of the number of boarding schools and the total elimination of boarding school education for younger Indian children (McLerran, 2009). Although the Meriam Report, Indian Reorganization Act, and Johnson-O'Malley Act prescribed changes to Indian policy and education, there were detractors, and things were slow to change.

In the late 1940s, policy focused on termination, which heralded a return to efforts to end the separate status of Native Americans by assimilating them into mainstream society (Watras, 2004). After World War II, Indian education shifted more to public schools. Efforts of Native American activists in the 1960s and beyond have resulted in several previous boarding and day schools now being tribally controlled, and Haskell (a former BIA boarding school) is now Haskell Indian Nations University (Lomawaima, 1994). Actions of Indian activists and their allies also resulted in the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedoms Act in 1978. This act, and its amendment, provides protection for Native Americans to believe, express, and exercise their traditional religions through ceremonials and traditional rites.

### **Dorothy Dunn**

From 1932 to 1937, Dunn taught painting and drawing to Native students at the Santa Fe Indian School. Hundreds of artists, authors, anthropologists, tourists, tour promoters, arts patrons, and social activists arrived in the Taos and Santa Fe areas after World War I, bringing with them a primitivist view of Indigenous art. Enchanted by the "primitive" way of life of Native peoples, these individuals looked to Native American cultures as a source of societal and spiritual renewal (McLerran, 2009). Many began promoting Native American arts as a way to salvage a supposedly dying Indian culture and bring much needed money into Native communities (Eldridge, 2001). Dunn also promoted the primitivist idea that Indian art needed to be preserved so it could serve as a basis for a new American aesthetic (Eldridge, 2001). For a thirty-year period beginning in 1919, Pedro DeLemos echoed this aim in his editorial work and writings in the publication of *School Arts Magazine* (White, 2001).

Dunn's art teaching, exhibition of her students' works, and publications helped to codify ideas about Native American identity as well as Native American painting and its authenticity for both Native peoples and non-Natives (Eldridge, 2001). She did not make room for her students' views on spirituality, ceremony, or prayer, as she seemed to see these important aspects of Native American life as traditions of the past and not part of the creation of new art forms. However, she was not the only educator working with Native students at that time.

### **Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton**

Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, with her husband Harold Colton, was instrumental in creating the Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA). She taught art at Flagstaff High School from 1928 to 1931, and also taught night classes for adults at the museum. Colton was involved in several projects to promote Native American art and art education. These included the Hopi Craftsman Exhibit, the Junior Art Show and other art shows for students, a travelling exhibit of Hopi and Navajo art titled *Craftsmen of the Painted Desert*, which was sent to schools and museums nationally, and "treasure chests" that were smaller versions for the public and Indian schools in Arizona (Eaton, 1994). Additionally, her treatise *Art for the Schools of the Southwest: An Outline for the Public and Indian Schools* was published by the MNA in 1934 (Colton, 1934).<sup>3</sup> Colton believed that Hopi arts were the least valued of the Pueblo groups and wanted to use MNA resources to "save and improve" Hopi art forms and encourage innovation in traditional Hopi designs with new uses (Eaton, 1994). Like Dunn and Reel, Colton took the position that there was a "right" way for Native American arts to be taught (Eaton, 1994).

By 1912, the number of Native children in public schools was larger than in government schools; by 1930, there were 707 Indian schools nationally in 24 states, both boarding and day schools

(Noel, 2002). Colton developed the *Outline* at the request of the Indian Service for a curriculum for arts and crafts that could be used by teachers at the Indian day schools, and also in reply to requests from teachers at rural county schools for the same. A brief discussion of the role of museums and Indian traders also appears in Colton's *Outline*, but her main focus was teaching general art education to all students, including minorities, with a special emphasis on teaching traditional arts to Hopi and Navajo children.

Colton sympathized with the difficulties of teachers in small schools. She stated that one or two teachers did all the work; their training had probably been limited to a general course in teaching primary art, which they found difficult to teach and usually lacked adequate texts, time, or funds. She noted that students in the area included those of Mexican, southern European, Chinese, and African American backgrounds. Instead of seeing art as only for majority students, she advocated for art training for students from all cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. She wanted teachers to use her framework (reprinted from Lemos, 1933) as a guide on which to build art instruction for all students.

However, Colton saw these children as stereotypically "precocious in the handicrafts" and "beyond the average artistic ability" (Colton, 1934, p. 6). In her framework for teaching art and crafts, she thought that some teachers might think the work too advanced for their students, but felt that they were dealing with "unusual" conditions in the Southwest, such as the "many peoples" she mentions (Colton, 1934, p. 7). Even today, the stereotypes that "all Indians are artistic" and that "Mexicans are good with their hands" still persist.<sup>4</sup>

Colton went on to address the "special problems presented by the Indian schools" (Colton, 1934, p. 19). She was well aware of the current changes in policy and varying attitudes towards Indians, and she observed that "very slowly the clumsy and antiquated machine that has been the Indian Bureau is being overhauled and brought up to date" (Colton, 1934, p. 19). This remark is indicative of her disdain for previous Indian policy and the difficulty faced by reformers. Colton stated that many Indian schools were making serious efforts to encourage Native art forms, but thought that the efforts were sporadic and unorganized, and therefore ineffectual (Colton, 1934).

In her discussion on the application and teaching of Indian art, Colton advocated that Native art should be taught by Native teachers and focused on the Hopi and Navajo peoples. This in and of itself was a radical notion for the time. However, Colton was a romantic primitivist, like many artists and Indian advocates of her time. Colton argued that Indian art should remain "pure" and that modern methods of pottery firing should not be introduced, because the "charm of a native art lies in its contrast to modern mechanical methods and its wonderful primitive invention and utilization of the natural materials at hand" (Colton, 1934, p. 22).

Colton demonstrated familiarity with the informal, non-institutional teaching of crafts by elders and the social customs of working together in Hopi life. She suggested building upon these social customs by having boys and girls work with a Native teacher in "working parties," with a male teacher for teaching boys knitting, weaving, and embroidery and a female teacher for educating girls in pottery and basketry. She also discussed the problems that students had in returning to their homes after years in school, "unable to repay social obligations in the form of ceremonial gifts" (Colton, 1934, p. 24) and unable to fulfill their part in producing family income due to lack of training in traditional crafts. Colton was aware of some of the deeper teachings and social meanings of certain art forms for Hopi people and she recommended that the traditional arts be taught from the collection of raw material to completed articles, but she was still not able to bring herself to mention the outright teaching of Native religions or world views.

Indian art education efforts previous to Colton denied the importance of ceremony in the creation and use of traditional art forms. This contributed to the colonization of Native Americans in that their ways of knowing and belief systems were seen as decidedly "less than" those of mainstream America. Colton seemed to grasp the effect this had on Native American students' identities. However, she did not make room for use of ceremony and prayer in the creation of these art forms, thus continuing colonizing effects on Native American life ways.

# Comparing the Educational Aims of Reel, Dunn, and Colton

It was during the progressive era that student-centered, studio-based learning was first integrated into U.S. schools (Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010). Dunn was a proponent of this, as was Colton. Dunn wanted to make sure that her efforts were seen as separate from vocational training, yet Reel wanted her efforts to be seen as a precursor to manual training. As Native Americans were often seen as rural and poverty-stricken by policymakers, the use of manual training was viewed as a way to "improve" their condition (Slivka, 2011). Colton did not see art education necessarily as career training, but instead as an increased ability to "see beauty in the world around you and a facility for creating things with your hands; these things are a great asset and add immensely to our joy in life" (Colton, 1934, p. 3). She believed that art training helped to create a pleasant environment in and around the home. She perceived art education as a basic necessity, not a "cultural frill" (Colton, 1934, p. 4), and promoted art for all instead of a few. Additionally, she saw a need for economic development and preservation of culture in teaching Native crafts to Native students.

Reel, Dunn, and Colton could be considered salvage educators, using schools to save and improve Native art forms. However, they were dualistic in their salvage efforts, as they disparaged outside influences on traditional art forms, yet saw that Native artists could, with "guidance," apply Indian designs to objects of a modern type or manufacture if that was desirable from an economic point of view (Eaton, 1994). None of these art educators of the past saw the need to preserve the many facets of Native spirituality that are often intertwined in the creation of traditional art forms.

The art education work of Dorothy Dunn and her Studio has received attention in Native American art history and the field of art education. Colton's work expands and further illuminates the kinds of ideas that surrounded art education for Native peoples during the early twentieth century. Colton, like Dunn and Reel, very much saw herself as an arbiter of what was acceptable as art students' products. She accepted and did not contest the stereotype that minority students had certain dexterity with crafts. Colton was a salvage educator saving Native craft forms from outside influences through the instruction of children in traditional forms and techniques. She constrained the students to preindustrial forms of production yet did not ensure the continuation of Native American spirituality. Although her intentions were sincere, her *Course of Study* was ethnocentric and written from an Anglo viewpoint.

Although Colton had constructed views on race, tradition, and modernity, she was progressive for her time. She wanted art education to be taught to all children, not just those of Anglo descent; she saw value in non-Anglo students' work and wanted them to value their work and themselves. Colton may not have reinforced Hopi and Navajo cultural traditions, but she did demonstrate cultural sensitivity by advocating art making activities that the students' families valued. By encouraging teachers to enlist community members to help carry out these lessons, it is possible that lessons of resistance were perhaps subtly communicated by the Indian teachers as well as traditional life ways and world views.

## Discussion

### I do not have photographs of the Going to Water ceremony or recordings of the words, as that is considered by Cherokee spiritual leaders to be important information that should only be carefully shared with others who are not Cherokee or who are not approaching ceremony with good intentions.

Native American knowledge and history have long been transmitted from one generation to the next through ceremony, storytelling, and material arts (Neylan, 2003). Archuleta and Strickland (1991) attribute the failure of cultural genocide of Native people to the power of Native art. The determined efforts of Native artists have left legacies that have made possible a preservation and understanding of many cultural traditions (Archuleta & Strickland, 1991).

When Native teachers teach traditional art forms to Native students, they should be able to share the teachings of prayers and ceremonies that go with the gathering of materials, creation, and use of these art forms. Native peoples are not of one mind on when to share such precious knowledge that could have so easily been lost. Some feel that only through continued sub-rosa activities will the knowledge be preserved. Others think that all should be shared so the knowledge is not lost when the knowledge keepers walk on.

I do not advocate the replication or appropriation of traditional or ceremonial art forms or objects in art classrooms. I do believe that the spiritual aspects of such art forms need to be acknowledged in discussion of these works and can be acknowledged without violating some Native religious adherents' belief in the need for privacy.

Colton, like Dunn and Reel, had no room for ritual or the interconnection of art, beliefs, and the natural world. They only saw art in terms of materials that represented a shallow view of culture, not deeper worldviews. I believe they lost an opportunity for cross-cultural learning between Anglos and Natives, and their educational aims can be viewed as less significant for that loss.

# Conclusions

The focus of art education history is slowly expanding to include the histories of art educators and students of color. The importance of works such as *Remembering Others: Making Invisible Histories of Art Education Visible* (Bolin et al., 2000) cannot be overstated. Several art education historians are expanding this discourse to include "other" voices and histories in the literature (Acuff, 2013; Acuff et al., 2012; Ashton, 2010; Eldridge, 2001; Slivka, 2011; Stankiewicz, 2013; White, 2001). Mary Stokrocki (2000) rightly calls for more inclusion of female and Native

American voices, and Peter Smith (1999) calls for attention to be paid to the art education histories of the American Southwest. However, more work is needed as art educators, students, and researchers of color are left with questions about the relationship between what is written about American art education history and what art education has been and which forms it has taken for people of color (Acuff, 2013).

Overall, the history of art education for Native Americans assists in decolonizing the history of art education in several ways. Perhaps most obviously, it emphasizes a largely overlooked group by adding Native Americans' schooling experiences to its narrative. Mainstream histories of art education have reduced much of Native American education to schooling, thus overlooking other forms of education (Cervera, 2014). Although Zastrow (1978) and McCollister (2000) have offered views of Native American community education, there is a great deal that we do not know about Native American traditional education (Cervera, 2014).

In an Indigenous reframing of art education, bringing forth important ways of knowing and being of Native peoples that are part of art making processes will present issues. Issues of what knowledge remains only within Native communities must be addressed if this type of education is to be taught and investigated. What remains private with Native individuals or groups (especially regarding ceremony and medicine) and what can be made public (Eldridge, 2009, Willis, 2001-2002) will have to be discussed and negotiated by individuals within tribal groups and nations and with researchers who keep in mind the relational aspects of doing Indigenous research. Art educators from the past can be studied to understand their contributions and what still needs to be done to decolonize and Indigenize art education theory and practice.

The wallpaper on my home computer is a photograph of the creek in Oklahoma where I last participated in the Going to Water ceremony. It pictures the current as it winds through tall green trees in a public park. As I currently live in Phoenix, there is a dearth of natural running water locally. Instead, through this photo I can mentally Go to Water if not physically. I try to think of all my relationships, including my family, friends, students, ancestors, the natural world, and the peoples in it as I concentrate on leaving negative thoughts and feelings behind. Howa, osda!<sup>5</sup>

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# Endnotes

- 1 Seat work included spool knitting and braiding, rug and mat making, and mechanical drawing for seventh through twelfth grades.
- 2 Lewis Meriam of the Brookings Institute was selected to head the investigation into schools and hospitals (Adams, 1995), and the report is commonly named after him.
- 3 I found this curriculum when browsing the Heard Museum's Billie Jean Baguley Library and Archives in Phoenix, Arizona.
- 4 Over my almost thirty years of teaching art in public elementary schools, I have heard a few of my students express these stereotypes about themselves. I do my best to encourage them to see themselves in a positive light beyond such stereotypes.
- 5 The rough translation of this Cherokee phrase to English is "it is good."



# The Required Globalization: de(s)colonial narratives of art/education in Brazil/World

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**Abstract:** We can identify in the history of Brazilian art/education two foundational narratives: those of Paulo Freire and Ana Mae Barbosa. Both elaborate, from their first productions in attention to the contextual articulations, between "place" and "world," between the local and the global. Their works never obeyed boundaries, geographical or epistemic. It is from this expansive character that we will deal with the global and colonial aspects of the works of these two central references to the fields of education and art/education, also Brazilian. Expansion is both accomplished by the "incurable fracture of exile" (Said, 2001, p. 46) and engendered by the transnational reception of these epistemologies. Freire's narrative will be revisited here by the updated<sup>1</sup> reception from the Black feminist perspective of bell hooks. Ana Mae Barbosa will be examined through the reading of Ramon Cabrera Salort about her Abordagem Triangular. Delineating some of the fundamental concepts of these elaborations, "another globalization" as understood by Milton Santos and the term de(s)colonial will be addressed here not only through the theoretical dimension of Walter Mignolo, Anibal Quijano, and Catherine Walsh, but also in its poetic dimension through the narratives of Grada Kilomba, Rosana Paulino, and Chimamanda Adiche.

### Keywords: de(s)colonial, art, education, Brazil, world

Resumo: Podemos identificar na história da arte/educação brasileira, duas narrativas fundantes, as de Paulo Freire e Ana Mae Barbosa. Ambas elaboradas, desde suas primeiras produções em atenção às articulações contextuais, entre "lugar" e "mundo", entre o local e o global. Seus trabalhos nunca obedeceram fronteiras, geográficas ou epistêmicas. É desse caráter expansivo que trataremos aqui, dos aspectos globais e de(s)coloniais das obras dessas duas referências fulcrais aos campos da educação e da arte/educação, também, brasileiras. Expansão realizada tanto pela "fratura incurável do exílio" (Said, 2001, p. 46) quanto engendrada pela recepção transnacional dessas epistemologias. A narrativa de Freire será revisitada aqui pela recepção atualizada<sup>1</sup> na perspectiva do feminismo negro de bell hooks. A de Ana Mae Barbosa, pela leitura feita por Ramon Cabrera Salort sobre sua abordagem triangular. Delineando alguns dos conceitos fundamentais a essas elaborações, serão abordados aqui "uma outra globalização" como entendida por Milton Santos e o termo de(s)colonial não somente pela dimensão teórica de Walter Mignolo, Aníbal Quijano e Catherine Walsh, mas também em sua dimensão poética pelas narrativas de Grada Kilomba, Rosana Paulino e Chimamanda Adiche.

Palavras-Chave: de(s)colonial, arte, educação, Brasil, mundo

The more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment and generosity necessary for true vision. The more easily, too, does one assess oneself and alien cultures with the same combination of intimacy and distance.

Edward Said, 1979

Quanto mais somos capazes de deixar o nosso lar cultural, mais facilmente somos capazes de julgá-lo e também ao mundo inteiro, com o distanciamento espiritual e a *generosidade* necessários para a verdadeira visão. Mais facilmente, também, avaliamos a nós mesmos e as culturas alheias com a mesma combinação de intimidade e distância.

Identidade [...] obviamente um repositório de experiências coletivas distintas, é finalmente uma construção

Edward Said, 2003

## For Another Required Globalization

O conhecimento de outros lugares, mesmo superficial e incompleto aguça a curiosidade. Ele é certamente um subproduto de uma informação geral enviesada, mas se for ajudado por uma conhecimento sistêmico do acontecer global, autoriza a visão da história como uma situação e um processo, ambos críticos. Depois o problema crucial é: como passar de uma situação crítica a uma visão crítica - e, em seguida, alcançar uma tomada de consciência. Para isso, é fundamental viver a própria existência como algo unitário e verdadeiro, mas também como um paradoxo: obedecer para subsistir e resistir para poder pensar o futuro. Então a existência é produtora de sua própria pedagogia<sup>2</sup>

Milton Santos, 2017

The world, imagined to be truthful, would rather be an imposed fabulation that uses expansion of contexts in order to consecrate a single discourse. The grounds of such fabulations would be information—whose empire is supported by the production of imagery and the imaginary—working for another empire, that of money, which is grounded on the economization and monetization of social and personal life.

In order to evade the belief in the truthfulness of this world, in opposition to the permanence of its misleading perception, we would be required to acknowledge the presence of at least three worlds integrating such a single world, each one of them representing a distinct form of globalization. The first one is the "world as we are led to see it;" the second one is the "world as it is;" and the third one is the "world as it can be." To them, respectively, globalization would be a fable, perversity, and the possibility of "another globalization." Each world is explained by

Milton Santos (2017) in the introduction to his book *For Another Globalization: From Single Thought to Universal Consciousness / Por uma outra globalização: do pensamento único à consciência universal.* 

Among such, "another globalization" is what concerns us due to the complexity related to such a controversial concept and the phenomena implied by it. A lot has been said about "globalization," one of the most challenged, contradictory, and critical facets of contemporary life, as stated by Elizabeth Manley Delacruz (2009).<sup>3</sup> There is no disagreement regarding the need for critically analyzing globalization's impacts time and time again.

From globalization's complex constitution defined by fabulation, perversity, and possibility in the words of Milton Santos (2017), we have opted for the "antidote"<sup>4</sup> for the enunciation of counterparts built by the same bases supporting fabulation and perversity. After all, they comprise the same world created by incongruences, conflicts, violence, intolerance, oppression, resistance, resilience, and acts of corruption and co-optation. A world of cruelties and unfairness is determined by the great god of capital disguised as moralizing discourse. However, despite all that, "the suffering caused by the neoliberal subjectivation" practices engendered by the work of "political imagination" (Dardot & Laval, 2016, p. 9) would render counterparts possible. Thus, in spite of being vulnerable to corruption and co-optation, we may generate essential resistances, even if imaginary ones.

We call counterparts those actions integrating and derived from "another globalization," (pp. 20-21) as stated by Milton Santos (2017), a more human globalization supported by the same material bases that serve the great capital for the structuring of the perverse globalization. Phenomena such as "the huge mix of peoples, races, cultures, tastes, in all continents," (Santos, 2017, pp. 20-21) jointly with the "progresses of information, the 'mixing' of philosophies, to the detriment of the European rationalism" (Santos, 2017, pp. 20-21), would be empirical data that would make the possibility of another globalization evident. To those, we should add "the production of a population gathered in smaller and smaller areas, which allows an even bigger dynamism" (Santos, 2017, pp. 20-21) to such amalgam of people and philosophies, generating "sociodiversity, which is historically much more significant than biodiversity itself" (Santos, 2017, pp. 20-21). These agglomerations, valued as places of dynamic cohabitation, would form the "bases of reconstruction and survival of local relationships" (Santos, 2017, pp. 20-21), affording such communities possibilities to use current technologies. Inserted in this set of evidence, Milton Santos includes the emergence of a "popular culture that makes use of the technical means which were exclusive to the mass culture, allowing it to exert on the latter an actual vengeance or revenge" (Santos, 2017, pp. 20-21). In theoretical dimension, he identifies an empirical universality resulting from the ordinary experience of each one of us, which would render possible the perception and the writing of a "new history" operationalized by "categories of a concrete history" (Santos, 2017, pp. 20-21).

From the agglomeration of racial, cultural, and philosophical multiplicities dynamized by informational technologies, new local understanding of world and place would be engendered "jointly with the elaboration of a new ethos, new ideologies, and new political beliefs, supported on the resurrection of the idea and practice of solidarity" (Santos, 2017, p. 82), allowing critical and propositional discourses even if they are not systematically elaborated. Even the precarity of work could become a potential for critical awareness by motivating "the expansion of free work, ensuring their holders new possibilities of interpretation of the world, the place, and the

respective position of each one in the world and place" (Santos, 2017, p. 81). Also, the operation of media is subject to reconversion for mandatorily having to consider the heterogeneity of its own "object of market" – the people – failing to "represent the common sense imposed by the single thought" (Santos, 2017, p. 81).

The process of acquisition of such a critical and propositive sense would vary according to each individual, being under irregular development. The individual discovery would be a "significant step ahead, even if it may seem arduous to its holder in view of the resistances surrounding such new way of thinking" (Santos, 2017, p. 82). Following such an arduous stage would be the "obtention of a systemic view" (Santos, 2017, p. 82), which would imply the understanding of situations and causes as an articulated and interdependent whole pertaining to a "dynamic network which is structured to the scale of the world and scale of places" (Santos, 2017, p. 82).

From a systemic view, the notions of world and place "meet, interweave and supplement each other" (Santos, 2017, p. 82), allowing one to "understand how each place, but also how each thing, each person, and each relationship depend on the world" (Santos, 2017, p. 82). That would authorize a "critical view of the history we live in" (Santos, 2017, p. 82), which would include a "philosophical appreciation" of our own situation and role in our community, in the nation, and planet (Santos, 2017, p. 82).

The above process would promote the emergence of new economic, social, and political models which, "from a new distribution of goods and services" (Santos, 2017, p. 83), would cause us to "lead a solidary collective life" (Santos, 2017, p. 83). "[S]temming from the scale of place to the scale of planet" (Santos, 2017, p. 83) would ensure a "reformation of the world, by means of different way of performing globalization" (Santos, 2017, p. 83), which becomes immediately possible by the insurgent counterparts to fabulation and perversity.

# **Beautiful Words**

Descolonização. Que palavra bonita. Escrita em imagens. Fotograma a Fotograma [...] A descolonização foi um ato global. Um ato de humanismo para o qual cada indivíduo foi convidado a participar. Todos juntos na mesma sala, mulheres e homens, crianças e adultos de Norte a Sul falam uma linguagem virtual comum [...] Essas imagens em bruto quase desapareceram, fazendo-nos crer que isso nunca existiu. Perguntas?<sup>5</sup>

Grada Kilomba, Diane MacCarthy, 2013

"Decolonization was a global act," said Grada Kilomba in the documentary *Conakry* (2013), made in collaboration by three female artists Filipa César, Grada Kilomba, and Diana McCarty. *Conakry* is a recomposition of fragments of audiovisual works performed as a recovery and exhibition of a history that had almost been lost, a narrative silenced by the greater narrative of power. It is a

movie that narrates a portion of the history of Guinea Bissau through images created by the political imagination of Flora Gomes, Sana Na N'Hada, Josefina Crato, and José Columba Bolama, four young people making cinema, who were motivated the political imagination of Amílcar Cabral (Cunha; Laranjeiro, 2016), one of the leaders of the movement to decolonize continental Africa. Cabral trusted the pedagogical power of images, cinema, and art as narrated by Grada Kilomba (Goethe-Institut São Paulo, 2016). Only by projecting images on the sheets in each village, in each "place" as reported by Milton Santos, would it be possible to motivate the understanding of the effective meaning of the decolonization movement and the learning of the systemic view, acknowledging the structural articulations between place and world.

*Conakry* was created by the articulation of images from Guinea Bissau's Cinema Archive, which had been filmed between 1972 and 1980 by Flora Gomes, Sana Na N'Hada, Josefina Crato and José Columba Bolama. This was a period that comprised both fights for decolonization and the reconstruction of a post-independent place. Such material was collected by Filipa César and Natxo Checa shortly after the coup d'état that occurred in that country on April 12, 2012. For years, it had been kept at the National Institute of Cinema and Audiovisual of Guinea Bissau, founded in 1977.

The most urgent aspect in relation to Grada Kilomba's (Goethe-Institut São Paulo, 2016) work was revealing a silenced history, making histories known. These histories have caused reactive actions to colonial processes supported by violence, genocide, oppression, occupancy, and exploitation, which are still permanent. They are structures defining the current societies that have not yet experimented—or are starting by counterparts—with de(s)colonization processes. The histories are rarely told in institutionalized spaces devoted to the formation of the largest part of the population. Decolonizing the knowledge demystifies it, and we are thus able to take on positioning. *Conakry* is a work that exposes, by revealing the silencing of histories, the dangers of a curtailing single story which is coercive, producing and maintaining stereotypes. The work of these women artists mobilizes the relations between place and world. They distribute histories that reveal the complexity of contexts, which are perversely pacified by the consecration of an unambiguous discourse which makes peoples and their cultures homogeneous in an oppressive way to uphold domains.

The elaboration and imposition of a single history as an instrument of power is poetically expressed by storyteller Chimamanda Adichie describing her narrative of the creation of a "single story." As Chimamanda tells:

So that is how to create a single story, show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become. It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an *Igbo* word, that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world, and it is *nkali*. It's a noun that loosely translates to "to be greater than another." Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of *nkali*. How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power.

Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person. The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti writes that

if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story, and to start with, "secondly." Start the story with the arrows of the Native Americans, and not with the arrival of the British, and you have and entirely different story. Start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you have an entirely different story [...] All of these stories make me who I am. But to insist on only these negative stories is to flatten my experience, and to overlook the many other stories that formed me. The single story creates stereotypes. And the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story [...] The consequence of the single story is this: It robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. (Adiche, 2009; 2010)

For the recovery of such stolen dignity and assertion of the acknowledgement of our humanity, the Brazilian visual artist Rosana Paulino creates her works. Places built in delicacy and bluntness reveal stories that make up the colonial, racist, and sexist structures defining our Brazil-world. Between October and December 2017, at the monument Padrão dos Descobrimentos in Lisbon, Rosana Paulino held the exhibition called "*Atlântico Vermelho*" (*Red Atlantic*). The title refers to the ocean dyed in blood by slave traffic, the connection between Brazil and Africa, revealing all of the harms and scars left by the slavery of people in both countries. The place hosting the exhibition was also highly significant, as caravel sailboats, which were critical to such connections, departed from there. Holding the exhibition at Padrão dos Descobrimentos was almost a closure of a cycle to Rosana Paulino. One of the works integrated in the exhibition of a single history fabulated as natural. The story was also corroborated by the discourse of undeniable truthfulness of scientific evidencing in a book by the artist called *História Natural*.

História Natural com dois pontos de interrogação, por que essa história não é natural, essa história é forjada, a ciência nunca foi neutra, a ciência foi utilizada também como hierarquização e domínio dos povos [...] eu sempre penso essas costuras que ligam as obras sobre o tecido não como costuras, mas como suturas e quando eu coloco também essas suturas à vista, eu coloco aquilo que a sociedade, principalmente a sociedade brasileira escondeu durante tanto tempo que é a discussão sobre o preconceito racial, aquilo que se deu ao avesso, eu trago esse avesso que foi escondido durante tanto tempo. O tecido me permite várias possibilidades de trabalho, uma delas são as transparências, as sobreposições. Nós temos a impressão de uma moça, de uma jovem escravizada ...é um ser humano que está ali, ela teve uma história, ela teve uma família, ela teve gente junto com ela, ela amou, então quando eu coloco um coração por cima, eu consigo ver essa pessoa por baixo, eu devolvo essa humanidade a ela [...] como artista visual só consigo trabalhar com coisas que me incomodam. A minha intenção não é apontar caminhos, mas é levantar questões. O que é esse preconceito? Ele foi construído. Existe uma narrativa aí. Existe toda uma construção. Eu quero que as pessoas olhem, reflitam e pensem. Do onde vem isso? Isso não é natural das pessoas. Racismo, Xenofobia, esse estranhamento do outro não é natural. Não há nada de natural nessa história. Isso não é natural, isso é construído. Então queria que as pessoas pensassem que construção é essa e de onde ela vem (Paulino, 2017).<sup>1</sup>

By overlapping impressions, that of a heart on an enslaved young woman, the artist gives back her dignity and acknowledges her humanity. The overlapping of images represent the overlapping layers of histories that define our humanity. Layers of multiple narratives characterize the empirical universality of Milton Santos. Universality is comprised of ordinary experiences, layers of interwoven discourses, actions, metaphors, dreams, times, and places that make us global beings. The relationship of the single with the multiple, the unit and the collective, the place and the world, the local and the global, engender other globalizations which are disclosed, for instance, in de(s)colonizing narratives and actions such as those of Milton Santos, Felipa César, Grada Kilomba, Diana McCarty, Flora Gomes, Sana Na N'Hada, Josefina Crato, José Columba Bolama, Amílcar Cabral, Chimamanda Adichie, and Rosana Paulino. This is the intended place, the disclosure of de(s)colonial narratives, which are understood as a reactive, responsive, resistant, and supplementary counterpart to the worlds of fabulation and perversity, appearances of another globalization.

The graphic game of the word "de(s)colonial" is not uncommon and was reused in this text as a way to preserve the argumentative elaborations justifying the choices of the prefixes "de" and "des," causing semantic variations that make up the history and the meanings of this concept that defines contradictory actions to the processes of domination. Such a choice also implies the idiomatic variations, and for this reason, we shall consider the translation as part of the conceptual variation. Additionally, the difference between the terms colonization and coloniality is also part of such semantic complexity, as well as their counterparts that are defined by the prefixes "de" and "des," which take us back to our graphic game.

Catherine Walsh (2009; 2013), for instance, opts for the prefix "de" deliberately suppressing the "s" as a conceptual demarcation and not for the promotion of Anglicanism. Likewise, in Portuguese, the prefix "des" in Spanish implies denial or inversion of meaning. To Walsh, there is no pretense of simply disarming, undoing, or reverting the colonial, as if its patterns and signs no longer existed. The intention of such a linguistic game is to show that there is not a null state of coloniality, but rather postures, positionings, attitudes, horizons, and projects of continuous resistance, transgression, intervention, insurgency, and incision. "Decolonial" would denote a path of continuous fight in which we would be able to identify, make visible and activate places of exteriority and alternative constructions (Walsh, 2009; 2013).

Such demarcation strictly marked by the prefix is not found in texts by Walter Mignolo. In *Estéticas Decoloniales* (Gómez & Mignolo, 2012), for instance, there is the indication of indifference with regard to its uses, suggesting them as synonyms by writing them with the explanatory conjunction "descoloniality (or decoloniality)" (Gómez & Mignolo, 2012, p. 7). In this case, the prefix associated to the concept "coloniality" is absent in the previous uses of the term "decolonization" (Gómez & Mignolo, 2012, p. 7).

Two years earlier, in his work *Desobediencia Epistémica: Retórica de la modernidade, lógica de la colonialidad y gramática de la descolonialidad*, Mignolo (2010) described the contextual implication in the use of the terms "decolonization" and "decoloniality," which may become interchangeable. However, he makes the historical distinction between the political "decolonization" of Africa and Asia between 1947 and 1970 and the epistemic "decolonization," which was referred to by Ramón Grosfoguel as the "second decolonization" and by Catherine Walsh and Nelson Maldonado Torres as "decoloniality." Also, according to Walter Mignolo there is a double pedagogic

advantage of "decoloniality" over "decolonization," as on the one hand it indicates the task of unveiling and disassembling the "logic of coloniality," and on the other hand, it denotes a project and a process to be distinguished from the various meanings ascribed to "post-coloniality" (Mignolo, 2010, p. 19).

It is possible to note in these two texts by Mignolo a greater attention to the circumscription of the expression "coloniality" in its differentiation from "colonization" than in determining the conceptual distinction by the linguistic demarcation. The expression "coloniality" is addressed by Mignolo from elaborations made by Aníbal Quijano (1992) in his text *Colonialidad y Modernidad/Racionalidad*.

Quijano (1992) denominates "cultural coloniality" the establishment of the European culture as a universal cultural model. This process might have defined the imaginary of non-European cultures, which could hardly exist or, especially, be reproduced outside such relations. According to Quijano, this is one of the most generalized ways of domination in the current world, and even when his "current world" was that of the late 1980s and early 1990s, we cannot say that it is no longer so. Quijano does not mention the counterpart "decoloniality" in his text, but he claims the "decolonization" as an epistemic reconstitution.

The idea of totality in the late 1980s and early 1990s was being questioned in Europe by postmodernist intellectuals. Such an idea was the by-product of modernity that was also European. Totality is an idea that has led to the theoretical reductionism and the metaphysical notion of a "macrohistorical subject," which is associated with undesirable political practices thrust by the dream of the total rationalization of society. But, according to Quijano (1992), it would not be necessary to refuse the idea of a totality, but rather to release the production of knowledge from its ties to European rationality/modernity. To support his argument, he resorts to the cosmovision of other cultures whose systematic production of knowledge is associated with an idea of totality while also considering the acknowledgement of heterogeneity of the entire reality, its irreducible contradictory character, and the legitimacy and the desire for diversity of the components of reality. Thus, totality is supported by the heterogeneity that implies the copresence and articulation of various historical rationales; even if they could take on a hegemonic character, they would not be seen as a single unit, preventing reductionism (Quijano, 1992).

The revision of the idea of totality would be part of this process of epistemic reconstitution or decolonization of knowledge, as restated by Mignolo (2010). If the knowledge is an imperial instrument of colonization, argues Mignolo, one of the most urgent tasks is to decolonize knowledge. To Quijano (1992), the epistemological criticism is indispensable, and more than that, it is urgent. It is not denial, but rather the detachment from ties with all the power not made by the decisions of free people. The epistemological decolonization would open up ways to a new intercultural communication generating an exchange of experiences and significations that would comprise the basis of another rationality that may pursue some universality (Quijano,1992), maybe such as that "empirical universality" proposed by Milton Santos.

There would be nothing less rational to Quijano (1992) than the pretention that the specific view of a particular ethnic group be imposed as universal rationality. Releasing the intercultural relations from the incarceration of coloniality would engender the freedom of choice among

various cultural orientations and, especially, the freedom to produce, criticize, change, and exchange culture and society. Placing knowledge in its de(s)colonial meaning would be part of the process of social liberation from the power organized as inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and domination (Quijano, 1992).

# De(s)colonial Narratives of Art/Education of Brazil-World

Qual conhecimento é reconhecido como tal? E qual conhecimento não o é? Qual conhecimento tem feito parte das agendas e currículos oficiais? E qual conhecimento não faz parte de tais currículos? A quem pertence este conhecimento? Quem é reconhecido/a como alguém que tem conhecimento? E quem não é? Quem pode ensinar conhecimento? Quem pode produzir conhecimento? Quem pode performá-lo? E quem não pode?<sup>7</sup>

Grada Kilomba, 2016a

## Letters to the World

Como homem do Terceiro Mundo, como educador com este mundo comprometido, outra não pode ser a minha posição

[...]

No fundo, numa educação como esta, o que se pretende é o exercício de uma reflexão crítica [...] É tomar a quotidianeidade mesma em que se encontram, como objeto de sua análise, no sentido de desopacizá-la, alcançando assim, a pouco e pouco e na continuidade da prática, a razão de ser da própria maneira como estão sendo no mundo.<sup>8</sup>

Paulo Freire, 1978

The preference for the "experience in full progress" (Freire, 1978, p. 10) resulted in the publication of *Cartas à Guiné-Bissau: Registros de uma experiência em processo*. The book is a compilation of narratives written in the form of letters, on the pathway of collaboration since 1975 regarding the work of alphabetization of adults in the newly independent Guinea-Bissau. These are records of a de(s)colonial process.

These letters are written from Geneva, one of the contexts of loan (Freire & Faundez, 1985; Mazza & Spigolon, 2018) experienced by Paulo Freire as an expat between 1964, right after the civilmilitary coup d'état in Brazil, and 1980. To Edward Said (2001), we do have a tendency to obscure the terrible violence of exile imposed by human beings on other human beings by romanticizing

it. It is critical to resize our imaginary view by paying attention to expatriation as a result of oppression, curtailment of freedom, famine, death, totalitarian regimes, imperialisms, and wars. Millions of people are violently mutilated when they are taken away from their livelihoods, their beloved ones, their homes, and their places. The intellectual production created by exiled people restores dignity to a condition generated from its denial. Stemming from such stories, the need for mapping these experiences becomes evident in order to understand the exile as a "contemporary political punishment" (Said, 2001, pp. 48-49). It is necessary to put aside the subjective refuges and to expand the dimension of such subjectivities in relation to mass policy. To these surviving subjectivities for having their names carved in the most superficial layers of history, we should add the "uncountable masses for which the UN agencies have been created" (Said, 2001, pp. 48-49), the "refuged peasants without any perspective of returning home one day, only bearing a supply card and an agency number" (Said, 2001, pp. 48-49), "the years of miserable loneliness" (Said, 2001, pp. 48-49) that unknown Vietnamese, Algerians, Cambodians, Lebanese, Senegalese, Peruvians have spent in Paris, the famous capital of the "cosmopolitan exiled people" (Said, 2001, pp. 48-49). Jointly with those who have found possibilities of survival of their narratives, we should join in the existence of those "hopeless crowds, the misery of people 'with no documents' who are suddenly lost" (Said, 2001, pp. 48-49), who have been "taken away from their houses and forced, either by bus or on foot, to enclaves in other regions" (Said, 2001, pp. 48-49). These experiences, by their very essence, are irrecoverable (Said, 2001).

One of the fundamental problems of the exiled person, in the words of Paulo Freire, is the "acute tension between the transplantation he is a victim of and the necessary implantation" (Freire & Faundez, 1985) into a foreign context. A dramatic experience of ambiguity and contradiction must be carefully faced so as to avoid the annihilation of his existence by a crippling nostalgia. According to Paulo Freire, they live "the permanent tension, which is radically existential and historical, between the context of origin, that was left behind, and the new borrowed context that the exiled person starts experiencing, by missing his context" (Freire & Faundez, 1985). It is an existence permeated by the ambiguous sensation of "freedom for having escaped something that threatened him" (Freire & Faundez, 1985) and the suffering for the "dramatical disruption in his history" (Freire & Faundez, 1985), which may, depending on the circumstances of survival, become fruitful. The contexts of exile, to Paulo Freire, did not represent pure negativity. Their circumstances allowed the experimentation of such a dramatic historical rupture as an essay of deep creativity (Freire & Faundez, 1985).

From such contradictory context, *Cartas à Guiné-Bissau: Endereçadas ao Mundo*, followed their historical course and were found by bell hooks at the time she started "deeply questioning the politics of domination, the impact of racism, sexism, class exploitation and colonization" that were taking place in the United States, finding herself "strongly relatable to the marginalized peasants" and her "black brothers and sisters," her "fellows" from Guinea-Bissau (Freire, 1978). This was a fundamental encounter to a person who had just got to university bringing her experience as a black woman from the southern rural area of the United States.

I had lived through the struggle for racial desegregation and was in resistance without having a political language to articulate that process. Paulo was one of the thinkers whose work gave me a language. He made me think deeply about the construction of an identity in resistance. There was this one sentence of Freire's that became a revolutionary mantra for me: "We cannot enter the struggle as objects in order later to become subjects." (hooks, 1994, p. 46)

This declaration by hooks is part of her book *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (hooks, 1994), in which she exhibits the work of Paulo Freire as the basis for the creation of her own work. It specifically integrates the chapter of her book dedicated to this founding relation, written as an interview as it was *Por uma Pedagogia da Pergunta* (1985), mentioned by hooks in the same chapter called "Paulo Freire" (hooks, 1994, pp. 45-58).

The insistence of education as a practice of freedom has motivated hooks to create strategies to turn her classes into mobilizing places that foster "awareness," a concept by Freire translated by hooks as "critical awareness and engagement" (hooks, 1994, p.14). Awareness is an idea that results in the understanding of all members (i.e., students and professors) integrating the process as active participants instead of passive consumers. These classes were prepared to embrace processes of knowledge construction as a collective work whereby everyone involved turns their work to the actions and reflections on the world with an intention to modify it (hooks, 1994, p.14). From her experience as a participant with Paulo Freire, she concluded that a pedagogic practice may be exercised without the reinforcement of domination systems (hooks, 1994).

It was through Paulo Freire that bell hooks first came into contact with critical pedagogy. Freire became one of her main references regarding the understanding of the liberating power of learning. Already engaged in feminist theory, hooks did not have any trouble reading Freire's works from such a critical perspective (hooks, 1994). The critical, feminist, and anti-colonialist pedagogies, and inevitably, their inter-relations, make up the basis for bell hooks' pedagogical practices (hooks, 1994).

Being an activist of the feminist theory, especially devoted to black feminism, bell hooks does not disregard the sexist character in the language of Paulo Freire's work, but rather, she places it in a debate in the chapter devoted to him:

There has never been a moment when reading Freire that I have not remained aware of not only the sexism of the language but the way he (like other progressive Third World political leaders, intellectuals, critical thinkers such as Fanon, Memmi, etc.) constructs a phallocentric paradigm of liberation – wherein freedom and the experience of patriarchal manhood are always linked as though they are one and the same. For me this is always a source of anguish for it represents a blind spot in the vision of men who have profound insight. And yet, I never wish to see a critique of this blind spot overshadow anyone's (and feminists' in particular) capacity to learn from the insights. This is why it is difficult for me to speak about sexism in Freire's work; it is difficult to find a language that offers a way to frame critique and yet maintain the recognition of all that is valued and respected in the work. (hooks, 1994, p. 49)

There is a lot of liberation in Freire's works in spite of the sexism of his language. No apology should be made for him, hooks states, as Freire's epistemological paradigm accepts the criticism of such a fault, which does not necessitate rejection. The strength for making constructive criticism to Paulo Freire's works would stem from feminist grounds, avoiding the passive

absorption of a "presented view of the world" (hooks, 1994, p. 51). To hooks, the liberating paradigm, associated with popular education and alphabetization, preserves the strength of Freire's works, intensified by the relation to black teachers' memories in the segregated school system who had been critical pedagogues providing liberating educational paradigms. These relationships made her identification with Freire's texts much stronger than with some other feminist texts (hooks, 1994).

To hooks, there is a convergence between Paulo Freire's work and feminist pedagogy. She particularly connects the development of her feminist and socially critical theoretical work to Freire's thinking and a "lived pedagogy" evoked from her memory of her encounters with black female and male teachers who were devoted to preparing children and young people to face racism and white supremacy. hooks' lived pedagogy was fostered by people who caused a deep impact on her way of thinking about art and the practice of teaching. "These black women did not openly advocate feminism (if they even knew the word), the very fact that they insisted on academic excellence and open critical thought for young black females was an antisexist practice" (hooks, 1994, p. 52).

Regarding direct interferences by Freire in her work, hooks refers to *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism,* a concrete manifestation of her fight for taking up a new dimension as subject of resistance. Freire's writings have contributed to enable bell hooks to place the US's racist policies in a global context, which allows the understanding of the association of her fight with that of other black people who "fought everywhere to decolonize and transform society" (hooks, 1994, p. 53).

More than in the work of many white bourgeois feminist thinkers, there was always in Paulo's work recognition of the subject position of those most disenfranchised, those who suffer the gravest weight of oppressive forces (with the exception of his not acknowledging always the specific gendered realities of oppression and exploitation). (hooks, 1994, p. 53)

This reading of Freire's works has confirmed hooks' desire to "work from her experienced understanding of the lives of poor black women" (hooks, 1994, p. 53) by creating a radical epistemic rupture that states the experience of black men and women as a possibility of greater knowledge of women in general rather than "an analysis that focuses first and foremost and always on women who live in privileged locations" (hooks, 1994, p. 53). That is why *Cartas à Guiné Bissau* is of great importance to hooks' work; it is, according to the author, "a crucial example" of how a "privileged critical thinker" approaches the sharing of knowledge and resources with people in underprivileged situations (hooks, 1994, p. 53).

The experience of exile narrated in *Por uma Pedagogia da Pergunta* was a contribution to hooks' critical reflections on black people and expatriation. bell hooks acknowledges in that book the quality of the dialogue that structures it. It is as a gesture of love, which is a certain love for the world, for life required by Freire throughout his work, another manifest identification (hooks, 1994). To hooks, the process of decolonization is associated with the process of awareness, as described by Freire. In his global understanding of the fights for liberation, he emphasizes awareness as a fundamental initial stage of transformation, a moment when we start thinking critically about ourselves and our identity within the political circumstances (hooks, 1994).

## **Utopic Topics**

A teoria do reconhecimento que sustenta as persistentes pós-utopias pós-colonialistas de nosso tempo se configuram no *Terceiro Espaço* de Homi Bhabha, no combate à estereotipia cultural de Edward Said, na alteridade secundária de Sanford Budick, nas políticas de reconhecimento das minorias sugerida por Charles Taylor e Susan Wolf, na defesa do sincretismo visual empreendida por Moshe Barasch, nas libertárias abordagens da cultura como um *quilt* bem desenhado de Lucy Lippard, e em muitas outras elucubrações de teóricos da cultura engajados nos movimentos pós-colonialistas, principalmente na Austrália e na Índia.<sup>9</sup>

Ana Mae Barbosa, 1998

This process of "awareness of what we are and how the surrounding world is" comprises the meaning of "knowing" to Paulo Freire, the same as assumed by Ana Mae Barbosa (Aguirre, 2009, XVII).

"Education could be the most effective path to arouse the individual's cultural awareness, starting by recognition and appreciation of the place" (p. 13) writes Ana Mae Barbosa (1998). This text, written in 1992, is one of the Utopic Topics combined in the book published in 1998. Topics are no longer addressed as "hopeful utopias," but rather other utopias pervaded with ideology and imagination. Something close to—if not the same as in other formations—the concept of utopia exposed by Paulo Freire in Pedagogia do Oprimido, is

unidade inquebrantável entre a denúncia e o anúncio. Denúncia de uma realidade desumanizante e anúncio de uma realidade em que os homens possam ser mais. Anúncio e Denúncia não são palavras vazias, mas compromisso histórico. (Freire, 1987, p.73)<sup>10</sup>

In a commitment to history, as well as to all of her works, *Tópicos Utópicos* was dedicated to the respect of diversity nourished by the interest in aesthetic manifestations of minorities and the idea of art as a cultural production related to its contexts. The "universalism of hegemonic codes" is questioned as denunciation and cultural plurality is announced as a "principle articulating the knowledge" (Barbosa, 1998, p. 11). Only "education that strengthens cultural diversity can be understood as democratic" (Barbosa, 1998, p. 80). Cultural pluralism, multiculturality, and interculturalism, she denounces, were not a concern of institutions, of art historians, of curators or artists, in general, who considered only the Eurocentric or North American hegemonic codes as valid (Barbosa, 1998, p. 80).

*Tópicos Utópicos* reveals once again Ana Mae Barbosa's ability to evolve. Such an ability is boosted by the ethical positioning of undergoing critical reviews of her own work and keeping it in line with the actual conditions of its existence, understanding it thus as being inserted in a historical process. Her willingness to be current and updated makes her work a "living organism," and as Imanol Aguirre said, "always willing to adapt to the changing circumstances, seeking greater efficiency in the solutions she formulates and in the dialogue with new visions emerging on artistic education in other places" (Aguirre, 2009, p. XVIII). Ana Mae Barbosa makes her own work concerning the systematization of an epistemology of art, which is then called Triangular Proposal, a topic to be considered in critical assessment and updated from the "post-colonialist" perspective (Barbosa, 1998). This permeability of the historical process and the acknowledgement of "the incomplete or silenced nature of the mode of practicing and building a domineering meaning of making history of art" (Salort, 2017, p. 182) would bring Ana Mae Barbosa's thoughts closer to those of decolonial strands according to Ramon Cabrera Salort.

Her epistemological systematization, which is initially referred to as methodology, and then Proposal, and at last Triangular Approach, integrates, according to Salort, ideas corresponding to a "Latin-American Episteme for Social Sciences", such as, for instance,

la idea de liberación a través de la praxis, que supone la movilización de la conciencia, y un sentido crítico que lleva a la desnaturalización de las formas canónicas de aprehender construir-ser en el mundo; la redefinición del rol de investigador social, el reconocimiento del Otro como Sí Mismo y por lo tanto la del sujeto-objeto de la investigación como actor social y constructor de conocimiento; el carácter histórico, indeterminado, indefinido, no acabado y relativo del conocimiento; la multiplicidad de voces, de mundos de vida, la pluralidad epistémica; la perspectiva de la dependencia y luego, la de la resistencia; la tensión ente minorías y mayorías y los modos alternativos de hacer-conocer. (Salort, 2017, p. 183)<sup>11</sup>

The Triangular Approach became a founding reference for Brazilian art education. It brought about significant change to the way we understan and practice the teaching and learning of art through the interdependent articulation of production, reading, and contextualization.

Ramon Cabrera Salort, in his analysis on the foundation of the Brazilian artistic/educational field, highlights the emergence of practice as a value. A cultural and educational practice is theoretically founded; however, it is revitalized in its social concretion. Barbosa's (1998) acknowledgment of the cultural roots of her practice are due to her proximity to Paulo Freire's thoughts. From such understanding, her Triangular Approach would be identified as a derivation of a double triangulation. The first one stems from epistemological character by conceiving the process of teaching and learning integrated by the three fundamental sensible-intelligible actions: creation or production/doing, the reading of images, and contextualization. The second triangulation would be related to the three epistemological benchmarks that are critical to such systematization and have been swallowed in a reflexive-critical interpretation, *Escuelas al Aire Libre* mexicanas, the English *Critical Studies* and the Movimento de Apreciación Estética DBAE *Discipline Based Art Education* (Barbosa, 1998).

The "swallowing," as recurrently evoked by Ana Mae Barbosa, would be, according to Salort (2017), present in contemporary artistic practices that experiment with the overcoming of their own limits. These practices expand into the most common and trivial practices, or more openly political and subversive practices, moving away from the established and legitimized discourse of art. Hence, the epistemological system elaborated by Ana Mae Barbosa would also be characterized as such. The Triangular Approach would enlarge its field of operation by including the various components of visual culture as something to be valued and worked on with the same critical rigor as any production validated as artistic and traditionally allowed in art teaching and

learning contexts. Claiming the co-presence of art and visual culture justified by the need for fighting the colonization of thought and behaviors would be further evidence of the "decolonial" character of such an approach (Salort, 2017).

As previously said, the three sensible-intelligible actions comprising Barbosa's (1998) epistemology are interdependent. Production performed in conjunction with reading and contextualization is the result of preparation, of a cultural alphabetization process, which involves reciprocal activation the intellectual and sensible exercise, theory, and practice, making up a complex and active mobilizer of cognitive/affective capacities and competences (Barbosa, 1998).

Reading is taken as cultural interpretation according to Freire's conception of "reading the word world" (Salort, 2017, p.185). For this reason, there is the fundamental relationship between reading and context. Placing the work into a context allows for the production of a field of decodable meaning and the personal poetics of the decoder, causing the reading to operate as questioning, search, discovery, and development of the critical capacity, not only as expansion of information. The reading becomes an act of significance, commitment, and cognitive/affective appropriation, whereby a dialogue is established with the "you" of the visual work (Salort, 2017). In this process, contextualization is intended to establish relations, the acknowledgement of historical, sociological, anthropological, multicultural, and ecological components, comprising grounds of interdisciplinarity and generating a located cognition, which is socially built by subjects and is meaningful to them. The articulation established by interdependence neither presupposes hierarchy nor separation; otherwise, its epistemic structure would be affected in its complexity characterized by context. Ramon Cabrera Salort compares this to the hybrid qualitative of the Latin American culture as exposed by Garcia Canclini.

However, Salort identifies that contextualization streamlines the systemic structure. In "decolonial" thinking, contextualization would reach double dimension, including both the epistemic and historical ones, such as in Ana Mae Barbosa's work. The epistemic dimension is concerned with the ways of knowing, learning, and the historical one occurs because we identify ourselves based on Europe. This is the reason for the prevailing denomination of "pre-Columbian America," while the correct use would be old America; our originating peoples also had their antiquity, which was of a nature and composition distinct from that of the West.

Para el pensamiento decolonial resulta seminal señalar que la primera descolonialización (iniciada en el siglo XIX por las colonias españolas y seguida en el XX por las colonias inglesas y francesas) fue incompleta, ya que se limitó a la independencia jurídico-política de las periferias. En cambio, la segunda descolonialización – a la cual se alude con la categoría *decolonialidad* – remite a las múltiples relaciones raciales, étnicas, sexuales, epistémicas, económicas y de género que la primera descolonialización dejó intactas y que la decolonialidad encamina a los procesos mediante los cuales quienes no aceptan a ser dominados y controlados no solo trabajan para desprenderse de la colonialidad, sino también para construir modelos no manejables y controlables por esa matriz. (Salort, 2017, p. 187)<sup>12</sup>

For its relation to the critical and liberating pedagogy, according to Salort (2017), the Triangular Approach may be taken up by any symbolic discourse, reaching the most extensive register of sensitivity for paying attention and considering the very contexts our pluri-culturalism comes from. In this sense, context is understood in its territorial, historical, and epistemic meaning.

Ramon Cabrera Salort finishes his reading of the epistemology systematized by Ana Mae Barbosa, by stating that it is an "excellent tool" in order to cause us to go beyond "the wall of meekness, of complacent glances, of domesticated thought, of numb and compartmentalized senses," unveiling new ways of being and perceiving the world from a reality that shows itself (Salort, 2017, p. 190).

# The Place-World

O mundo aparece como primeira totalidade, empiricizada por intermédio das redes. É a grande novidade do nosso tempo, essa produção de uma totalidade não apenas concreta, mas, também, empírica.

A segunda totalidade é o território, um país e um Estado - uma formação socioespacial -, totalidade resultante de um contrato e limitada por fronteiras. Mas a mundialização das redes enfraquece as fronteiras e compromete o contrato, mesmo se ainda restam aos Estados numerosas formas de regulação e controle das redes.

O lugar é a terceira totalidade, onde fragmentos da rede ganham uma dimensão única e socialmente concreta, graças a ocorrência, na contiguidade, de fenômenos sociais agregados, baseados num acontecer solidário, que é fruto da diversidade

e num acontecer repetitivo, que não exclui a surpresa.<sup>13</sup>

#### Milton Santos, 2006

Created by non-conformism to contexts of domination, the grounding narratives by Paulo Freire and Ana Mae Barbosa may be understood as actions of counterpart to the fabulation and perversity in the search for creation of other possible worlds. Grounded on the insistence on knowledge as awareness of our places in their systemic interdependence with the world, these narratives have provoked - and still provoke - territorial expansions, not only geographical, but especially epistemic, conforming to decolonial processes.

Narratives are updated by readings and practices. In April 2019, for instance, a conference was held in São Paulo, Brazil highlighting "Teaching/Learning of Arts in Latin America: colonialism and matters of gender." This was a collaborative effort among SESC São Paulo, INSEA, CLEA, FAEB and EAV/ANPAP, restating Barbosa's commitment to the history by insistently situating our place in an updated relation to the world.

Barbosa's initiative integrates a decolonial movement that has been gaining momentum in Brazil, by the strength of social and institutional movements such as the work performed at the Municipal School of Early Childhood Education Nelson Mandela (EMEI) in São Paulo, among others. Through public policies such as Law 10.639 of January 9, 2003, which renders mandatory the teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture in the basic and higher education institutions, and Law 11.645 of March 10, 2008 which amends it by also including the teaching of history and culture of indigenous peoples. In spite of the hindrances to their implementation, these laws have

brought about changes to educational contexts and materials that serve as didactic and paradidactic support, revolving colonial contexts. And through the effort of people who insist on not accepting fabulations and perversities, defining their works as counterparts in an intention to the "world as it can be," the possibility of "another globalization" exists, despite what may still happen. We shall continue with the foundation of our decolonial narratives.

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# Endnotes

- 1 "atualizada" / "updated" in line with the concept of *Aktualität*, the becoming act (*Akt*) of a power, as elaborated by Walter Benjamin (GAGNEBIN, Jeanne Marie, 2014, p. 204).
- 2 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Milton Santos, 2017 Knowing other places, even superficially and incompletely, arouses curiosity. It is certainly a byproduct of general biased information, but if it is adjusted by systemically knowing the global happenings, it authorizes the viewing of history as a situation and a process, both critical ones. Then, the crucial issue is: how can one move from a critical situation to a critical view – and, right after that, gain some awareness. For that, it is critical to live one's own existence as something unique and truthful, but also as a paradox: obey in order to survive and resist in order to be able to think about the future. Thus, the existence produces its own pedagogy.
- 3 "Advocates celebrate globalization as the triumph of modernization, progress, innovation, and freedom throughout the world—linking these to the achievements of capitalism, democracy, technology, and Western ideology. Opponents decry globalization's oppressive neoliberal rationality and its resulting excesses, human suffering, social fragmentation, and devastation of entire ecosystems" (Delacruz, 2009, p. X).
- 4 "I prefer the antidote" by Meredith Monk in the documentary *Feminists: What were they thinking?* (Demetrakas, J. (Director). (2018). *Feminists: What were they thinking?* [Film]. <u>International</u> <u>Documentary Association</u>).
- 5 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Grada Kilomba, Diane MacCarthy, 2013 Decolonization.

What a beautiful word.

Written in images.

Photogram by photogram [...]

Decolonization was a global act. An act of humanism to which every single individual was invited to join in. Everybody together in the same room, women and men, children and adults from North to South speak a common virtual language [...]

These images, in the raw, have almost vanished, making us believe that it has never existed. Questions?

- Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Rosana Paulino, 2017 6 Natural History with two question marks, because this history is not natural; it is a forged history; science has never been neutral; science has also been used as hierarchization and domain of peoples[...] I always think of these seams connecting together the works on the fabric not as seams, but rather as stitches, and when I bring such stitches to sight, I bring what society, especially the Brazilian society, has hidden for so long, which is the discussion about racial prejudice, which happened on the inside, I bring out this inside part that was hidden for so long. The fabric allows me several possibilities of work, one of them is the transparencies, the overlapping. We have the impression of a young lady, a slaved young woman ... it is a human being that is there, she had a history, she had a family, she had people with her, she loved; then when I place a heart on it I am able to see this person from underneath, I give back her humanity [...] as a visual artist I can only work with things that bother me. My intention is not to show the ways but to raise issues. What is this prejudice? It was built. There is a narrative there. There is a whole construction. I want people to look at it, to reflect upon it and think about it. Where does that come from? This is not natural to people. Racism, xenophobia, this estrangement toward the other person is not natural. There is nothing natural in this history. This is not natural; this is built up. So, I would like people to think what kind of construction this is and where it comes from.
- 7 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Grada Kilomba, 2016a
  Which knowledge is acknowledged as such?
  And which knowledge is not?
  Which knowledge has been part of official agenda and curricula?
  And which knowledge is not part of such curricula?
  Whom such knowledge belongs to?
  Who is acknowledged as someone who is knowledgeable?
  And who isn't?
  Who can teach knowledge?
  Who can perform it?
  And who can't?
- 8 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Paulo Freire, 1978 As a Third World man, as an educator committed to this world, I could not take a positioning otherwise
  - [...]

Deep down, in a context of education like this, one intends to exercise a critical reflection [...] It is making the very routineness where it is inserted, an object of analysis, in such a way to make it clearer, so as to attain, little by little and continuously through practice, the reason for being the way they are in the world.

- 9 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by An Mae Barbosa, 1998 The theory of recognition supporting the persistent post-colonialist post-utopias of our time appears in *Terceiro Espaço* by Homi Bhabha, in the fight against Edward Said's cultural stereotyping, in Sanford Burdick's secondary alterity, in the policies of recognition of minorities as suggested by Charles Taylor and Susan Wolf, and in the defense of visual syncretism carried out by Moshe Barasch, in the libertarian approaches of culture as a very-well designed quilt by Lucy Lippard, and in many other lucubrations by theoreticians of culture who are engaged in the post-colonialist movement, especially in Australia and India.
- 10 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Paulo Freire, 1987 the unbreakable unity between denunciation and announcement. Denunciation of a dehumanizing reality and announcement of a reality in which men can be greater. Announcement and denunciation are not empty words, but rather a historical commitment.
- 11 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Ramon Cabrera Salot, 2017 The idea of liberation through praxis, which supposes the mobilization of consciousness, and a critical sense that leads to the denaturalization of the canonical ways of apprehending building-being

in the world; the redefinition of the role of social researcher, the recognition of the Other as the Self and therefore that of the subject-object of the investigation as a social actor and builder of knowledge; the historical, indeterminate, indefinite, unfinished and relative character of knowledge; the multiplicity of voices, of worlds of life, the epistemic plurality; the perspective of dependency and then that of resistance; the tension between minorities and majorities and alternative ways of makingknown.

- 12 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Ramon Cabrera Salot, 2017 For decolonial thought, it is seminal to point out that the first decolonialization (initiated in the 19th century by the Spanish colonies and followed in the 20th by the English and French colonies) was incomplete, since it was limited to the legal-political independence of the peripheries. On the other hand, the second decolonialization - referred to by the category decoloniality - refers to the multiple racial, ethnic, sexual, epistemic, economic and gender relations that the first decolonialization left intact and that decoloniality leads to processes through which those who do not accept to be dominated and controlled not only work to get rid of coloniality, but also to build models not manageable and controllable by that matrix.
- 13 Translator's Note: free translation of the section by Milton Santos, 2006. The world appears as the first totality, made into an empire by the networks. This is the great news of our time, the production of a totality that is not only concrete but also empirical. The second totality is the territory, a country, and a State – a sociospatial formation – a totality resulting from an agreement and restricted by borders. The globalization of networks weakens the borders and compromises the agreement though, even if the States are still left with countless forms of regulation and control of networks.

The place is the third totality, where network fragments take up a unique and socially concrete dimension, thanks to the occurrence, in contiguity, of aggregated social phenomena, which are based on a solidary happening, which is the fruit of diversity, and based on repetitive happenings, not excluding the surprise element.



# Intercultural Response of Art Education to the Era of Moral Panic

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**Abstract:** Anti-immigration rhetoric is a part of the contemporary narrative of racism and xenophobia, which stems from the history of European colonialism and Eurocentrism. The first part of the text deals with the main outlines of the narrative of the refugee crisis in the European Union and some of the connotations linked to the mechanism of "moral panic," which may serve as an instrument for identifying and explaining one of the most stereotypical and manipulative images of the migration crisis of the recent years and its implications. In the second part of the paper, the attention is focused on intercultural education in general and on the subject of art education, for which the global narrative of racism and xenophobia can be an important topic and a call for critical processing. It also analyzes two art projects: in the National Gallery of the Czech Republic and the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art in Prague prepared for the exhibitions of Ai Wei-wei and Daniel Pešta.

Keywords: museum education, inter-cultural education, moral panics, arts education

**Abstrakt:** Anti-imigrační rétorika je jednou z částí dnešního globálního narativu rasismu a xenofobie, který má své historické kořeny v evropském kolonialismu a eurocentrismu. V tomto textu jde v prvé části o to sledovat základní kontury tvorby interpretace uprchlické krize a některých jejich konotací provázaných s mechanismem tzv. morální paniky, která může být vhodným nástrojem k pojmenování a vysvětlení velké části stereotypních a dezinformačních vyobrazení uprchlické krize a tematiky migrace v posledních letech a z nich vyplývajících důsledků. Ve druhé části příspěvku bude pozornost zaměřena obecně na interkulturní edukaci a především na předmět výtvarné výchovy, pro který může být globální narativ rasismu a xenofobie podstatným tématem a výzvou ke kritickému zpracování. Zároveň budou představeny a analyzovány dva vzdělávací projekty Národní galerie a centra současného umění DOX, které byly připraveny jako doprovodný program k výstavám multimediálních umělců Aj Wej-weje a Daniela Pešty.

Attitudes toward migration in the European public space have been strongly influenced by what is known as the refugee crisis that started in 2014. A major change in the attitudes of Europeans toward the migrants was provoked by the rhetoric based on various distinctions between "us" and "them," often interpreted by certain politicians, journalists, or common citizens as a clash of civilizations. What is the current state of the European society after the imagined or real waning of the refugee crisis? Has our knowledge of the issue been deepened by the crisis, or are we witnesses to a shift in the European (and American) politics and society toward new forms of nationalism, or at least of moral failure due to lack of aid to the refugees? The notion of possible moral failure is supported by the public statements that would have been impossible in the past, such as doubting the Geneva Convention or statements in favor of a limit on people granted asylum who face the threat of torture, being sold into slavery, or even death.<sup>2</sup>

Anti-immigration rhetoric is only a part of the contemporary global narrative of racism and xenophobia, which has its historical roots in the period of European colonialism, Eurocentrism, and the construction of binary categories that had served to distinguish between the "West" and the other territories, either regarded as "the Third world" or the "Orient" (Said, 1979).<sup>3</sup> The first part of this text aims to observe the basic outlines of the way the interpretations of the refugee crisis are formed and of some of the connotations that are linked to the mechanism of "moral panic," which we consider a useful tool for identifying and explaining the vast majority of the stereotypical and disinformation-fueled depictions of the crisis, as well as the issue of migration over the last several years and the effects of such depictions.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, this discourse is also disseminated among the current young generation.<sup>5</sup> The educational system of the European states is, however, one of the suitable environments that should offer not only a more general explanation of the real reasons for and effects of migration in today's world, but also offer methods for intercultural education that would enable us to regard difference in a positive manner. The second part of this contribution will focus not only on intercultural education in general, but also on the subject of art education in particular as it could deal with the global narrative of racism and xenophobia in a serious and critical manner. We shall also point to a way that the connection of art education with the art world could include these issues in art education, and we shall continue to demonstrate it with two particular exhibition projects - the exhibition by the Chinese artist Ai Wei-wei Law of the Journey and the exhibition of Daniel Pešta DeTermination.

## 1. Moral Panic and the Migration Crisis

Migration had not been a major issue for the political parties and the media in a number of European countries, and in some countries, it hadn't even been an issue for the educational system. Recently we have been able to observe both closing up Europe by intensifying checks at the outer border and the common use of anti-immigration rhetoric that supports the build-up of borders among various groups of people within Europe—the "natives" and the "immigrants;" the "populists-rejecters" and "liberals-welcomers;" etc.—rather than only among populist politicians (see Balibar, 2009; Gonzales & Sigona, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Everyone developed an "opinion" on the issue of migration, and in migration policy, we often deal with values rather than evidence; the topic generates emotional reactions which may turn politics in any direction whatsoever (Collier, 2013).

Along with the surge in anti-immigration rhetoric, there has been a degree of moral panic involved since the beginning of the migration crisis, but also a certain fatigue set in as shocking events became routine and often ceased to provoke any moral response (Bauman, 2016). On the one hand, we may observe signs of solidarity with the refugees; on the other hand, there were displays of adversity and cruelty. Examples include when Hungary, Macedonia, Albania, and Serbia turned to military action to stop the people on the run or when we witnessed proclamations that any aid to refugees necessarily leads to an overwhelming threat of the Jihadists (Loizidou, 2016).

The issue of moral panic has been under considerable scrutiny, first discussed perhaps by the sociologist Stanley Cohen (1972). He used the notion to depict the reactions of the media, the public, and other controlling institutions that are to review our actions during times of crisis, which may always lead to a moral panic. The mechanism of reconstruction of moral panic may thereby be regarded as a specific form of social exclusion as selected groups of people are "morally sensitivised" in connection to an ostensible threat to generally accepted values (Volek, 2000, p. 110).

Aside from a wave of solidarity, we may thus observe a surge in media depictions of the refugee crisis in various – often misleading and imprecise – ways, and a rise in prominence of various "moral guardians" (e.g., populist leaders like Marine Le Pen, Viktor Orbán, Matteo Salvini and other, less well-known public figures), while there has also been a shift in our vocabulary and a stereotypization of a number of extreme positions. This may contribute to a pressure on securitization of society and support of such pressure in the form of strengthening checks on both inner and outer borders (Bauman 2016; Gonzales & Sigona, 2017; Loizidou 2016; Morgan 2016; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Moral panic has been initiated by fears of a disruption of the social, political, or cultural *status quo*<sup>6</sup> and includes inadequate, overexposed reactions of the media, the repressive apparatus, politicians and a number of other actors, and an augmented sensitivity. All contribute to swift identification of the "enemy" and the formation of a space of social exclusion (Volek, 2000, p. 110).

The quantitative surge in the phenomenon of moral panic in the last several years is linked to the contemporary make-up of media distribution (Volek, 2000). It also reflects the general state of modern communication via various mediators, which expand the number of our contacts but also give them an inauthentic character (see Lévi-Strauss, 2013). This lack of authenticity may lead to easier formation and spread of stereotypes. Since identity is also established by means of communication, mass media communication also employs an ideological typus of the *us-versus-them ideologies* (Donnan & Wilson, 2001). Attitudes toward immigrants are also founded by ignorance and erroneous judgment (Isernia & Olmastroni, 2016).

The key question is, then, how and to what extent are moral panics imprinted into the workings of the society? We must also consider whether they cause a long-term social change, whether we see their impact not only in the rhetoric in the public space, but also in the attitudes of current and even future generations, and whether they have an impact in the institutional make-up of the educational system or in the form of the law (Volek, 2000). It is also important to add that such xenophobic or stereotypical narratives also tend to draw our attention away from more important matters. Myths about Islam, for instance, often ignore social conditions: global inequality, unsustainable living standards in the countries of origin, and the situation in the suburbs of big cities with high unemployment that form a basis for radicalization (see Swerts, 2017).

#### 1.1. The European Union, the "Migration Crisis," and the Era of Moral Panic

With the emergence of what is known as the migration crisis in 2014, there has been a surge of interest in the issue of migration in the public sphere, followed by a spread of fear of migrants.<sup>7</sup> In the European environment, we may also observe a shift of the narrative of accentuating security threats posed by refugees to accentuating possible undesired economic impacts of migration. Security checks focused on maintaining public order and monitoring the stay of foreigners and the resulting media coverage of such activities has, in our opinion, contributed to the understanding of migration as a phenomenon that is closely linked with criminality. This security narrative has also appeared in the sphere of politics and in specific policies.<sup>8</sup>

For instance, in 2015 the European Commission reinforced the control over the outer borders, which led to the formation of a complex border administration and more efficient management of migration flows. Border and maritime patrols were soon followed by so-called "hotspots" (registration centers) in Italy and Greece. Closing the borders and reinforcing border defense was also prominent in the process of closing down the Balkan route in 2015 and in the EU negotiations with Turkey on a financially backed reinforcement of checks on the maritime border.

On the other hand, we may also observe a transfer of border control from the outer line of the European coast to international waters, holding potential asylum seekers and refugees in areas close to conflict zones in the neighboring states. Cooperation with the countries of origin or transit countries leads to the formation of detention sites outside the EU territory (e.g., in Libya). Possible impacts of financial support of dictators within the migration partnerships with countries such as Libya, Sudan, or Eritrea were discussed in the UN report *Detained and Dehumanized – Report on Human Rights Abuses against Migrants in Libya* (UN, 2016), which provided evidence of torture, slave labor, and sexual violence committed at the detention centers in third countries.<sup>9</sup> The procedure allows for the states to avoid compliance with the *Geneva Convention* and to deny entry to asylum seekers; yet by holding them in conflict zones, they are compliant in their detention under often unbearable, inhuman conditions (see Afeef, 2006).

Although European borders can be overcome, even granting asylum may not mean their influence on a migrant's identity ceased to be; we should still assess them as social borders. The seemingly "paradoxical" position of an "irregular" migrant as a "security threat" and simultaneously as a "saved life" may be sorted into the same level of meaning: as a part of the "irregular" population whose basic needs, vulnerability, and potential are controlled by ambivalent ethical and political practices (Vaughan-Williams, 2015, p. 39). People crossing the border may be degraded by being ascribed various statuses that are connected with different rights than those of state citizens. Borders are thus set by social processes of exclusion and integration that maintain these categories despite individual processes of integration and socialization, which may influence the identity and self-understanding of one's subjectivity as citizens and migrants.

The issue of migration has become a means of articulating broader (existential, economic) fears of the European society (see Dempster & Hargrave, 2017). At first glance, fear of migration and anti-migration rhetoric hide a degree of fear of a failure of the elites on the domestic and European

scene and distrust of traditional parties and EU institutions that they are capable of dealing with the crisis. On a deeper level, we see discontent with the level of inequality, lack of social recognition, overload and insecurity, and loss of common language. As noted above, we believe this situation is reflected also in attitudes of many pupils and students.

# 2. Art Education and a Reflection of the Socio-Political Situation

The acute character of the contemporary socio-political situation discussed above and the resulting need for a positive notion of otherness asks for more intensive educational outreach to contents aimed at developing pro-social conduct, interpersonal and social empathy, or cooperation with multicultural environments. This very approach, we believe, may contribute to a long-term process and task of deconstruction of the migration moral panic. In this respect, we could draw on the educational procedures of critical pedagogy, which is among the notions that may identify, deconstruct, and subvert stereotypical categories (e.g., Hickman 2005; Kanpol, 1999). This approach to pedagogy aims to give students the competencies needed for critical reflection on current topics and their media processing of today's society and everyday life (see Giroux, 2000). Aside from critical thinking itself, it should also develop their competency to seek alternative solutions.

We believe that intensifying educational outreach as discussed above also applies to art education, which should start considering the global narrative of racism and xenophobia as a major and topical theme far more than has done (see Wagner, 2015).<sup>10</sup> Linking education in the visual fields with the art world is a natural way to implant this issue into art education in schools. In the following sections of the text, we discuss recent educational projects as examples of such implantation. We chose two gallery projects of leading Czech galleries: The exhibition of the Chinese artist Ai Wei-wei, *Law of the Journey* exhibited at the National Gallery's Trade Fair Palace from March 17 to January 7, 2018, and the exhibition of Daniel Pešta, *DeTermination*, which took place in the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art in Prague from January 26 to May 7, 2018. Both were accompanied by pedagogical sections with educational activities for pupils, students, and teachers.

These two educational projects may be linked to the approach of *public pedagogy*, which is a part of the discussed critical pedagogy and deals with education in relation to public space and the art sphere (Sandlin & McLaren, 2009). Public pedagogy aims to educate pupils, teachers, and the general public via art and artistic activities such as exhibitions, installations, happenings etc. (Sandlin & Milam, 2008; Sandlin, Schultz & Burdick, 2010). Art is understood as a space for uncovering and deconstructing either negative stereotypes or negative aspects of current societies in general.

Another method worth mentioning in this respect is *gallery education*, which has developed since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and includes gallery animation, art activities, and workshops; in all, it emphasizes the input of the visitor (Greenhill, 1991; Jagošová, Jůva & Mrázová, 2010; Moffat & Wollard, 1999). With the right adjustment, the process of gallery education creates a powerful contact between the spectator and the artwork, while gallery education forms a creative space for working with signs and their identification and interpretation based on interaction with artistic artifacts (see Buschkühle, 2015). The multimedia artists and contemporaries Ai Wei-wei and Daniel Pešta exhibit their current works, which reflect social activities and further develop global narratives of social interactions of people of various origins and fates. The programs set up by educational departments are based on creative interpretation of these artworks, which may bring exceptional aesthetic experience to open-minded individuals and therefore transform their worldviews or understanding of identity. Art education is a directly creative discipline which develops creativity on an emphatic – intersubjective – and experiential level, and therefore allows for an important distinction between recognizing perspectives of Me and Them (Hardy, 2006). Practice has shown the importance of dialogue for pupils and students about difficult issues that surround them and prove demanding even for adults due to their complexity. According to Ai Wei-wei, art is an instrument for understanding our complex situation, an impulse to react, and a possible source of solace.<sup>11</sup>

#### 2.1. Ai Wei-wei: Law of the Journey

The world-famous Chinese artist Ai Wei-wei (born 1957), himself a former refugee, has been nearexclusively focused on the issue of human rights of migrants in the last few years. He has traveled to dozens of locations facing humanitarian crises and testified to human suffering in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in his art. In terms of the first part of our article, we might say he has helped deconstruct moral panic with his art. His *Law of the Journey* exhibition was characterized in the curator's text as "a multi-layered, epic depiction of the state of mankind, an expression of empathy and moral outrage of an artist in the face of unending, uncontrollable destruction and bloodshed," which we may regard as one of the examples of today's crisis.<sup>12</sup>

The central object of the Prague exhibition was a large rubber boat exhibited in the Great Hall; it was called a modern "boat of forced exodus," with which the artist "celebrates the eternal hope of man for home and human companionship."<sup>13</sup> Unlike the often-presented issues of border maintenance and the illegal practice of border crossing, the motif of a boat in the context of the exhibition connotes both boats filled with people and the topics that have become usual in the European media sphere, such as the stories of people who lost their homes and have been forced to seek a new one. The aesthetic experience of Ai Wei-wei's artwork is also closely linked to a possible experience of interpersonal social empathy.

The department of educational programs of the National Gallery prepared two kinds of programs to accompany the exhibition: the *Na cestě* program for young primary school pupils and the *Liquid Truth* program, which was aimed at secondary and high school students.<sup>14</sup> The department prepared tours with commentary for teachers and a seminar with Médicins sans frontiéres and the HATE FREE initiative.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, study materials for pedagogues emerged that are available for download and which present the exhibited artworks and the artist's biography, while parents will also find recommended activities they could do with children when visiting the gallery. These include:<sup>16</sup>

- Activities aimed at realizing the main causes of the so-called migration crisis, i.e., the migration wave: "Read the text under the boat. Try to point out what the people are running from. Write the word/slogan on a card and put it at the back of the boat."
- Focusing on the depiction of refugees on their journey, which would offer a different notion than the one that was presented at the beginning of the crisis: "Form a spyglass/telescope. Use it to observe the boat and the people on it. Consider which observable details you would preserve after such a journey. Draw them."

- Promoting empathy through one's own reflection of the demands of the journey: "Discuss the physical demands of traveling on an overcrowded boat. People are pressed on one another on the boat. The private space of each one has to take into account others' needs."
- Strengthening empathy through understanding the situation of the refugees in search of a new home: "The words you've written on the cards and put at the rear of the boat represent what the characters mean to leave behind. Now use a word or slogan to depict what they are about to encounter, what they hope for, why they are on the journey."
- Understanding media depictions and the reasons why certain phenomena are more often depicted than others: "News on the refugee crisis is often emotionally charged. Or it can be manipulative, untrue. Important factors in our understanding are the choice of shots by the reporters and photographers and pointed commentary. Look at the photographs that document the situation in refugee camps. Create your own report by remaking any three of the photographs. You may operate with positive or negative emotions that you seek to suggest to the spectator."

#### 2.2 Daniel Pešta: DeTermination

The mission of the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art is to introduce contemporary art to the public and to create an environment in which people of various backgrounds and experiences encounter and inspire each other. It seeks to fulfill its calling through a socially aware exhibition program which emphasizes education and both specialized and public interaction.<sup>17</sup> DOX organized the so-far largest independent exhibition by Daniel Pešta (1959): *DeTermination*.<sup>18</sup>

#### Pešta's DeTermination

presents a selection of his works on issues of genetic, racial, and social determination, for which he won an award at the London Biennale this year... His video art, paintings, and objects focus on individuals and their helplessness in the face of their fate, or on the contrary depict the destructive power of anonymous society. (https://danielpesta.com/en/determination-dox/)

Pešta's symbolism often draws upon very specific metamorphoses of the contemporary world, which are a source of the author's frustration: human narcissism, Donald Trump being elected president of the US, more and more open expressions of hatred toward the people seen as "other," or successful campaigns based on fear and lies. For the centerpiece of his exhibition at the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Daniel Pešta chose a two-headed calf – an ambivalent being that elicits compassion, sometimes ridicule, and perhaps also disgust – that peers down from its pedestal of a sacrificial animal to reflect on the absurdity of unavoidably repeating catastrophes caused by man.<sup>19</sup> The exhibition included Pešta's video art *I was born in your bed* and the cycle of painted portraits of Roma children who took part in the video art *I am gypsy, and you*? These artworks, which elaborated on the spreading of racist global narratives – stigmatization of the Roma – were presented at the Biennale in Venice.<sup>20</sup> Unlike Ai Wei-wei's more narrow thematic focus, Pešta concentrates on the broader topic of stereotypes which are part of the global narratives of racism and xenophobia. In his work and the educational programs set up by DOX, we can see the potential of art for education which bears the characteristics of critical, public and gallery education.

As with other DOX exhibitions, there was an accompanying program that reflected a visitor's age. The DOX programs are characterized by a critical approach toward current political issues, and the programs can therefore be inspirational not only for art teachers, but also teachers of history or social education. The DOX has also been attempting to uncover and subvert a number of stereotypes, and it offers interactive materials on its website that could help with the difficult topic and also help with preparing programs aimed at disrupting stereotypes. An example is the *Map of social stereotypes* which was accompanied by methodical material with tips for education, which was a part of Pešta's exhibition.<sup>21</sup> This map was created in cooperation with the organization EDUin (a public benefit organization that informs education and supports its reform in schools, towns, and regions), and it addresses questions such as: what do our stereotypes offer us and what effects may prejudice have?

This activity attends to the issue of moral panic and the related, more general issue of the formation of prejudice, expressions of hatred, but also the capacity for solidarity. The program for pupils and students itself commenced with the interactive *Map of social stereotypes*; the pupils and students then focused on the formation and operation of common prejudices and on the language and movement-based activity with the notions *normal, strange, acceptable, unacceptable.* An interactive tour of the exhibition followed, and the last part consisted of a debate about the exhibition and the issues of prejudice and discrimination. The map and the related activities are innovative, playful, and slightly provoking, but aimed at leading pupils to learn from each other via directed debate. The pupils experience both collective activity and work in small groups (2-4 students). The activities do not only aim at education, but also leave space for individual reflection of one's own stereotypes. It is therefore a combination of gallery space and work in groups of pupils, using a somewhat provocative exhibition to deliberate on the formation and operation of stereotypes, self-reflection, and collective sharing of insights in the concluding discussion.

The manner of utilizing the exhibition in terms of education is linked to the theoretical approaches of critical pedagogy, public pedagogy, and gallery education. Both the described exhibitions are examples that show the potential of education in the public space and the art world using the right setup of gallery educative space which strengthens the contact between the spectator and the artwork.

# Conclusion

Intercultural education and its use in art education may be the best answer to the global narrative of racism and xenophobia. An example of such a narrative is the current anti-immigration rhetoric. Analysis of the mechanism of what is known as moral panic, initiated by fear of disruptions in the social, political, and cultural *status quo*, may be helpful for understanding such rhetoric. Its instruments include inadequate reactions of a number of actors, swift identification of the enemy, and forming a space for social exclusion. In the last years, we could have observed the transposition of such anti-immigration discourse among the young generation; teachers should therefore criticize it and use methods of intercultural education in order to provide a positive notion of difference. Using specific examples of two gallery projects in the Czech Republic – the exhibitions *Law of the Journey* by the Chinese artist Ai Wei-wei and *DeTermination* by Daniel Pešta – we may see ways of promoting tolerance and positive notions of difference via aligning the world of education with visual arts and promoting this complex issue in art

education. In our opinion, social problems ask for more intensive educational outreach that would include contents aimed at developing pro-social behavior and cooperation in the multicultural environment. In this respect, we might use the approaches of critical pedagogy, public pedagogy, or gallery education. Such approaches may, in our opinion, contribute to a long-term deconstruction of more than merely migration-related moral panic.

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## Endnotes

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- 2 See, for example, "Detained and dehumanized:" Report on human rights abuses against migrants in Libya (OSN, 2016). The report provides evidence of torture, slave labor, and sexual violence in detention centers in the third countries (outside the EU).
- 3 We understand the term *global narrative* as specific statements disseminated to a large degree into various parts of the world, realized through speech, writing, and various imagery, but also in various forms of social practice. That means using this narrative may be understood as a way of thinking and conduct that would influence people's actions or perspectives. This notion is related to the notion of discourse.
- 4 This text expands on our earlier article, which we have updated and transposed from the Czech into the European context (see Paroubková & Trčka, 2019).
- 5 For instance, in the Czech social environment, there are strong negative sentiments towards minorities in schools; pupils tend to copy examples given in the public space, primarily by the media (*BRICkS*, 2016).
- 6 For instance, economic globalization or globalization of communications and transport supports the tradition of popular, economic, factors-based adversity toward threats of cultural identity of a given society (see Hobsbawm, 2007).
- 7 In this section, we draw on the analysis by Michal Trčka (2017).
- 8 For instance, strengthening the logic of martial law in the Schengen aquis, the promotion of which is based on the activity of individual states, may, by the Schengen border codex, set up checks on the internal Schengen borders in cases of grave threats to public order, internal security, etc.
- 9 See also other reports on detention centers, including the Nauru files by the Australian Guardian reporters available at: <u>https://www.theguardian.com/news/series/nauru-files</u>; the Amnesty International report on Libya '*Libya of Tomorrow*' What Hope for Human Rights?, available at:

https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE19/007/2010/en/; or other Guardian reports 'Sexual assaults on children' at Greek refugee camps, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/13/child-refugees-sexually-assaulted-at-official-greek-camps.

- 10 In the Czech environment, "we wouldn't talk about colonialism and racism in our schools, such issues are not seen as current or crucial. That only underlines the complexity and ambiguity of the reflection of such phenomena, which had not been a part of the public discourse until recently. Only in the recent years, due to a serious wave of criticism of social inequality in the art world and comic books, the issues of oppression and injustice have been minor issues." (Fulková, 2008, p. 240)
- 11 See the curator text on Ai We-wei: Law of the Journey (2017).
- 12 In this text we consider the specific realization of the Prague exhibition, but this had other realizations in a number of locations, such as the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney (2018).
- 13 See the curator text on Ai We-wei: Law of the Journey (2017).
- 14 From the account of an art teacher and civic educator: *Personally, I visited the program Liquid Truth* which was linked to Ai Wei-wei's artistic reflection of the migration crisis with eight-graders twice, and since I know the attitudes of some of them, I was surprised by the positive feedback to the gallery program. The subsequent questionnaires have shown that approx. 60 percent of them changed their attitude toward refugees after the exhibition. They realized that refugees cannot be seen as a mass like they are represented by the Czech media, but that we need to seek individual, human stories. My impression was that that was the main goal of the program. The first creative task considered a very crowded black rubber boat. Pupils had to form groups and write on black cardboard containing a human silhouette the fate and specific information on a particular migrant. Afterwards they spoke to the lecturer about all the fictional characters, the credibility of their motivations, and possibilities of success on their way abroad. It was interesting that when asked which work made the greatest impression, they didn't mention only the large boat, but also other objects: the Snake ceiling, Crystal Ball, and Laundromat the objects that had authentic links to individual lives. Some were outright startled by the Newsfeed artwork that was preceded by the game of Chinese whispers. Media-induced distortion of information was among the important moments that the program focused on.
- 15 The civic initiative promoting coexistence, respect, and tolerance. See: <u>https://www.hatefree.cz/o-nas/o-hate-free</u>.
- 16 Study material for Ai Wei-wei: Law of the Journey (2017). All the following quotes are from this source.
- 17 See information from additional materials that the center publishes at <u>https://www.dox.cz/en</u>.
- 18 The multimedia artist Daniel Pešta graduated from the Václav Hollar Art School; he focuses mostly on drawing and commercial graphics. See: <u>https://danielpesta.com/en/biography/</u>.
- 19 From the curator text by Terezie Zemánková, available at: <u>http://danielpesta.com/determination-dox/</u>.
- 20 See: http://danielpesta.com/i-was-born-in-your-bed-venice/.
- 21 See: https://www.dox.cz/vzdelavani/mapa-spolecenskych-stereotypu.



# Beyond the Metropolis: The New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM)

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**Abstract:** The New England Regional Art Gallery and Museum (NERAM) in the Australian regional city of Armidale is the custodian of the Howard Hinton Collection. This impressive collection of Australian art was initially bequeathed to the Armidale Teachers College, the first teachers' college outside of a metropolitan center in Australia. Hinton wanted the artworks to be hung throughout the College so that the teacher education students could physically encounter and engage with them on a daily basis. Regional art galleries are often the cultural heart of communities who have been long-term and passionate advocates for their continued existence. This article explores the particular challenges and highlights of working in a regional gallery through three interviews conducted with the Director, the Exhibitions and Curatorial Manager, and the Education Officer. The findings reveal the importance of historical context, lived experience, the expectations of a regional community, and the value of art in contributing to the legacy of quality art education that Hinton established beyond the Metropolis.

Keywords: Armidale Teachers' College, arts funding, Australian Impressionism, education, Howard Hinton, New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM), regional galleries

### Introduction

In early April 2020, Rachael Parsons, the director of the New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM) in the Australian city of Armidale, took to Facebook to engage with the institution's supporters during the COVID-19 lockdown. Aware that the Getty Museum in Los Angeles had challenged people to post photographs of themselves recreating their favorite works of art, she decided to do the same with a piece from the NERAM collection (Image 1). She chose The Yellow Gloves, a portrait by Esther Paterson (1896-1971), an entrant in the 1938 Archibald Prize, Australia's most famous portraiture competition (Image 2). It did not win, with that year's award going to Nora Heysen (1911-2003), who remains, at 27 years of age, the youngest ever winner and also the first woman artist to gain this distinction. The Yellow Gloves was subsequently purchased by Australian art philanthropist Howard Hinton (1867-1948) – who had been a Trustee of the National Art Gallery of New South Wales since 1919-and then donated to the Armidale Teachers' College. It eventually became part of the NERAM collection when the gallery opened in 1983. The Gallery, which is funded by the Armidale community and the New South Wales Government, was built to house and exhibit the artworks from two of its main benefactors, Howard Hinton (1867-1948) and Chandler Coventry (1924-1999), in addition to the existing Armidale City Art Collection.



Image 1. Rachel Parson's recreation of Esther Paterson's The Yellow Gloves



Image 2. Esther Paterson's The Yellow Gloves

It is hardly surprising that Parsons chose *The Yellow Gloves* amidst the lockdown necessitated by the COVID-19 crisis; it is an iconic piece in the signature collection of one of Australia's top regional galleries. Due to Australia's geographic spread, the role of regional galleries is critical in enabling communities who may not have the opportunities to travel to metropolitan centers on a regular basis to physically encounter and experience an artwork (Piscitelli & Weier, 2002). There are a number of other excellent regional galleries in Australia, including the Bendigo Art Gallery, the Art Gallery of Ballarat, the Newcastle Art Gallery, and the Tweed River Art Gallery to name just four; however the opening of *HINTON: Treasures of Australian Art* in the refurbished East Gallery in February 2018 ensured that NERAM loses nothing by way of comparison. Though he had been dead 35 years before the museum was opened in 1983, Hinton, one of the greatest benefactors of the arts in Australian history, deserves a good deal of posthumous credit for that initiative (Newling, 1951; Pearce, 2014). Over the course of two decades, he also became a key advocate for art education, donating a staggering 1200 artworks and 700 art books to the Armidale Teachers' College (1928-1971).

The proposal for a University College in Armidale had been resisted by the Government, who was concerned about decentralizing services. The appointment of David Drummond to the role of the New South Wales Minister of Education on October 18, 1927 was a pivotal step in obtaining official approval for the construction of Armidale Teachers' College. Drummond was on the foundation executive of the Northern New State Movement, which advocated for the secession of the New England region and surrounding areas, including Armidale, from the State of New South Wales and the establishment of a new State of New England. During his first term, Drummond focused his considerable energies on a number of issues that reflected his hopes for statehood, one of which was rural education, with an early success in 1928 with the opening of the Armidale Teachers College. Drummond was determined that regional students would have access to the same opportunities and facilities offered at the metropolitan Sydney Teachers' College in the State's capital. In fact, Drummond instructed the Government Architect to base the plans for the College on the Sydney Teacher's College, taking into account local conditions. Elphick (1989) notes that the first Principal Cecil Bede (C. B.) Newling and the Director of Education S. H. Smith pioneered a new approach to teacher training which emphasized the practicalities of teaching rather than "academic knowledge as a substitute for teaching skills" (p. 7). In 1971, the Armidale Teachers' College became the Armidale College of Advanced Education (Armidale CAE). The Armidale CAE was seen as a pioneer in embedding Aboriginal Education into teacher education, formalized through the building of an Aboriginal Studies Centre between 1982 and 1984 (Elphick, 1989). In 1988, the Armidale CAE was amalgamated with the Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education and the University of New England (UNE). During its time as part of UNE it was known as the C.B. Newling Centre. The C.B. Newling Centre, formerly the Armidale Teachers' College, was listed on the New South Wales State Heritage Register on November 8, 2006.

This article will explore the importance of Howard Hinton's ongoing contribution to art education, which will include interviews with three participants from NERAM, including the Director, the Manager, the Exhibitions and Curatorial Manager, and the Education Officer. This research has received ethical approval from the University of Southern Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee.

## Howard Hinton and his Gift to Art Education

The English born Hinton's first act of art philanthropy was the gift of a collection of the caricaturist Phil May's (1864-1903) sketches to the National Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1914. By the time of his death, his donations to this institution totaled 122 pictures, including works by Emanuel Phillips Fox (1865-1915), George Lambert (1873-1930), Elioth Gruner (1882-1939), Tom Roberts (1856-1931), Sir Arthur Streeton (1867-1943), and a 1932 self-portrait by Nora Heysen (1911-2003). Possibly in response to the Gallery declining several of his gifts, Hinton redirected most of his philanthropic focus to the Armidale Teachers' College. The Hinton Collection of over a thousand works began with a small oil on canvas by Adrian Stokes (1854-1935) titled *The Lock Gates* donated by Hinton to S. H. Smith, the then Director of Education. Over subsequent years, Hinton's donations came to include works by a number of notable Australian artists from 1880 until 1945, including four by Tom Roberts, three by Charles Conder (1868-1909), five by J.J. Hilder (1991-1916), fifteen by Sir Arthur Streeton, three by Walter Withers (1854-1914), eight by George Lambert, thirteen by Elioth Gruner, nine by Sir Hans Heysen (1877-1968), two by Hilda Rix Nicholas (1884-1961), five by Nora Heysen (1911-2003), eleven by Margaret Coen (1909-1993),

two by Margaret Preston (1875-1963), two by Thea Proctor (1879-1966), fifteen by Arthur Murch (1902-1989), seven by Lloyd Rees (1895-1988), six by Roland Wakelin (1887-1971), three by Antonio Dattilo-Rubbo (1870-1955), two by the Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira (1902-1959), four by Harold Septimus Power (1877-1951), and a number by the siblings Daryl (1889-1976), Sir Lionel (1874-1961), Norman (1879-1969) and Percy Lindsay (1870-1952).

For all its obvious value, however, The Hinton Collection is not an exhaustive overview of Australian art history. Almost 70 years ago, the artist R. H. Goddard (1951) acknowledged that his friend Hinton did indeed have "his own canons of taste and was not impressed by freakish extremism" (p. 1). Barry Pearce (2014) commented on Hinton's profound distrust of art styles such as Modernism and its propensity to flout traditional values. Hinton himself simply observed that "one can't go wrong if one follows absolutely correct drawing and harmony of color" (Goddard, 1951, p. 2). Parsons (2018), who was NERAM's Manager Curatorial & Exhibitions when the *HINTON: Treasures of Australian Art* exhibition opened in 2018, speculates that given time, Hinton may have developed a taste for Modernism. Artworks from pioneers of Australian Modernism including Roland Wakelin, Herbert Badham (1899-1961), Margaret Preston and Adrien Feint (1894-1971) were part of his bequest. In any case, the collection loses nothing for its donor's predilections, for it remains a remarkable collection of "art in Australia as it appears from a particular time and context, mediated through the tastes and interests of a singularly altruistic collector" (Parsons, 2018).

What makes Hinton's philanthropy even more notable is the wide exposure to the artworks his idiosyncratic approach facilitated. He was determined that the artworks would be hung in publicly accessible places throughout the Armidale Teachers' College so that the students "could live with them, thereby growing to know and love them" (Goddard, 1951, p. 2). They were subsequently hung throughout the College in the corridors, lecture theatres, auditorium, and the various clubs on campus. In a letter to C. B. Newling, Hinton revealed that he "wished to spread the appreciation of art throughout the State, and that he thought no better means could be found of doing this than by inspiring young teachers" (Newling, 1951, p. 4). It is a philosophy best understood in the context of the 19th century view that art was a means of inculcating civilizing values, but also of Hinton's valuing of the emotional impact of an engagement with art:

I can but reflect how much pleasure I should have lost if I had not had the charming companionship of these works; to me they have been a fine tonic over and over again, and if I have derived such benefit, should not others (who may not be in a position to own them personally) have, at least, the chance to view them in our galleries? (Goddard, 1951, p. 2)

Joe Eisenberg, who was the director of NERAM for the first two decades of its existence, also understood the importance of a physical engagement with art. When considering the increasing use of technology to facilitate a "viewing" of artwork, he made no effort to hide his disdain: "What a waste of time. Art is the real thing – see it, smell it, touch it" (Waldman, 2014, p. 23). The importance he placed on actually seeing artwork in person is understandable, given that the collection he oversaw for two decades is "widely recognized as a priceless anthology of the artistic impulse in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Australia" (Elphick, 2018). The educational role and value of the art gallery and museum in teacher education has been well

documented (Burnham & Kai-Kee, 2011; Hooper-Greenhill, 1999; Pavlou, 2015), particularly the pivotal role of the regional gallery in developing cultural and community knowledge, developing knowledge about artists' practice and gallery collections, and creating relationships with the community (Mitchell, 2017).

Through his philanthropy Hinton continues to make a posthumous contribution to the artistic and cultural life of Armidale. NERAM has ensured his legacy is preserved by keeping the collection on display with associated resources that contextualize the works for a contemporary audience. As Raymond Wholohan (2014) observes:

[Institutions such as NERAM] have had a proud and substantial history of receiving further benefaction over the years toward developing their respective and respected art collections. Logically, potential benefactors want to endow their collections to institutions with a strong track-record of conserving, preserving, and interpreting donated private collections and cultural gifts for posterity. (para. 3)

In effect, a bequest such as that made by Hinton is a potent catalyst which attracts future benefaction. For example, as a counterpoint to The Hinton Collection, which covers Australian art in the years between 1880 and 1948, the Chandler Coventry Collection of over 200 works offers a more contemporary flavor. Described by James Mollison, the National Gallery of Australia's inaugural Director, as one of the country's most important private collections of contemporary Australian art (NERAM, 2018), it is particularly strong in works from the 1960s and 1970s. Chandler Coventry's (1924-1999) philanthropy was informed by Hinton's approach. Coventry had grown up in the Armidale area and his "earliest encounters with 'high art' were through the Howard Hinton Collection, which he saw as a schoolchild displayed in the rooms and corridors of the Armidale Teachers' College" (Grishin, 2013, p. 24). He offered his collection on the understanding that an art museum would be built which would house both his and Hinton's collections. Coventry collected the works of expressionist and abstractionist painters, in addition to some figurative work. Artists included Ralph Balson (1890-1964), Peter Booth (1940- ), Gunter Christmann (1936-2013), Janet Dawson (1935- ), Elaine Haxton (1909-1999), Leah MacKinnon (1943- ), Michael Taylor (1933- ), Dick Watkins (1937- ) and Brett Whiteley (1939-1992).

# **NERAM – A Regional Jewel**

NERAM was extended in 1997 and now houses six gallery spaces, a Museum of Printing, an artist's studio, conference facilities, a shop and café. Colin Still, the architect for the Stage Two Development, understood that the built environment would exert considerable influence on how visitors would engage with the artwork both inside and outside the gallery space. His philosophy was:

... applied to all aspects of the building: the cafe and the artist studio were built not only to cater for people's activities inside, but also to act as transition spaces where people see beyond the walls and move between inside and outside; the galleries are spaces which not only display works but create a mosaic of art beyond the glass and metal, on to the concrete and out into the open air, the natural grass and scattered trees. (NERAM, 2018, para. 5)

The approach which Still has taken appears to have considered the needs of the visitors to have space and places in which to reflect on the work, which challenges the recurring criticism of many new and renovated museums and galleries that "the desire of the architect to create a signature building [has] ridden roughshod over the needs and aims of the museum" (MacLeod, 2005, p. 10). Interestingly, the architecture draws its inspiration from modernism in its adoption of large open, flowing, and welcome spaces. The regional community is an integral part of NERAM, and the large expanse of glass encourages and celebrates this relationship.

Before assessing the personal and professional opportunities afforded those working in a regional galley or museum, it is worth acknowledging the place these institutions have in the life of their communities. As James Hamilton (2011) argued in connection with regional galleries in England, art and place are specifically inter-related. Galleries and museums such as NERAM, and the artwork they acquire, conserve, and display, are as significant within their memory landscapes as the natural environment:

They exist there because individuals and small groups fought to acquire them for their towns, and went through adversity, making history, to do so. They reflect difference, local nuance and independence of government. (Hamilton, 2011, para. 9)

Joe Eisenberg made a similar point in 2014, and in doing so rejected the view that museums are places that reinforce cultural hegemonies:

I believe art museums belong to the communities in which they are found. I have always tried to democratise the institutions so that people feel comfortable and have a sense of ownership of the art which is inside. I try to provide opportunities for the community to have a meaningful relationship with activities and exhibitions by making these open to their needs and their enjoyment, as well as for education. (Waldmann, 2014, p. 23)

At their best, as Michaela Boland (2012) reminds us, local art galleries "reflect the region back to itself." Armidale, and particularly its arts community, has a very strong sense of what they wish to see in that reflection. Located midway between the two state capitals of Brisbane and Sydney, Armidale was once touted as the capital of a possible Australian state of "New England." With a population of just over 23 000, it is a deceptively cosmopolitan regional center with a vibrant artistic and cultural life, due in no small part to its status as a university town. Rachel Parsons, the Director of NERAM, sees this as one of the most significant benefits of working in a regional gallery:

Your local cultural community tend to be incredibly invested in the museum doing well. They want to see you succeed. They get involved in projects. They volunteer. We have over 100 volunteers working at NERAM, which is amazing and you really feel the sense that what you're doing is important to people. I never felt that working in Brisbane. I thought that the programs we ran were fantastic and people came and they said that they were great but you never felt the sense that what you were doing at your particular space in Brisbane amongst all the other spaces in Brisbane, was the thing that was really connecting people or providing access to art and culture for that community. But here, in a smaller regional space, you really get that sense.

As James Hamilton (2011) noted when assessing the declining fortunes of English regional galleries, there is more at stake for a community than "just paint on canvas". It is an observation that the supporters of NERAM instinctively understand. They have a sense of proprietary interest, particularly in matters associated with the Hinton Collection, as Parsons observes:

The Hinton collection certainly doesn't belong to me as the director. It belongs to the community. It has such a significant history within the New England region, that people really have a strong sense that they are part of that history and that they in part own it ... Then of course, that means that people have strong opinions about how that work should be showed. How much of it should be showed. How often. People are often very unhappy when their favorite artwork is not on the wall.

Who owns the artwork is not as simple a matter as it sounds. Eisenberg, the first Director of NERAM, recalls that some artworks were sold to assist the gallery financially "and tears well in my eyes just saying this" (Waldmann, 2014, p. 25). Though never likely to find any significant support among the NERAM community, or probably any regional institution, the temptation to sell work is understandable, if not quite defensible. NERAM's collection has been variously valued at \$25 million, \$45 million, and \$56 million. The wealth of material at NERAM is not unprecedented. As Raymond Wholohan (2014) observes, regional galleries in New South Wales "hold a large portion of the state's distributed art collection, as well as some of the state's largest and most significant cultural gifts, donated by some of the country's most generous benefactors" (para. 2). That, of course, does not translate into consistent sources of funding, as a Supreme Court case would prove. Faced with a debt to the local council of over \$400,000 (which would not be cleared until 2016), an offer in 2006 from the Director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Edmund Capon, to purchase a half share in Tom Roberts' Mosman's Bay (valued at \$1.8 million) proved tempting to some stakeholders, particularly the Armidale Dumaresq Council who wished to use the windfall to put the New England Regional Art Museum on sound financial footing (Lamont, 2007). The case created deep divisions in the Armidale arts community, and it was not until 2009 that the Supreme Court ruled that such a sale contravened the trust deed put in place by the far-sighted Hinton.

The court case highlighted the financial limitations of the museum's funding framework, as NERAM is not owned by the local government authority unlike a number of other regional galleries in NSW. In 2006 the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery received \$570,000 from Council, Orange Regional Art Gallery received \$650,000 per annum and Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery received \$550,000. Each of these Councils also provided the buildings that house their public galleries (Spendlove, 2006). Over a decade later, the funding from the Armidale Regional Council stood at \$329,848, augmented by \$115,786 from the Margaret Olley Art Trust and \$60,000 from Arts NSW (now Create NSW) towards operating costs in excess of \$800,000. It is the search for funding that shapes the challenges and opportunities that a position at NERAM delivers. Beyond even the satisfaction of working with renowned artwork, a position at a regional gallery of the quality of NERAM brings with it an array of personal and professional benefits, as the following interviews with Rachael Parsons, the Art Museum Director, Belinda Hungerford, the Manager, Exhibitions & Curatorial, and Alexis Rickards, the Education Officer, attest.

## The Journey to NERAM

Interestingly, not one of the three interview subjects were born in Armidale, with only Rickards being a resident when she was first employed by NERAM. In at least one respect, however, their appointments offer a palpable sense of historical continuity. Hinton and Eisenberg placed great value on the actual experience of seeing artwork in person. Parsons, Hungerford, and Rickards arrived in Armidale shaped by formative art experiences that had inculcated in them the critical importance of physically engaging with art. Parsons' exposure to Brisbane art galleries during her final year of schooling "ingrained in [her] an appreciation of these spaces as ... special. Somewhere that has a power that you can really engage with art ..." Having been initially surprised by their daughter's desire to enroll in a university art program, Parson's parents sought the counsel of her school's art teacher. The first piece of advice they received, which would have a significant influence on her later career choice, was to enroll in external art classes in order to build a portfolio. The second was to visit art galleries:

So my dad and I used to take these Saturday or Sunday art crawls. We would go into the Valley or the city center in Brisbane and we would walk around to all of the commercial spaces ... we'd go to QAG [Queensland Art Gallery] as well. We would go to IMA [Institute of Modern Art], we would go to Philip Bacon, Jan Manton, all those kinds of smaller galleries. And because of that experience, I learnt to really love the gallery experience, which is actually kind of unique for a young art student. Lots of art students don't go to exhibitions, don't go to gallery spaces, particularly commercial gallery spaces ... It was something special that I did with my father. You'd really get dressed up, you could have a coffee.

Parsons enrolled in a fine arts and education degree, perhaps in an attempt to ensure that she retained a pathway to a "conventional" career. Within a year, she had dropped education and switched to a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. During her second year she became heavily involved in *Post Datum*, the Queensland University of Technology's (QUT) student art organization, which saw her curate peer exhibitions and programs. By the time she enrolled in her honors and then her Masters, Parsons' practice had shifted from pure art to an artist as curator. Her Masters research showed the influence of those afternoons spent visiting galleries with her father:

[I researched] the physical, emotional, economic, mental barriers that stop people who might want to go to a gallery from going to them. Then I looked at curatorial strategies and methodologies that would perhaps, not necessarily increase, but diversify participation in these kinds of museum spaces.

Whatever concerns Parsons' parents may have had regarding the employment opportunities available to gallery directors would have been allayed by her methodical engagement with the opportunities that were available. She initially worked as a volunteer curator at The Block, QUT's interactive exhibition space. A part time curator's position became available after a few months, which in turn became a full-time curatorial position. Parsons then fell victim to the dreaded restructure and her role disappeared. In retrospect, she believes that this was "probably a really good thing:"

I had essentially been at QUT for my entire adult life as a student and as a tutor. I was also teaching in their art history department and then as a professional employee. So it was probably a good time to spread my wings a little bit and of course the landscape for curatorial roles is highly competitive. There's not a bunch of open curatorial spots just sitting there waiting to be filled.

Nevertheless, a position for a curator opened up at NERAM. After a little over two years in that role, during which she curated the Howard Hinton show, she became Gallery Director after Robert Heather, the previous Director, moved to UNE. Working at NERAM is more, however, than just curating their own collection, for as Parsons explains, with six galleries and 30 exhibitions a year, it is quite an extensive institution for a regional center:

We work hard to ensure that there is a really engaging cross-section of art on display. So while we want to make sure that our collection is highlighted and it's at the center of our exhibition program, we also look to bring in the most exciting and engaging touring exhibitions from across Australia and supporting our local arts ecology as well. New England has a whole range of fantastic artists and a part of what we do is ensuring that those artists have a platform to show their work and to be supported.

Hungerford's exposure to art galleries came a little later than Parson's, but it was no less significant. After school, she worked in publishing and then in children's television production. Later while working in England, she visited galleries and museums in London and on the Continent. Inspired, Hungerford returned to Australia in 2007 and enrolled at the Australian National University (ANU) to study art history and curatorship. After graduating in 2010 with honors, she was employed at the Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney as part of the curatorial team. After stints as a freelancer and then 18 months at the State Library of New South Wales working on the Max Dupain negative archives, she was appointed Manager Exhibitions and Curatorial at NERAM. The benefits of working in a regional gallery are not necessarily confined to professional opportunities, as Hungerford observes:

I wanted to move out of Sydney ... I'm from Sydney, lived most of my life in Sydney and I was tired of the traffic, congestion, the crowds, lack of space of where I was living. I decided to only look for jobs in regional areas ... I think a lot of workers in this industry see regional galleries as a stepping stone to a metropolitan institution ... I was in Sydney, working in significant institutions. So, for me, the move to regional is actually not necessarily to further my career although there are definitely career benefits ... it was more I was searching for a better life work balance, a better place to live. If I think about where I go from here, I would say it would be to another regional institution, which I think is unusual.

Like Hungerford, Rickards also spent time immersed in the London art world and arrived at NERAM via an equally circuitous route. After graduating from school and in spite of being discouraged from pursuing a career in the arts, she moved to Sydney and completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Sydney College of the Arts. After graduation she journeyed to London in order to "immerse myself in the art world." Rickards worked at a small independent art gallery in Hampstead and then in hospitality at the Saatchi Gallery where she "loved being immersed in the amazing art collection and often got to chat with Charles Saatchi … he was a very inspiring

and generous person." After returning to Australia, however, Rickards found it difficult to get a paid position working in the visual arts:

I applied for a job as a fit model for the iconic fashion designer, Lisa Ho. This position merged my two passions – art and fashion. Full of opportunity, this position began my career in the fashion industry, enabling me to flourish in the marketing world over time. Being a fit model and new to the industry enabled me to understand how garments were made, working closely with pattern makers, designers, and retail professionals.

After a ten-year career in graphic design/marketing during which she worked for four different fashion designers, Rickards was ready for a change:

While I was in Sydney, I craved the art world again ... the fashion world was laying heavily on my shoulders in terms of the environmental impacts. I always worked in high fashion, and it got to me in the end, the consumerism side of things. I wanted to work back in the art world and I wanted to help people rather than make people buy.

Rickard's partner Gareth was originally from Armidale, and still had family there who were confronting a serious drought that had begun in mid-2017. Droughts are such a regular feature of the New South Wales landscape that the State government has moved away from treating them as natural disasters, and instead characterizes them as a business risk that requires forward planning (Department of Primary Industries, 2020). In addition to a desire to help her partner's family through the drought and leave the fashion industry, Rickards also sought "space and ... a better quality of life" for her two children. Parsons and Hungerford had also welcomed the shift to a regional community, but they arrived in Armidale with a position at NERAM already confirmed. Rickards applied for the position of Education Officer after her arrival, and as we shall see in the following discussion of the challenges and opportunities inherent in working at a regional gallery, the breadth of her experience more than mitigated any concern there may have been about her lack of experience in schools. It also helped that she understood and embraced the NERAM culture, for she too believed that "coming into the art museum is the key to education and exposure to the art world for life."

# Working Outside the Metropolis: The Challenges and Opportunities of Working in a Regional Museum

Parsons, Hungerford, and Rickards acknowledge the challenges and opportunities of working in a regional gallery in a hierarchy that reflects the demands of their particular roles. As Director, Parsons identified funding and resourcing as key issues. Hungerford, in her role as Manager, Exhibitions & Curatorial, identified resourcing. As the Education Officer, Rickards revealed her central challenge in terms of facilitating access to the collection and providing a range of relevant and engaging educational opportunities. Parsons and Hungerford's concerns are exacerbated by the fact that NERAM is only one of two independent regional galleries in New South Wales (the other being the Bank Art Museum in Moree). NERAM has seven employees, but only Parsons and Hungerford are full-time. The other six part time roles are collections manager, front of house coordinator, finance, gallery technician, education officer and two part-time gallery assistants who keep the museum open on the weekends and do "front of house" tasks. Parsons acknowledges that she would prefer that all of those roles were full time, with additional support for media and communications and fundraising. Hungerford also identifies similar challenges:

The biggest challenge has been the lack of resources ... any larger exhibition is coming from elsewhere. So the issues around the budget for freight is a massive change from what I've been used to living in the city. Not being able to call on contract labor as easily is another. Often, we have big touring shows come in, we need more muscle to help bring those crates in.

The arts community in Armidale, at least as it pertains to NERAM, is in Hungerford's view made up of people who are

generally retired, although some still work. They've lived in Armidale all their life or a long time. Some have married into Armidale, so to speak. They're educated. They're sophisticated, they're quite worldly, and they're generous people. They want NERAM to succeed.

This proprietary interest in NERAM can, however, be a double-edged sword, as Hungerford acknowledges:

A lot of people here were involved with the raising of funds for NERAM and the building of NERAM and bringing the works into NERAM. They definitely feel that sense of ownership, which is wonderful that they're so invested. But it can be a challenge in that they have different expectations of what we can deliver or how we should be delivering certain things, which we try and meet.

Beyond these generic challenges that probably confront any regional institution, Parsons, Hungerford, and Rickards see only the opportunities afforded them by their work at NERAM. Parsons and Hungerford arrived at NERAM after actively seeking an opportunity outside of a major metropolitan center, while Rickards was already domiciled in Armidale when she was first employed. They do not view the plethora of opportunities on offer and the potential for an accelerated career trajectory that they might afford as a means of returning to a major center like Sydney, Melbourne, or Brisbane to work in a better resourced institution. Each has embraced the personal and professional benefits of regional living generally, and a position at NERAM specifically. Though Parsons acknowledges the constant pressure to source funding, this is always articulated in the context of the associated opportunities:

Regional art museums are amazing places to expand your skills and your knowledge of how a museum is run because you have to do everything. You have to contribute to all aspects of the business. So I of course do all of our strategic planning and our visioning and that kind of higher level directorial stuff, but I also do some of the social media posting. I will curate an exhibition. If a tour needs to come in and there's no one to give it, I will do it.

This flexibility does require a particular mindset that goes far beyond just being adaptable. Parsons argues that it requires you to get rid of your ego or your sense of 'that's not my job'. You have to really just be able to go look, if a wall needs to be painted and I'm the only one here to paint it, sure, let's do that. Let's get this done. You also have to be able to inspire that from the rest of your team. Everyone on NERAM's team is prepared to do everything from their own specific, highly qualified position description, through to setting out and stacking chairs for an event.

Hungerford sees this collaborative imperative extending beyond Armidale to include other regional institutions:

I think Sydney is very cliquey. The commercial gallery scene there is quite competitive. I think everyone is a bit more protective about their roles in the city, which is not surprising. I think the regional network is more helpful. We do want to help each other, especially with our own touring shows. We do want to support other regional galleries' touring shows as well, and it's important to do that.

The issues of funding and staffing nevertheless have permeated the approach adopted by the current team at NERAM. It requires a mix of pragmatism and creativity, one that includes initiatives ranging from a collaboration with the University of New England's Discovery program, an outreach, engagement, and education program, to flamenco nights at the Museum. Where it may also have demanded a varied approach is in recruitment. Rickards was employed as NERAM's Education Officer despite not having a background in schools. What in other circumstances may have been seen as a deficit became a potential strength:

I came at it from a different angle and said, "I'm not a teacher and I never will try to be a teacher, but what I want to do is build relationships with teachers, build relationships with the public by using my background in marketing and communications." I've also had experience in building websites and in graphic design, so I can create appealing visual learning material, as well as building relationships.

In addition to her industry experience, Rickards brings an artistic sensibility that is untrammeled by curriculum expectations and the demands of classroom instruction. Using her own daughter's experience at kindergarten as both a guide and a warning, she approaches the new role without preconceptions, or at least, a different set of preconceptions:

When I run programs with younger students, I never, ever, want them to copy something or to feel like just because they are doing a landscape, the sky has to be blue and the grass green. I want them to think outside the square and have their own interpretations of things. Since my daughter has been in kindergarten this year, she's starting to draw like she *should*, rather than how she wants. She loves art so she was doing these hilarious Dr Seuss sort of characters and they had really long bodies and they were all warped. They were full of character. As the months go on, they're changing and they're becoming proportionate and it seems like she's becoming what she thinks she should. Although Rickards has not trained as a teacher, she is well aware of the importance of students taking risks and facilitating open-ended tasks that encourage the exercise of the imagination and enable them to see a range of possibilities (Eisner, 2009).

Each of the participants bring what Maxine Greene (2004) describes as their "lived lives" to their pivotal roles at NERAM. It is evident that their past experiences in the arts sector have equipped them to respond to the unique challenges inherent in a regional gallery. In addition, their awareness and appreciation of the historical legacy related to the Hinton Collection, its links to art education and Australian art history more broadly, and their active engagement with the regional community of Armidale have enabled NERAM to ensure it is positioned as an art gallery that is relevant and authentic.

## Conclusion

The Howard Hinton collection is a key collection of Australian art history which was bequeathed to the Armidale Teachers' College by Hinton, who "wished to spread the appreciation of art throughout the State" and thought "no better means could be found of doing this than by inspiring young teachers" (Newling, 1951, p. 4). When Hinton was asked why he gave so many pictures to the College, he replied:

My object was to provide a complete collection illustrating the development of Australian art from eighteen eighty onwards, and my action in making the gift to the Armidale Teachers' College was prompted by my great interest in Australian education and my desire that the Collection should be available in perpetuity for succeeding generations of students at the College. (Newling 1951, p. 6)

Hinton emulates the views of many noted arts educators and theorists, including Elliot Eisner and Maxine Greene, who also recognized the intrinsic value of the arts in a holistic education. Institutions such as NERAM continue the important tradition of enabling any visitor to the gallery the opportunity to physically encounter works of art, to engage with different perspectives and stories from a diverse range of artists. Regional art galleries are critical in providing opportunities for viewers to interpret and emotionally connect with a range of artwork. As Burnham and Kai-Kee (2011) acknowledge, "like the artist's own process of creation, experiencing a work of art is not a regular and predictable process" (p. 16). Institutions such as NERAM contribute to providing viewers with art experiences which have a plethora of interpretive possibilities. The vital role of the regional gallery in enabling its community to see its own history and be part of a broader global history is one of which Hinton would be proud.

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## The Meanings of Possessions of Adolescents in an Art-Talented Class: From Transitional Object Perspective

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**Abstract**: A transitional object, an intermediate area of experience between an infant and the major caregiver, is one of the most notable contributions of pediatrician and psychoanalyst Winnicott. During the time of separation-individuation, a transitional object helps calm the infant and make them feel secure, increases their sense of control, and assists them in coping with frustration. The second stage of individualization occurs in adolescence, during which time the transitional experiences function similarly as they did in early life. The present study tries to understand the collective meaning and relationships of visual art creativity in adolescents from an object-relations perspective. The focus group consisted of nine members from a 7<sup>th</sup>-grade art-talented class. The results show that adolescents' various collected objects are not necessarily their transitional objects, but the transitional object may be among one of the collected possessions. Moreover, a transitional object may be transformed to different activities, including visual art, by adolescents. However, the overwhelming pressure to learn in the art-talented class may have a negative impact on the adolescent's attitude toward art making, which may cause some of the teenagers to transfer their attachment from visual art making to other forms of creative activities.

Keywords: separation-individualization. adolescent, possessions, transitional object, transitional phenomenon

理論中的過渡性客體,指嬰孩創造出來替代照顧者,協助自己安定身心,得到安全感的客 體。此客體介於母親與嬰孩之間的中介地帶,在嬰孩分離個體化時期,協助嬰孩學習掌 控及自主性,同時是個體之象徵化能力的開始。青少年時期再次面臨邁向獨立的成長期 ,形成對過渡性客體的需求。本研究以一個九人組成的七年級美術班學生為焦點訪談團 體,試圖由客體關係心理學解讀青少年珍藏品的種類,擁有原由和心理意義,並探究其 與視覺藝術創作之間的關係。研究結果顯示,美術班青少年的珍藏品種類多元,不一定 全部屬於過渡性客體,但個人的過渡性客體可能包含在這些東西當中。再者,青少年珍 藏物件的原因與金錢價值較不相關,但與心理感受較為相關。最後,這些青少年因其藝 術創作之專長與興趣,使藝術創作成為具有過渡性特質的心智活動。然而,美術班的學 習壓力,同時造成部分青少寧可遠離視覺藝術創作,轉投入其他相關的藝術創作形式。

關鍵詞:分離個體化、青少年、珍藏品、過渡性客體、過渡性現象

#### 1. Introduction

Transitional objects are developed in an intermediate area between one's inner reality and the outer world by one's illusion in early life. Through imagination, fantasy, daydreams, and creativity, one is able to show a sense of control, integrate the inner mind, and stay calm and secure. The phenomenon occurs in the first separation-individuation stage in early childhood, and the second stage of individualization occurs in adolescence, during which time the transitional experiences function similarly as they did in early life. Moreover, this phenomenon will be repeated throughout the human life span when the need for autonomy arises. This study investigates adolescents' transitional objects. The motivations, purposes, questions, and limitations of this study are discussed below.

#### **1.1 Research Motivations**

Adolescents confront drastic biological and psychological changes on their way to adulthood. They face challenges when learning to be independent. For example, after the Ministry of Education in Taiwan lifted the hair ban in 1987, junior high school students were able to choose their own hair styles, no longer being restricted to same old short, dull-looking hairstyle. The philosophy of discipline was not as strict as before, either. Therefore, junior high school students were allowed to have greater freedom to determine their own behavior. Collecting small toy figurines as decoration and creating interesting little visual art products are important ways for students to express themselves. Artistic expression ranges from scribbling on one's schoolbag and classroom table to making personal photo stickers, creating paper cards, storing badges or small toy figurines, reproducing popular cultural products, and so on. The adolescents express themselves in various creative ways. Why does such a phenomenon fall in one's adolescence in particular? What are the motivations and purposes behind these behaviors? How can we better understand these phenomena through research? This study aims to answer these questions and gain a better understanding of the adolescent.

#### **1.2 Purposes and Questions**

In order to fulfill developmental tasks, adolescents are trying to be independent and to identify themselves; however, their behaviors may be different from individuals in other developmental stages. By viewing the adolescents' behavior of collecting possessions and intimate objects as experiencing autonomy in the separation-individuation stage from the perspective of Winnicott's transitional object theory, this research attempts to identify the relationship between a transitional object and creativity in a visual art task in adolescents from a 7<sup>th</sup>-grade art-talented class.

According to the purposes above, the research aims are as follows:

- (1) Inquire about the adolescent behavior of collecting possessions and the reasons behind it from a transitional object perspective.
- (2) Discuss the meanings of adolescents' possessions from a transitional object perspective.
- (3) Explore the relationship between adolescents' transitional objects and their visual art tasks.

#### **1.3 Research Limitations**

Subjects of this research are nine 7th graders — six females and three males — from an art-talented class in a junior high school in the Taipei area. In order to understand theoretical issues related to separation-individuation, transitional objects, and art experiences, researchers held a focus group. However, the behaviors of the participants may differ from those who live in rural areas since the study was conducted in Taipei City. Second, the limited number of participants, the uneven gender ratio, and the selected age group may also influence the outcomes of the research. The main research method used a qualitative approach. Regarding questions about how to identify transitional objects, how to help participants correctly understand the meaning of a transitional object, and how to help participants to talk about their possessions with transitional object meanings, interviewing the participants in a focus group seemed to be the best way to find out the answers. Finally, some of the participants had limited time to be interviewed due to having to go to cram school right after the interview, which might also have an impact on the results of this research.

## 2. Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena

#### 2.1 The Concept of Human Development by Winnicott

As a pediatrician and a psychoanalyst, Winnicott developed a notable human developmental theory when working with children. He created several influential concepts such as the "good enough" mother, transitional objects, true self and false self, etc. For this study, transitional objects are the most relevant of these theories. In order to grasp the concept of the transitional object, developmental perspectives by Winnicott are described below.

#### (1) Absolute Dependence

Winnicott (1953) stated that a newborn infant stays in an "absolute dependence" stage because he cannot stand alone from his mother; he is totally dependent and assumes the omnipotence of the major caregiver. During this stage, the infant believes in his own omnipotence because he cannot distinguish himself from the major caregiver, Winnicott observed, in developing a sense of self, an infant is unable to perceive his body as himself but can sense his fist or a part of his blanket as "not me." When the infant is growing, he can gradually recognize "me," himself, and "not me," outside of himself. Clair (2004) expressed that the infant explores the environment to find "me" and "not me," and the mother's major role is to provide opportunities for the infant to begin to interact with environmental objects and to establish a relationship with them.

#### (2) Relative Dependence

Clair (2004) states that when an infant is unable to operate "not me" in the environment, his sense of omnipotence is reduced, and the infant is shifted to the stage of "relative dependence." Winnicott (1971) believed the infant probably could not tolerate the realistic situation without protection because he would sense his dependence on his mother and be anxious while she is away. However, transitional phenomena could help the infant develop the ability to sense his inner reality and outer world in a realistic situation. During this period of time, the environment plays an important role of developing the concept of "me" while the mother or the major caregiver would be the most important object to interact with. If the mother neglects the child, then the infant may become reliant on fantasy and develop a "false self." A "good enough mother" will both fulfill and not fulfill the baby's omnipotent fantasy. Therefore, the baby has a chance to interact with the environment by himself and develop the "true self;" he needs to get comfort and security from the "not me" object, but also overcome his frustration and anxiety on his own when facing reality (Li, 2000; Winnicott, 1971).

#### (3) Toward Independence

Clair (2004) explains that a baby would gradually need the caregiver less and less and would instead grow attached to something soft, which is a substitution for his mother when the mother is away. At this moment, the child would be able to develop independence and other mental abilities and integrate himself and the environment. This is what Winnicott called "toward independence."

Three stages of "absolute dependence," "relative dependence," and "toward independence" clearly describe the process of mother-baby interaction in the early developmental stages. Transitional objects and transitional phenomena occur during the independence stage.

#### 2.2 Identification of Transitional Objects

Winnicott (1953) started to discuss the theory of transitional objects and transitional phenomena in 1951. He observed that a baby is able to wave his fist, to play with his fingers or thumbs, and to stimulate the oral area to satisfy his instinctive pleasure. After several months, the baby starts to find a soft blanket or a fluffy toy to play with. Winnicott (1971) stated that the soft blanket or the fluffy toy is the first "not me" possession. With the characteristic of separateness, the ownership of the object is created by the baby when facing the issue of separation-individuation. This object comes from the baby's illusion which portrays the decrease of his omnipotent feeling, and it exists between self and important others, thus assisting the baby in experiencing "me" and "not me." Therefore, holding a blanket or a fluffy toy helps a baby to learn self concept and autonomy independently.

Winnicott (1971) believed that the intermediate area of experience stands between subject and object, helping a baby to realize his limited ability and gradually learn to accept the reality. As a substitution of the mother, the baby invents his transitional object as a safe area without negating the sense of separation.

Clair (2004) explained Winnicott's theory, and he pointed out that transitional phenomena mean more than transitional objects. Such phenomena first happen when an infant tries to use his omnipotent fantasy to create and manipulate a concrete object around him—such as sucking his thumb and touching his blanket—to avoid anxiety when his mother is away. Transitional objects like fingers and blankets are objects existing concretely in physical reality and are used to substitute for the mother's breast. Transitional objects bring comfort to the infant; the objects are neither the real mother nor fantasy, but are in the infant's intermediate area of experience. Winnicott (1971) observed the importance of transitional objects, or an object that the infant carries all the time and is sometimes as important as his mother. It helps solve the psychological problems of anxiety and loneliness, and decreases depression, which makes it "an object of anti-anxiety" (p. 5).

Winnicott (1971) perceived illusion as a basic human experience, and the transitional object is the result of illusion, which symbolizes the baby's ability to distinguish reality from fantasy. The omnipotent illusion allows the baby to create transitional objects and helps him march toward independence. This experience can't be ignored because it stands between the outer and inner

reality and provides a sense of security and comfort to the baby when he feels anxious. The transitional phenomenon usually occurs when the baby is 4-12 months old, or even much later. Depending on one's age, sometimes it could also be transferred to some proper interests or related behavior.

However, Litt (1986) found in his research:

- (1) Transitional object attachment is not a general phenomenon in a child's developmental process.
- (2) Transitional object attachment is more common in the middle and upper socioeconomic class family, which may be related to the parenting style.
- (3) None of the following are relevant to transitional object attachment: sleeping environment, feeding styles, gender, birth order, number of siblings, when breast feeding stops, number of caregivers, etc.
- (4) Transitional object attachment is usually continued in 7- or 8-year-olds or even in adolescence, but no evidence shows that the use of transitional objects is associated with psychological illness.
- (5) Some evidence shows that using a transitional object or not may be due to personality differences.

No matter how people identify the transitional object, it exists only when the parents provide opportunities for a baby to have control over his transitional object. Moreover, the transitional object seems to have its own temperate vitality. Winnicott (1971) implied that the transitional object would lose its meaning when one grows up, but wouldn't be forgotten by the owner. The forms of transitional objects can be transformed over time. Boys tend to love hard objects (Kamptner, 1995) or electric games (Hull, 1985), while girls tend to transfer to the need of interpersonal relationships, family love, literature (Berzoff, 1989), or a diary (Downey, 1978a; Sosin, 1983). However, there is almost no gender difference in one's first transitional object.

#### 2.3 The Meaning of the Transitional Object in Adolescents

Many scholars consider the transitional object to portray characteristics of a mother—such as caring, soothing, and providing a sense of security—and thus it functions as a substitution for the mother. As a product interacting between the baby and the environment, the transitional object helps one to learn independence, subjectivity, constancy, and consideration (Boniface & Graham, 1979; Garrison & Earls, 1982; Kamptner, 1995; Passman, 1976, 1977; Winnicott, 1953) However, there are few studies about transitional objects beyond childhood.

Regarding the developmental psychology of adolescents, Freud thought that adolescents are in the genital stage, maturing in sexual development and seeking a person of a different gender as a loving object. Yet, Freud only pointed out that sexual drives would produce inner conflicts; he did not describe the detailed biological and psychological changes that take place during adolescence. Erikson viewed human development from a social perspective, emphasizing developmental crises and missions at different ages, and suggested that adolescents would confront the challenges of identity and successfully adapt if they overcome the crises (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2008). Transitional experiences solve the problem and allow one to avoid the inner conflict or confront developmental crises. Like the baby manipulating the blanket to display self-control, adolescents may use transitional objects to reduce anxiety and uncertainty. Tabin

(1992) emphasized that self-objectification activates the process of self-integration in infancy and reappears in adolescence.

Usually, transitional objects can be totally manipulated by the owner, who will integrate the inner self and change their sense of the environment when interacting between the inner and outer reality. Tabin (1992) stated that self-objectification means using one's self as his transitional object; the transitional object symbolizes a part of the body or the extension of the self. When one is in his early life, how important the transitional object is to him may depend on how often he carries it. For adolescents, possessions may have similar functions. Adults who carry specific objects when traveling may experience the transformed transitional phenomenon as well. Emotionally and cognitively speaking, the transitional object reduces anxiety for the owner and leads to self-realization.

To summarize, functions of transitional objects are integrated below:

- (1) Transitional objects provide psychological comfort. This is a main point of transitional object theory by Winnicott. Similarly, Hong (1978) indicated that the baby could keep calm and secure when associating the transitional object with his mother.
- (2) Transitional objects improve self-concept. Tolpin (1972) stated that a baby enhances his self-concept by fantasying the transitional object, which indicates that the baby somehow devoted himself to his transitional object.
- (3) Transitional objects contain the concept of self-objectification. Tabin (1992) stated, transitional objects can help a baby deal with the issues of self-control and self-continuity because of the way that a baby uses transitional objects to exhibit himself as his transitional object. Therefore, transitional objects can be controlled by their owners, which is something that self-image cannot achieve.

Tabin (1992) thought that the process of self-objectifying by a baby would resurface when he grows up, especially when adolescents are dealing with the crisis of self-control and self-continuity.

Moreover, Passman (1987) and Jalongo (1987) thought that using transitional objects is not a symptom of illness, and more scholars indicate that holding transitional objects is good for psychological and biological health (Boniface & Graham,1979; Mahalski, 1983; Provence & Ritvo, 1961). Newson, Newson, and Mahalski (1982) and Boniface and Graham (1979) pointed out that the transitional object could increase self strength. However, some scholars found that there is no difference whether one uses transitional objects or not (Sherman, Hertzig, Austrian & Shapiro, 1981).

Sandler (1985) implied that it is a normal defense mechanism to use transitional objects regressively and exaggeratingly in adolescents. Downey (1978b) described that the value of the defense mechanism in transitional objects lies in the meaning of self-comfort and self-actualization. From Tabin's (1992) point of view, self-objectification explains the need for transitional objects and is mostly transformed into autonomous learning, which is related to the issue of self-integration in adolescents.

Furthermore, Winnicott, like Freud, believed that sexual drive is the motivation of adolescents whether they are aware of it or not. Therefore, adolescents' immaturity needs to be allowed. Such immaturity, including creative thoughts, sense of freshness, concepts of new life, etc., is the element of health. Jacobs (1995) stated that if immaturity is a natural process in personality development, one cannot pull up the seedlings in order to help them grow faster. Although personality development cannot be formed through education, the parents can provide opportunities and room for such development.

Hamilton (1999) extended the idea of the transitional object which appears by illusion in early life. He believed that the transitional object never stops being transformed into various interests and activities at different stages of life in order to adjust individual matters and emotional sustenance in the latent stage, during puberty, and in early adulthood.

From the theories above, most scholars believed that the adolescents are at a unique moment for their physical and mental development as they are facing sexual drives, actively establishing social and self identity, and learning to be independent. Their ability to create could satisfy the need for control by manipulating art materials. The behavior of self-control through art making is a concrete way of creating a space between self and object, the inner and outer world, fantasy and reality. Art can be viewed as a safe transitional space for learning and promoting independence and integration.

## 3. Transitional Objects of Adolescents

With calm and secure functions, transitional objects influence the development of integration during childhood and adolescence as well. However, theoretically speaking, there are individual differences in the process of transitional object transformation; thus, this study will attempt to explore the issue of transitional object transformation.

#### 3.1 The Meaning of Transitional Object Transformation

Tolpin (1971) stated, as an illusion and substitution of the mother figure, the transitional object would become the source of security, helping one to develop from maternal regulation to self-regulation. Schneiderman (2000) indicated that the infantile transitional object could even process the symbolic alter ego; therefore, the area between subject and object would stimulate one's ability to symbolize.

Winnicott (1953) called the experienced transitional area "intermediate space," describing the place between self and not self, reality and fantasy. Galligan (1994) implied that there is no clear border of this space, and Schecter (1983) pointed out that young children connect the areas when playing imaginatively. In the process of play, children experience three states:

- (1) Children stay in a fantasy world when playing with an egocentric attitude.
- (2) Existing substantially in reality, the object can still be experienced by children during play.
- (3) Even when children stay in a fantasy world, they can still truly connect with the real subject and the object.

The three steps display the overlapping reality of the subject and the object, which is neither a self-centered illusion nor a concrete object reality. When children play, draw, tell stories, and write literature, they stay in the space between fantasy and reality without experiencing any conflict.

Winnicott (1953) thought that the transitional object would lose its meaning gradually as children develop; yet, if the environment allowed children to play, draw, and tell stories freely, then they were able to transfer the transitional object attachment into creative activities. Schecter (1983) indicated that creative activities would bring pleasure and satisfaction for children and people of all ages. Moreover, creative tasks would help promote self-esteem if the subject could show his autonomy and self-control under regulation.

Illusions can be transformed into creativity in a relaxing, playful atmosphere. Therefore, adults' creative activities are similar to children's play. However, only a good enough mother can provide opportunities that could help one to change outer reality to fantasy. For adults, whether or not opportunities are present in the environment is crucial. The process of developing abundant creativity may lead one to an unfamiliar territory filled with curiosity, which also presents the increasing possibility of dealing with anxiety. The skills of creativity usually come from independence in early life. One is able to take a creative adventure only when one is in a state of independence. Winnicott (1953) believed that similar situations would happen in different stages of life when the need for independence increased. However, while daydreaming won't directly produce creative work, it could become the pathway to invention; moreover, personal memories combined with historical fantasy might produce mythology.

Fantasy is an important characteristic of transitional phenomena. Transitional objects and transitional phenomena are both a creation of one's mind; thus, Winnicott (1971) tended to think that people could find extended features of transitional phenomena in the whole cultural environment. Theoretically, the transitional object is created through opportunities given by parents in one's early life and will recur for the rest of one's life. This intermediate concept between inner reality and the outer world actually permeates one's life through many forms such as play, creative arts, religion, imagination, creative science, dreams, amulets, ceremonies and so on, which are all extensions of transitional phenomena that finally become different forms of art and cultural activities.

#### **3.2 Possessions of Adolescents**

In order to inquire about the relationship between transitional objects and possessions of adolescents, related literature is discussed below.

Chen, Lin, and Lin (2004) used questionnaires to investigate the collecting behaviors of elementary and junior high school students. This research showed that more and more scholars were interested in the meaning of collecting behaviors, and they found that human beings exhibit collecting behaviors from a young age. One could confirm the existence of self by collecting, which also might imply different psychological and emotional meanings and could be viewed as very early cultural activity. Kamptner's (1995) quantitative research approach used questionnaires for 264 adolescents aged 14-18 and attempted to prove the connection of early life experiences and the meaning of possessions. The results showed that treasured possessions provide security and comfort, symbolizing the connection of the self and the mother, which is

able to decrease pressure and anxiety and increase independence. The results of these two studies are associated with the transitional phenomenon.

Though the research of Chen, Lin, and Lin (2004) focused on the varieties and habits of collecting behavior, it did not mention any psychological meaning. Kamptner (1995) found six factors related to collecting behavior. Among those factors, entertainment, materiality, social factors, and outer-self factors have the largest difference from the meaning mentioned by object relation theorists. Moreover, Chen, Lin, and Lin (2004) pointed out that the trendiness and decorativeness of collected objects were important for collectors, while Kamptner (1995) mentioned that the collected objects reflect self-identity and the mirroring of one's self. Both studies also discussed the factors of age, gender, social issues, and memory of the past.

In order to understand the transitional objects of adolescents, this study drew from the two studies discussed above. Even though Kamptner (1995) tried to explore the deeper meaning of adolescents' transitional objects, the quantitative research approach seems to be unable to yield such conclusions. In this study, the researcher provides an idea of adjusting the research methodology as outlined below:

#### (1) The Possible Limitations of a Questionnaire

Chen, Lin, and Lin (2004) used the term "collection" while Kamptner (1995) used the term "treasured possession" in their research. However, "treasured possession" possibly implies the monetary value of the products and might mislead research participants. Although questionnaires offer quick results, it is rather difficult to obtain answers given with psychological comfort and in a non-substitutable manner. Moreover, it is even more difficult to find answers related to the possible transformation of transitional objects in different age groups.

#### (2) The Possibility of a Qualitative Research Approach

When using a transitional object as a substitution for the mother, the key is that the object provides security and comfort. The object could decrease anxiety during the stage of separation-individuation. Possessions may bring pleasure and have social functions, but do not necessarily have the functions of the transitional object. If a study only explores the varieties of possessions, it is not enough and may be unable to obtain the answers of the psychological meaning of the objects. Therefore, a qualitative approach may strengthen the research design.

#### (3) Results Showed Multiple Meanings of Transitional Objects

Mirroring, self-identify and social connection all exist in the meaning of the infantile transitional object. As for adolescents, the irreplaceable meaning of a transitional object is wider, yet possessions are more or less within the meaning of it. Self-objectification, as Tabin (1992) said, is a way of using illusion to establish a transitional object by oneself and is good for enhancing interaction between the self and the environment. Qualitative research may help to integrate the multiple meanings of the transitional object.

Furby (1978) and Belk (1991) thought that valuable possessions could help adolescents to experience independence and were good for the development of self-identity. More scholars pointed out that the function of possessions was similar to the transitional object that exists in early life, which increases security and comfort, enhances connection to the mother, and decreases pressure (Berg, 1982; Downey, 1978b; Rosenthal, 1981; Sosin, 1983; Straetz, 1976).

Besides, consciously or unconsciously, separation anxiety can happen in adolescence, and the object of separation might be the family or the familiar environment. In order to stay calm and secure when experiencing separation anxiety, adolescents might seek to attach themselves to specific objects to substitute their parents or family, the source of security.

#### 3.3 A Focus Group

According to what is described above, this research uses a qualitative research approach to explore transitional objects of adolescents. Krueger and Casey (2008) stated that the focus group assists the researcher to efficiently explore specific experiences in a simple way. Therefore, a focus group interview was conducted in this study.

Before the focus group was conducted, the researcher explained the purposes and needs of this study to the teacher of the art-talented class. Research subjects were selected through purposeful sampling and the teacher's assistance. Seven students who collect objects were willing to participate in this study. The researcher established relationships with the participants in the preparation meeting (February 7, 2007 at 11a.m.) and showed them pictures to explain the meaning of personal possessions and the purposes of this research. The pictures showed objects that might possibly be possessions of adolescents, such as keychains, drop ornaments, action figures, bolsters, Japanese capsule toys, candy toys, various stationeries, and so on. Interestingly, it seemed that participants were not attracted to those objects. Two of them stated immediately that they didn't own similar objects, and two other participants wondered whether they would be able to participate because the things they liked were quite different. The researcher affirmed that as long as they were collecting something, they could participate in this study. The researcher then made an appointment with them for a formal interview. Before they left, the adolescents in the preparation meeting started to exchange information about where to find an art studio to sharpen their skills. It seemed that art learning was much more important to them than the issue of collecting.

- 1. Identify the items you own from the pictures. Please introduce similar items you have in your schoolbag, on the school table, or in the drawer.
- 2. Please describe why you like these items. Why do you collect them?
- 3. Please describe under what circumstance you would want to have them.
- 4. After you purchase them, what do you do with them? Do you put them in order?
- 5. What are the feelings that you have when you look at them?
- 6. If these things were lost, what would you do? Would you buy the exact same thing to replace it? Would you find something similar? Or would you try to do something to fix it?
- 7. Are the things you collect all the same type of thing? What does your collection mean to you?
- 8. Please describe your deeper feelings toward these collections.
- 9. Is there any correlation between the things you collect and your creative artwork?
- 10. How do you feel about visual art? What does art-making mean to you?

Table 1. Interview questions for the focus group

After the preparation meeting, two more students were also interested in this study and joined the formal interview. In the end, there were 9 participants in total – six females and three males – joining the focus group interview in the art room at school. The interview only lasted about one hour because students needed to rush to cram school. Questions used in the focus group aimed to answer the research questions, including categories of possessions, reasons for collecting, emotional factors, personal meanings of art making, and possibilities of transforming one's possessions into creative works. The process of this focus group emphasized the interaction of group members, attempting to guide members to talk more about the focus issues. Questions are listed in Table 1.

The researcher and all of the participants sat in a circle in the art room. The researcher assigned each one a number in order (number 1 was the one on the right side of the researcher, and so on). Numbers 1-4 were female, numbers 5-7 were male, and numbers 8-9 were female.

Among all research participants, numbers 1 and 4 concentrated on answering questions and expressed themselves clearly. Participant number 5 showed his great interest in the research topic. Numbers 6 and 7 were not very cooperative and interfered with the process of interview. Numbers 8 and 9 were co-operative but expressed a lot of negative feelings due to their sense of inferiority and frustration about not having a good enough artistic performance. At the end of the focus group discussion, participants were willing to share their collections by taking pictures.

After the focus group, the researcher read the transcript, marked the main points, coded sentences, and arranged meaningful themes. The researcher tried to analyze results as objectively as possible. Two experts who had a professional specialty in object relations helped to verify the validity of the results.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The research is based on the theory of transitional objects and tries to understand adolescents' collecting behavior. Participants of the focus group came from a 7<sup>th</sup>-grade art-talented class. The results show rich contents.

### 4.1 Categories and Reasons of Owning Possessions

Kamptner (1995) stated that possessions of adolescents tend to be materialistic. His research shows that males tend to have 3C computer products while females tend to have valuable things such as necklaces. Chen, Lin, and Lin (2004) found that adolescents had a wide range of possessions which were not necessarily expensive. In reality, expensive objects were rarely found in their research. Additionally, there was no gender difference in collecting decorative objects. Most of the objects were gifts from others.

According to research data (see Table 2), possessions can be categorized into three different groups: valuable products, unpurchased items or gifts, and art works by the owner or do-it-yourself (DIY) goods.

(1) Valuable products include: drop ornaments (#1, 3, 5, 8), Japanese capsule toys (#5, 8), keychains (#1), Manga (#4), posters of favorite idols (#9), picture albums of traditional hand puppet shows (#2), tourist souvenirs (#2, 3), stamps (#5, 6),

and movie posters (#7). These collections are mostly gifts from friends and relatives (#2, 3, 6, 7), objects bought with personal allowance (#4, 8, 9), or both (#1, 5).

- (2) Unpurchased items or gifts include: advertisement leaflets (#2, 3), tourist souvenirs such as labels and flyers (#2), memo pads from hotels, advertising leaflets from museums or theme parks (#3), and product tags from clothes (#7).
- (3) Art works and DIY goods include: taking photos and storing them in a personal blog (#8), DIY action figure from a Japanese capsule toy (#5).

Participant	Varieties of possessions
No. 1 (F)	drop ornaments (Snoopy, Doraemon), keychains
No. 2 (F)	picture albums of traditional hand puppet shows, exotic products (dream catcher, bags from aborigine, wooden shoes from Holland), tourist souvenirs (labels, advertising leaflets)
No. 3 (F)	Thank You cards from wedding, tourist souvenirs, drop ornaments, memo pads from hotels, advertising leaflets from museums or theme parks
No. 4 (F)	Manga, especially the fantastic style
No. 5 (M)	Japanese capsule toys with human action figures inside, picture albums of Japanese capsule toys, drop ornaments, stamps
No. 6 (M)	Stamps, pet (stag beetle)
No. 7 (M)	product tags from clothes, movie posters
No. 8 (F)	drop ornaments, notebooks, Japanese capsule toys, necklaces, something special, taking photography and storing in personal blog
No. 9 (F)	posters of specific idols

Table 2. Varieties of possessions from research participants

By simply discussing "why do you collect them?" in the focus group, research data shows different reasons for collecting possessions. External factors include attractive appearance (#1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8), unintentional action (#3, 5, 6), and influence from others (#4, 6). Specific personal factors include good memories (#3), wish fulfillment (#2, 4), personal love (#5, 7, 8), and idolism (#9). Internal factors include visual pleasure (#1, 3, 5, 6, 8), emotional sustenance (#1, 2, 3, 4, 8), releasing pressure (#3), identification with an idol (#9), and inspiration of creativity (#2, 4, 5, 7, 8).

#### (1) External Factors

- (a) Attractive appearance: good looking (#7, 8, 5), adorable (#1, 3), pretty (#6), beautifying effects (#1). Visual pleasure is the most important reason that motivates adolescents to collect.
- (b) Unintentional action: "...Singapore is the first foreign country I visited ...I took the memo pad from the hotel...then I started to come up with an idea of collecting memo pads of places I used to visit...then I started to collect them and had more and

more..." (#3). Unintentional action came from life experience and became a reason for collecting.

(c) Influence from others: "My mother gave me a book of stamps," said participant 6. Due to this reason, he started to collect stamps. Being influenced by classmates is also a reason for collecting: "Once I saw it, I was infatuated with it" (#4). The reason is similar to what Kamptner (1995) said about the social factors of collecting.

#### (2) Personal Factors

- (a) Good memories: "Footprints in the sand show where one has been" (#3). Connecting possessions and personal life experiences best explains what Kamptner (1995) said about the meaning of connecting with the past.
- (b) Wish fulfillment: A wish that cannot be achieved in life can be entrusted to the care of an object. "I am eager to go to some places, so I started to store up things from those places," participant Number 2 said. These objects are mostly tourist souvenirs from friends and relatives. Participant number 4 wishes to become a manga writer and caricaturist, which motivates her to collect manga books.
- (c) Personal preference: Collecting possessions can be for personal reasons. For example, participant number 5 collected Japanese capsule toys with action figures especially in the human style just for fun. Participant number 7 thought that product tags from clothes are tasteful, so he collected them. Participant number 8 collected her photos in her blog just for the sake of saving them.
- (d) Idolism: Due to identification, participant number 9 "collected posters of her favorite sport stars or movie stars."

#### (3) Internal Factors

- (a) Visual pleasure: This is the major reason of collecting.
- (b) Emotional sustenance: Participants shared that "in order to express their feelings" (#4), they "follow their heart to collect those items" (#2). Sometimes, they "do feel much better when looking at those when we're down" (#1). These statements show that emotional sustenance is an important reason for owning possessions.
- (c) Releasing pressure: Generally speaking, participants tend to think that possessions function as a placebo. Participant number 3 said, "I think about it or look at it when I have a short break from studying, and it may help motivate me to go on studying."
- (d) Idolism: Participant number 9 likes to play basketball and to collect posters of her favorite idols, but "only limited to the specific ones."
- (e) Inspiration of creativity: This factor may only happen in the art-talented class. Participant number 2 stated that "I usually collect things I really want to draw," participant number 5 thought that "opening a Japanese capsule toy and assembling the human figure inside is very interesting," and participant number 4 expected that those mangas she collected would help her "become a manga writer." Moreover, participant number 8 thought that her drawing skill is not as good as her classmates', so she transferred to photo taking and saving pictures in her blog for herself.

The results above help us to understand the categories and reasons for collecting. This research will then discuss the meaning of collecting possessions by adolescents from the transitional object perspective.

#### 4.2 Meanings of Possessions

Object relation theory pointed out that a transitional object provides the function of self-control and comfort. Most importantly, nothing can replace a personal transitional object. This study asks: do possessions of participants share similar characteristics? Participants were asked to talk about how they store possessions and how they feel if they lose their favorite possession. Results of the focus group interview are described below.

Regarding storing the possessions, results show that participants frequently leave objects in noticeable places (#2, 3, 5, 6, 9) such as in their bedrooms (#2), on the desk lamp (#3) or wall (#9), in a cabinet (#6) or a special cabinet for collecting (#5), or any other obvious places at home. As for the meaning of possessions, participant 2 stated that "if I collected something, there must be a special meaning to it." If it is not displayed in an obvious place, participant 5 would "feel...somewhat bored." Participant 3 stated that she hung her drop ornament on her desk lamp and kept the advertising leaflet in the plastic box because she "can look at it during the study break." Moreover, carrying the object with them all the time is also a way of collecting. For instance, participant 1 hung her drop ornament inside of her schoolbag, not showing it to others.

The loss of transitional objects in the infantile stage causes huge emotional responses, so the participants were asked to talk about their feelings when their possession was lost. Results show that a sense of loss is the most common feeling when they lose their possessions, but they might not try to find the exact same thing to replace the original one. If their parents prohibited them from having these objects, parent-child conflicts would then arise. More detailed information on these trends is described below:

- (1) Not necessarily finding the exact same object for replacement: Some participants (#1, 2, 5, 4, 8) stated that they would not buy the exact same thing to replace the lost object because they "would just project the sad feeling to another object." Participant 8 stated that "Though I can do nothing about the loss, I still tried all night to find it." Two participants described that they would find the exact same object to substitute for the original one (#4, 9). When asked if her favorite possession were missing and could never be found, participant 1 responded exaggeratingly, "Then I don't want to live." Participant 8 implied that she could not tolerate the loss of her photo projects and said, "I think losing an object is not a big deal, but if my photo project stored on my website was missing, I would cry till I die" and even "go somewhere or to someone to protest about it."
- (2) The feeling of loss is the most common reaction: Most participants expressed experiencing a sense of loss (#1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9), and feeling "sad" (#2), "weird" (#3), "angry" (#9), "upset" (#5), and even said they "can't go on living" (#1) or would "cry myself to death" (#8).
- (3) Parent-child conflicts: If the parents prohibited their child from having the object, then the adolescents would have emotional reactions to it, which then turn into parent-child conflicts (#3, 4, 6, 7). The conflicts usually occur when the parents thought that collecting favorite objects and keeping them in an obvious place

would have a negative impact on the academic performance of their children (#2, 4), or due to some other concerns (#4, 6). Sometimes, parents even threw their possessions away without their permission (#7). All participants agreed that their possessions brought them delight and did no harm to their school grades. Instead, these objects function positively by allowing them to project their affectionate feelings (#1, 2, 3, 4, 8) and to release pressure (#3).

The research results show that adolescents care deeply about their transitional objects due to the reported strong sense of loss and the conflicts with their parents about the objects. According to the results, the five characteristics of the transitional objects are: they are irreplaceable, they bring comfort, they allow adolescents to express independence, they bring a sense of loss if lost, and they allow the ability to make decisions.

- (1) Irreplaceable: According to the research data, collections may not always be irreplaceable to the participants, which means that possessions may not necessarily represent a transitional object for them. For example, participant 1 stated that among all her collections, only the small Doraemon decorated toy hanging inside of her schoolbag was irreplaceable to her. Participant 3 has more affection towards the drop decoration hanging on her table lamp than anything else. Participant 4 loves manga while participant 8 holds dear her photo project in her blog, and neither could afford to lose their favorite object. Participant 6 collected product tags from clothes, and participant 9 picked up posters of idols. Although participants 2, 5, and 6 in the focus group described their possessions in detail, their objects were not irreplaceable to them, which suggests they are not transitional objects.
- (2) Comfort: Irreplaceable objects may often be a carrier for the expression of emotions, yet objects with such a function may not be irreplaceable. Participant 5 collected Japanese capsule toys with human figures inside; he said, "The process of assembling the human figure is the most interesting thing," and "if these human figures were broken and can't be fixed, they could only be thrown away." He would not buy the exact same capsule toy for replacement because it is somewhat wasteful to him; he usually chose to "buy a different one."
- (3) Independence: Adolescents were allowed to use their allowance to purchase possessions, which helps explain Furby's (1978) and Belk's (1991) viewpoints on how purchasing objects enables adolescents to be more independent. In this research, only participant 5 received help from his mother in collecting stamps; the rest of the participants all purchased objects with their own allowance, which shows their autonomy in collecting behavior.
- (4) Sense of loss: If the object is irreplaceable, it will then cause the sense of loss if it goes missing (#1, 3, 4, 7, 8). On the other hand, the loss of replaceable objects causes less emotional reactions such as "grief" (#2), "pity" (#5), and "sadness" (#6).
- (5) Ability to make decisions: This issue of fighting for one's autonomy was not a planned topic for the focus group, but it was addressed by the participants. Some participants were bothered by their parents when parents interfered with their collecting decisions (#3, 4, 7, 9). This result seems to prove that adolescents need

to be allowed the freedom to decide their own transitional object; otherwise, parent-child conflicts may arise.

According to research results, there are complicated factors regarding object relations, and possessions are not necessarily equal to transitional objects. However, the transitional object still plays an important role in the stage of separation-individuation.

#### 4.3 The Correlation Between the Transitional Object and Visual Art Creativity

It is important to learn to be independent and manage oneself when facing the issue of separationindividuation and the crisis of identification. In reality, adolescents seem to have autonomy and yet still fall under the influence of their parents or school authority, which may cause great anxiety and discomfort. The transitional object helps to solve such psychological dilemmas. Hand (1995) pointed out that one will develop the ability of symbol formation and creative behavior when using the transitional object in the form of visual art making.

Time management is a way of showing autonomy, underlining the relationship between free time and art making. Therefore, the topic of time management was brought up in the group discussion. Participant 1 stated, "My free time was getting less and less after I entered junior high school..." and she spent her free time on creative works. Only participant 3 felt that she could freely use her time to do things she liked. Most adolescents from the art-talented class expressed that they tended to engage in activities other than art making in their free time (#8, 9). They "only make creative artwork when it is assigned as schoolwork...I rarely scribble now" (#8).

Due to the importance of the psychological feelings related to transitional activities, this study attempted to discover how the concept of the transitional object influences art activities of adolescents. Some of the major reasons for the adolescents' art activities include getting good grades (#1, 4), training oneself for a specialty (#1), projecting feelings (#1, 4), releasing pressure (#4, 5, 7), getting creative inspiration (#2, 4), and considering the uncertainties of the future (#8, 9).

- (1) Getting good grades: Pursuing opportunities to enter a good school is the major task of junior high school students. Participants in the art-talented class pay close attention to the qualification for entering a good high school. Therefore, art making is not only a purely creative activity, but also a major means to achieve their dreams. Participant 1 said, "When I draw, I think of getting into a good high school. If I work hard in the art-talented class, then I may be able to get into the art-talented class in a better high school."
- (2) Training self for specialty: Participant 1 viewed art as a specialty and said, "If I train myself to be an art specialist, my life could be forever changed."
- (3) Functioning as a carrier for the expression of emotions: Drawing provides opportunities to "project and release feelings" (#1) or "relax" (#4).
- (4) Releasing pressure: Participant 4 stated clearly that art making helps her relax. Participant 5 expressed that scribbling brought about a feeling of relaxation during the break of math practice. He said, "Mathematical problems make my eyes sore, but art helps them relax." Participant 7 expressed that "drawing is a way of resting."
- (5) Getting creative inspiration: Participant 2 expressed, "There were not many ideas on my mind and I always got my inspiration from my collections."

Participant 4 tried to connect creative work and writing: "I drew and made a free association with the drawing; then I might think that I could write a novel based on this picture. The inspiration possibly helped me draw some more things. Then I am able to continue writing my novel."

(6) Uncertainties for the future: Being exposed to the stressful academic environment in junior high school, participant 8 said, "I drew all the time before, but now, no homework, no drawing, and I even scribbled less and less." Participant 9 even thought "the environment would kill the interest of drawing." Sometimes, an unexpected bad grade might lead to sense of frustration and make it hard for them to have a good balance between the academic subjects and art courses, which sometimes even raised the idea of putting art away and only studying. Yet, participant 8 said, "If I gave up just because of such a reason...I am reluctant to do that."

Self-objectification indicates that adolescents are able to manipulate activities by themselves, and art is an important thing to express such an ability. Due to the characteristics of its irreplaceability, art can be done by an independent subject who chooses art materials, art forms, and everything in the process of a creative task, and finally helps the artist relieve emotions and release pressure. However, does the artwork of adolescents from the art-talented class function as a transitional object to them? If it does, what would they feel if they were not able to make art?

When asked how they would feel if they could not make art, the results included: "It's unacceptable" (#1, 2), "I have no idea" (#3), "It doesn't matter" (#7), and "I accept it, but I would feel regretful about it" (#4, 5, 6, 8, 9). It seems that there is no direct correlation between art making and transitional phenomena. However, participants did talk about the transformation of creative works which were related to the transformation of transitional objects over different ages. Related issues of possessions as decorations (#1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), possessions as creative inspirations (#2, 4), possessions as art materials (#5, 6, 7), and possessions as art itself (#8) will be discussed below.

- (1) Possessions as decorations: Most research participants decorate with drop ornaments, Japanese capsule toys, accessories, tourist souvenirs and other things within daily life spaces, such as hanging them in their schoolbag (#1, 8), using them for decoration (#2, 5, 6), keeping them in their table lamp (#3), or sticking them on the bedroom wall (#7, 9).
- (2) Possessions as creative inspirations: Participant 2 used pictures she collected as source of inspiration for drawing, but she "would never copy it." Participant 4 tried to combine her interest in manga and literature, hoping that she could become a diagram text creator in the future.
- (3) Possessions as art materials: Participant 5 stated that the Japanese capsule toys must have a DIY function so that he could play with it. Participant 6 liked to make specimens of dead stag beetles and place them in a glass box, which seemed to be a way to express his love for these pets. Participant 7 loved to hang product tags from clothes together.
- (4) Possessions as art itself: Participant 8 saved her photo album and articles in her blog, and she is quite attached to the invented space. She couldn't tolerate the loss of such space.

According to the study results, the autonomy of collecting and creating work is similar and has important psychological meaning from the perspective of transitional object theory. However, the correlation is not very strong because there are individual differences in the way people show autonomy and independence.

## 5. Conclusions and Suggestions

Applying the theory of transitional objects by Winnicott (1953), one of the object relation theorists, this research tried to explore how adolescents view their possessions as transitional objects and develop the relationship between these possessions and creative works, and moreover, how they use these possessions as transitional objects to increase comfort and decrease anxiety. The conclusions from the results of this research are listed below.

- (1) Categories and reasons of owning one's possessions vary: Prices are irrelevant to owning one's possessions and most possessions are gifts from friends or family members. The major reason of collecting is one's special feelings toward specific objects. Furthermore, appearance, personal reasons, and inner feelings are important reasons for owning objects.
- (2) Possessions of adolescents do not necessarily carry a transitional meaning: Possessions are irreplaceable, controllable, and have the function of consolation, and it will cause a sense of loss if they were to go missing. Furthermore, parentchild conflicts occurred if children were not allowed to have their possessions. One may have many collections, but there may be only one thing with the most important transitional meaning, such as the drop ornaments hanging inside the schoolbag by participant 1, or art photos saved in a personal blog by participant 8. The phenomenon shows that all possessions may not be a personal transitional object, but one's transitional object may be one of the possessions that provides visual pleasure, serves as a carrier of emotions, releases pressure, and even gives creative inspiration for adolescents.
- (3) Visual art works by adolescents have transitional meanings: Creative art behaviors have transitional meanings, and for most participants, they function as a carrier of emotions and help to release pressure. However, among students in the art-talented class, the pressure of getting good grades to enter a good academic high school is the most important and realistic reason for adolescents to practice art, which may decrease the influence of the transitional object. Actually, transitional meanings of art making vary for every participant. For example, participants 1 and 2 have more needs for autonomy when making art, while it doesn't mean much for participant 7.

As Litt (1986) said, the transitional phenomenon is not a general situation experienced by everyone. Compared to adolescents in general classes, adolescents in the art-talented class were allowed to do art related works without complaining about their academic performance. This reflects what Winnicott (1953) described as the importance of opportunities, which provide the chance for the adolescents to create the space between fantasy and reality. Ironically, the nature of pursuing good grades in art is against the nature of the transitional object, since the owner needs to be able to control the object of his own will. Thus, art could even cause inner conflicts

and frustration to these adolescents. Therefore, the adolescents might transfer their creative energy to photography or blog writing.

However, this research did not address the issue of academic performance that may influence the art activities among these adolescents in the art-talented class. Moreover, it is hard to compare the correlation between self-confidence and good grades in both academic and art performance, as well as the degree of adolescents' attachment to their collections or transitional objects. It is also questionable how parents' attitudes affected the development of the transitional object or of art activities with transitional meaning among adolescents. All of the above need further research to extend the ideas.

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## **Creating Solidarity Through Art to Resist Radicalization**

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**Abstract:** The *Radical Teacher* research project is about politically radical positions of teachers in history and connected to nowadays. The political role of the teacher (Ahonen, 2002; Atjonen, 2005; Tirri, 2002) is approached through arts-based research with a phenomenological case setting. The question is: how and why did a teacher take a radical position in the historical frame? The mission of the research project is to look at the role of the teacher with a critical lens. Crucial concepts in my research are radicalization and solidarity. The Finnish Civil War in 1918 included all levels of radicalization. Finding solidarity with historical victims on both sides of the Civil War became an important issue in the arts-based project. The experience created the hope of finding possibilities to make communication connections between politically opposing parties in current society and through that, to avoid radicalization. Art and art education may offer an option for encountering beyond words. Through the artistic process, it is possible to build common experiences that are the basis for solidarity. Applications for the research could be found in teacher education and especially art education.

Keywords: Solidarity, radicalization, Civil War, Finland, history, teacher, arts-based research

**Tiivistelmä:** Radikaali opettaja -tutkimusprojekti käsittelee opettajan poliittisesti radikaalia asemoitumista historiassa ja nykyisyydessä. Opettajan poliittista roolia lähestytään taideperustaisen tutkimuksen ja fenomenologisen tapaustutkimuksen kulmista. Tutkimuskysymys on, miten ja miksi opettaja asemoitui poliittisesti radikaalisti historiallisessa kontekstissa. Tutkimuksen keskeiset käsitteet ovat radikalisoituminen ja solidaarisuus. Suomen sisällissodassa vuonna 1918 ilmeni kaikki radikalisoitumisen muodot. Taideperustaisessa tutkimusprojektissa solidaarisuus sodan molempien osapuolien uhreja kohtaan nousi keskeiseksi aiheeksi. Kokemus loi toivoa löytää keskusteluyhteyksiä poliittisesti vastakkaisten tahojen välille myös nykyyhteiskunnassa ja sen myötä välttää radikalisoitumista. Taide ja taidekasvatus voivat mahdollistaa sanattomia kohtaamisia. Tutkimustuloksia voi hyödyntää opettajankoulutuksessa ja erityisesti taidekasvatuksessa.

Asiasanat: solidaarisuus, radikalisoituminen, sisällissota, Suomi, historia, opettajat, taideperustainen tutkimus

### Introduction

In my *Radical Teacher* research project, the political role of the teacher (Ahonen, 2002; Atjonen, 2005; Tirri, 2002) is approached through arts-based research with a phenomenological case setting. The issue for the whole research project is the politically radical positions of teachers in history and nowadays. I chose one historical case for the closer discovery of the radicalization of a teacher: Martti Pihkala (1882–1966). Pihkala was a special education teacher in a school for people with hearing impairment. For Pihkala, the period before the Civil War was a time to be released from just the teacher's position, and he took on a more political role of an agitator and some kind of demagogue.

A disturbing aspect in my research is that the politically radicalized teacher whom I chose for the case is my grandfather, who was politically active and radical from 1910 until 1944. I never met him in person because he passed away six years before my birth. It does not make it easier that Finnish fascist movements are being both studied and re-established intensively nowadays. The context of my grandfather's activity has been revealed not by relatives but by researchers and journalists (for example, Jokisipilä, 2017; Silvennoinen, Tikka, & Roselius, 2016; Uola, 1982, 1998, 2001).

The role and position of the school institution in each historical and political era is a complex issue to review. According to Rantala (2010), a didactic/psychological paradigm is dominant in Finnish research on education. The historical and societal aspect is minor. Because of this, the political role of the teacher is rarely studied in the field of education. The Civil War is the issue at hand in some films and novels, but only a few visual artists have paid attention to this national trauma. The artist Heikki Marila had an exhibition on the issue in Helsinki in 2016, at the Forsblom Gallery (Marila, 2018). When it comes to the Civil War, Finnish art education research has a blank area.

This essay is an overview of my research project. First, I will give the temporal frames and descriptions of the main concepts. Then I will clarify the method and materials. At the end of the text, I will introduce some outcomes and ideas of where to apply those. Pictures have an important role within the text. The reason why I have included screen shots from Instagram in this essay is that they represent the social aspect more authentically than would independent pictures without a hint of the context.



Figure 1. Photograph of Martti Pihkala (approx. 1918) from a family album

## **Teachers in Two Different Eras**

The mission of the research project is to look at the role of the teacher with a critical lens. I initially approached the archive material with the question: how and why did a teacher take a radical position in the historical frame? I did not find a clear answer, but rather more questions and some kind of ethical paradox. I found a pattern in my own thinking: I assume that all teachers are ethical and trying to create social justice. I am a product of my own era, the era after the Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, n.d.). It is totally different to be a teacher in a new-born country in 1918 and to be a teacher and teacher educator 100 years later in a country which

has a good international reputation due to its education. I understand that my grandfather's world and my world are different. The role of the school in shaping the people's ethos has been clear before and after World War II (Rantala, 2002; Rautajoki, 2017). But what makes a difference is that the school institution was seen as an important role when the Declaration of Human Rights was disseminated.

Finland gained its independence 1917, and the young state was in an unstable condition. The Finnish Civil War (27 January–15 May 1918) was fought between the Reds reinforced by Soviet Russia and the Whites supported by the German Empire's military. Behind the Reds was the ideology of the labor movement, while the Whites were conservatives and based on national-cultural visions. Society divided into two opposite parts. The division followed social classes and professions, and the teachers were almost wholly on the White side. This can be explained by the fact that the posts of teachers were dependent on the decisions of the local school boards. The school boards were mainly formed by the Whites (Rantala, 2010). There is no doubt that Martti Pihkala was pure White, as the *Suomen Kuvalehti* magazine named him "The whitest man in Finland" (Jokisipilä, 2017).

## **Radicalization and Solidarity**

A crucial concept in my research is radicalization. Radicalization means that violence is used, someone threatens with violence or encourages others to commit violence, or violence is authorized by ideology. It could mean that a person joins violent groups or organizations. Extreme radicalization may lead to terrorism (Sterkenburg, 2019). Quite often, contemporary discussion on radicalization is based on a vision that the roots of contemporary radicalization concern young men on the edge of marginalization. Low self-esteem is offered as some kind of overall explanation for radicalization and violent ideologies (e.g., Suojala, 2017). I suppose in some cases this could be misleading. The influencers and backing could be somewhere else.

The Finnish Civil War included all levels of radicalization. When I claim Martti Pihkala was a radical, I am referring to his archives. In the manuscript of his memoirs, he points out that he used violence only once, when he hit a man with baton. But his role in agitation was huge; he encouraged people to join and be active in the Whites. In the manuscript, he describes his reaction when the moderate wing of the Whites doubted the use of weapons. "Is this some kind of operetta-revolution?" he asked when others proposed following a non-violent approach to solve political conflict. His opinion was that the situation in Finland in 1918 needed radical action, and he knew that victims would appear on both sides. He gained his authorization for action from both nationalism and religion. He strongly believed that God had given him his role, and all his choices were for the nation (Pihkala, n.d.).

Hannah Arendt (2002) clarifies how responsibility is avoided when thinkers and agitators are separated by action. Both release themselves from guilt through explaining how they did not actually have responsibility. Actors say: we followed the instructions and did not make decisions. Agitators say: we did not use violence. This is exactly how Martti Pihkala saved himself in his own manuscript, and how he proved the case for his conscience. He also gave responsibility to God, who he considered to have authorized his role.

Another important term in my research project is solidarity, which is often associated with both feelings and attitudes and action. The simplest definition of solidarity is, according to Laitinen and Pessi (2011), connection to other people, to the members of a smaller or larger group. Expressions of solidarity often take the form of time, money, or a gift. It differs from both altruism and sympathy, which are in some definitions connected to solidarity (see. Sen, 1982). Commitment, empathy, and compassion are often mentioned as similar concepts. Embodied compassion (Pessi, Horwitz, & Worline, 2017) may offer a bridge to the arts. Salmela (2011) states that group emotions are an important component of solidarity. I assume that the arts have special possibilities for reaching connection and group emotions. Strikes and demonstrations evoke group emotions and are visible expressions of solidarity. They are clearly political acts. Media and arts offer a platform for solidarity and critical discussion through sensory and embodied knowledge. We are able to meet individual and unique lives through art (Dittrich, 2015; Zegarlinska, 2015).

## Method and Way of Knowing

Tom Barone and Elliot Eisner (2012) define arts based<sup>1</sup> research in the field of social science. One of their fundamental features of arts based research is: "The purpose of arts based research is to raise significant questions and engender conversations rather than to proffer final meanings" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 166). When I failed to find answers to my questions from the archive material, I redesigned my research project. In this project, I have combined performative art and fiction-writing with a historical frame. The combination of arts-based and narrative material is not totally new. In the field of education and art education, these methods are believed to open the door to experiences and unique meanings. For example, Kivioja and Puroila (2017) have applied arts-based and narrative methods in the field of childhood research. Through a table theater project, they reached children's everyday experiences in school using a performative approach. They connect their research to the arts-based inquiry defined by Leavy (2015). Kivioja and Puroila (2017) state that narrative and arts-based methods allow the researcher to understand the experiences of the people involved in the research project. These methods reach beyond spoken and written words.

The narrative turn happened as long as 30 years ago in the field of research. Autoethnographical and narrative approaches became more important as data when objectivation was deconstructed. So-called real life and fiction have a complex relationship. In the field of sociology, as well as in education research, attempts to reach subjectivity and unique experiences have made room for fictional writing. Leavy (2015) describes three genres of fiction-based research (FBR): 1) the rise in autobiographical and narrative data, 2) creative nonfiction, and 3) an emphasis on public scholarship. She also leans toward "literary neuroscience" when proving the power of reading and writing. Readers are physically placing themselves in fictional places, as fiction is an immersive experience, which also activates the movement and touch areas in the brain. Emphatic engagement is an aspect which makes fiction ethically interesting for me (Leavy, 2015).

Writing fiction is a process which allows movement toward ignorance. Here, we face knowledge which may be understood through the concept of epistemic pluralism (Coliva, 2017; Nado, 2017) or social epistemology and feminist epistemology (Townley, 2011). Townley (2011) ties up epistemology and ethics in her approach to ignorance, writing in her book's introduction, "Just as it is a mistake to take knowledge to be always good, rejecting ignorance as always negative is

too hasty" (p. xxi). Knowledge and knowing sometimes have evil roots, while ignorance may offer an exit from that. In a way, I go toward ignorance through my performative and fictional methods to be able to discuss evil.

I see the Crocheting Alma project as a feministic action (Townley, 2011), which is connected to performativity (Eckersall, Grehan, & Scheer, 2017). A feministic approach is somewhat of a base for my practice in research and pedagogy. But I have a rather complicated relationship with "feminine" practices. My gender identity is blurred or fluid in such a way that I am not able to identify myself as a woman in normative way. For example, crocheting is a kind of double provocation for me. When I was in comprehensive school, I took only one compulsory course in textile crafts. There is nothing wrong with textile crafts, but I was more technically oriented like the majority of the boys. When I made my Crocheting Alma project, it was not typical for me. The assumed gender I am usually connected to is the stereotypically crocheting gender. But while I was not visible; it was only my emotion. Textile crafts have an important role among contemporary art practices (Haveri, 2016). It has been a movement against masculine-dominated art practices.

## **The Material**

The narrative materials that are relevant for my research are: 1) the manuscript by Martti Pihkala, archived in the National Archives, which contains about 600 pages of experienced history, 2) the book *Minkälainen Suomi meidän on luotava?* [What Kind of Finland do we Need to Create?] by Martti Pihkala, published in 1918, as well as 3) in 1944 together with Finland's President P.E. Svinhufvud, Pihkala designed and implemented a book entitled *Testamentti kansalleni* [The Testament to my Nation] (Svinhufvud, 1944), published in the name of the president. I regard this material as an experience report more than an event report (Gready, 2008; Squire, 2008). In the material, the subject's voice varies between the first person and the first personality of the plural. The material is historical; it is an experience documentary and a narrative from the first half of the 20th century.

Pihkala's book in 1918 made clear his political agenda. The 36-year-old father of five children, the special teacher, showed that he was politically outspoken and ready for radical practices so that the future of the Finnish people was aligned with the vision of the movement he represented. He wrote:

Toinen edellytys – josta edellä on ollut puhetta – on puhdistustyön kunnollinen suorittaminen. Meillä suomalaisilla on erityisiä edellytyksiä suorittaa menestyksellä rotumme jalostustyö (Pihkala 1918, p. 134)...Onko tämä, tässä maailmansodassa omalaatuinen ja ainokainen taistelumme valkoisen, puhtaan Suomen luomiseksi enteenä siihen, että myöskin kansamme saamme taistellen valkoiseksi ja puhtaaksi kansaksi, joka kerran vielä puhdistuneena, jalona ja väkevänä saa nähdä Jumalan? (Pihkala, 1918, p. 142)

[Another condition – which has been discussed above – is the proper performance of the purge. We Finns have special premises for successful completion of our eugenic task (Pihkala, 1918, 134). ... Is this lone and unique in this world war struggle of ours to create a white, pure Finland a herald that we will also be

successful in our fight to make our people white and pure, a purified, noble and powerful people who will once again see God?] (Pihkala, 1918, p. 142)

The historical archive material by Pihkala and his book from 1918 made me very confused and emotionally overloaded. To understand this confusion and overload, I took a step aside. His mother, wives, and daughters gave me keys to new perspectives. All have passed away, and actually my focus is not historical facts, but rather *possible experiences* and emotions connected to them. Historical facts are the starting point for fictional and arts-based knowledge (O'Sullivan, 2017; Suominen, Kallio-Tavin, & Hernández-Hernández, 2017). The first project was the performative Crocheting Alma project in spring 2018, and the second fiction-writing project Kuunottajat (Moonbathers) is still in progress.



Figure 2. Alma Gummerus painted by the artist Kaarlo Atra (1879–1961) in 1929

During the arts-based part of my research, I trace the polyphony of happenings in 1918. The first starting point for the Crocheting Alma project and part of my material was a portrait of my grandfather's mother Alma Gummerus painted by artist Kaarlo Atra (1879–1961) in 1929. Crocheting Alma (Virkkaaja Alma) was my performative project, which lasted for the same period of time as the Finnish Civil War lasted a century ago. On each day, for a total of 109 days,

I crocheted in a public or semi-public site 50 white and 250 red stitches to represent the number of victims in both sides of the Civil War. I asked someone to take a photo of each crocheting session with my mobile phone to publish it on the social media application, Instagram. "What are you doing?" was the question I waited for. When this was addressed to me, I said, "This is a project on the Finnish Civil War which took place 100 years ago." Sometimes this answer made people react. Sometimes I was the one who asked the second question. I addressed it to my photographers: "Do you know which side your family or relatives were on?"



*Figure 3. Screenshot from the Virkkaaja Alma Instagram account.* 

What did Alma think about her son who was a special teacher and took a politically radical position during the Civil War process? Was she proud of her son who collected White Army members and gave propaganda speeches? Was she sorry for all those victims of the Civil War? Was it a fulfillment for a mother as an educator to see her son as a political active and radical? These were probably not the questions which Alma spun in her head while crocheting ten years after the Civil War. I just borrowed this feministic performative act from her and deployed it to combine the personal and societal through an embodied project.

I am not sure if my performative Crocheting Alma project was a pastiche of the portrait by Kaarlo Atra or rather a paraphrase. Nyqvist (2010) defines pastiche in the context of literature. She summarizes pastiche as a concept of the postmodern: "Thus pastiche would not be, after all, reduced to empty imitation, but could have other uses and meanings depending on its context in contemporary culture" (Nyqvist, 2010, p. 112).

The Crocheting Alma project was action in a time mode. It may be seen as one-sided solidarity, which means assisting someone else without expecting anything in return, whereas there is such an expectation in the case of two-sided solidarity (de Beer & Koster, 2009). Or was it? If I express solidarity with victims in history, I cannot expect anything in return. But if my expression of solidarity is understood in the frame of the current situation, it could mean all victims in all civil wars and all those who suffer guilt or the role of a victim.

## Outcomes

The results of my arts-based research are partly in visual form and partly in verbalized experience. That is the base for the next turn and stage of my research. Through the art process, it is possible to build common experiences that are the basis for solidarity. This opens up the role of art and art education in creating solidarity. The Crocheting Alma project made room for encounters and political discussions in everyday life.



Figure 4. Screenshot from the Virkkaaja Alma Instagram account.

The suggestion based on the research process so far is that maybe radicalization should be studied in the context of the everyday and ordinary. Framing the issue too early with heroism or guilt creates narratives which may not give an understanding of how individuals and small communities, with so-called good reputations and behavior, could ever become radical. Radicals are not necessarily from the margins of society, or the margins should be re-defined.

So far, one outcome is an understanding of how a feeling of superiority as a starting point for a teacher's work is difficult, even dangerous. Until the Second World War, a teacher could, until radicalization, work for one nation and one religion. Since the 1950s, it has been possible for a teacher to be released from the role of model citizen (Rantala, 2002, 2005). The current emphasis on global social responsibility and justice in teachers' work has begun to form since the 1970s. The ethical focus has continued to grow at the turn of the millennium (Ahonen, 2002; Atjonen 2004; Tirri, 2002). This could also be seen as a deconstruction of superiority. When a teacher does not see themself as better knowing and a better citizen, it is equally possible to build a human dialogical setting, and even strongly different political and religious views may be encountered. Preventive work against confrontation and radicalization has become part of teaching.

The Crocheting Alma project made room for encounters and political discussions. According to my arts-based project, the material and performative nature of crocheting made room for the basis for compassion: compassion toward both Whites and Reds, and compassion for a divided Finnish nation 100 years ago. The reasons for the Civil War were multi-layered. One answer is that the young society was politically deeply divided. When the distance between parties grows too wide, the threat of radicalization becomes real. Radicalization may be seen as a serious lack of solidarity (Saari, 2011). Is solidarity something we can promote, and if so, how shall we do this? Is it possible to express solidarity for people in history? And what does it matter?

Emil Durkheim (see Theron, 2015) was writing already more than a hundred years ago about organic solidarity, which is based on interdependence in heterogeneous societies. That was at the beginning of industrialism. In an era of globalization and post-nationalism, it needs even more, maybe some kind of *ultra-organic solidarity*. What could we do through art to make room for ultra-organic solidarity and create a wide understanding of "we?"

I see the applications for my research as being in teacher education and especially art education. I claim that to do that, we need a deconstruction of the teacher's role in higher education, and teacher training is crucial. I hope that graduating art teachers have a high capacity for critical reflection and good professional esteem but still a very clear understanding that they are not any kind of *better citizen*. I hope they make room for encounters and solidarity within art, as they have a special potential for that.

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# Endnotes

1 Barone and Eisner use the format arts based while I use arts-based, by Suominen, Kallio-Tavin, and Hernández-Hernández (2017).

# Section III Voices of Under- and Mis-represented Groups



This section will include a scholarly exploration of minority art educators. Each country defines minority depending on their own population and social contexts, so the readers will find how minority groups in other countries address social, political, and cultural issues, through the voices of art educators and their research and classroom practices.



# **Impact of the Creative Arts Indigenous Parental Engagement (CAIPE) Program**

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**Abstract:** Creative Arts Indigenous Parental Engagement (CAIPE) was funded by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) as a Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) project. It is a community driven program for parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people up to the age of 19 years (Department of Education, 2013). It facilitated the production of culturally relevant visual arts (murals and artworks) and resources (books) which drew on the cultural capital of parents, students, and community members. The impact of the CAIPE was measured in eight schools, with a total of over one thousand students, including 155 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students. The three program elements of CAIPE—In-School Workshop, Early Literacy Storytelling, and Creative Community—were implemented by The Song Room in urban, regional, and remote schools in Queensland, Australia. A mixed methods approach using statistical analysis of data and case studies identified statistically significant increases at the regional schools in attendance, with English grades and literacy outcomes as measured by the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). Semi-structured interviews with students, parents, teachers, and school leaders identified key learnings in program design.

Keywords: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, creative arts, evaluation, mixed methodology, statistics

#### Introduction

Parental involvement and engagement are particularly effective in encouraging and improving student outcomes. Creative Arts Indigenous Parental Engagement (CAIPE), funded by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), fosters Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) in the lives of children and young people. It is a community driven program for parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people up to the age of 19 years (Department of Education, 2013). PaCE supports initiatives that assist families and communities to "reach-in" to schools and other educational settings to engage in their children's education (Department of Education, 2013). The CAIPE Project was implemented by The Song Room in three trial sites in urban, regional, and remote settings in Queensland.

The Song Room is a not-for-profit organization that delivers free or low-cost tailored music and arts programs to schools and communities that would otherwise have no access to such opportunities. These programs are developed and conducted in partnership between The Song Room and participating schools. The Song Room delivers its programs to over 200 schools face to face each year and works with 15,000 children (early childhood, primary, and secondary students aged up to 15 years) every week, as well as many more schools through online delivery. Students typically participate for approximately one hour per week in each class. The In-School Workshop programs are delivered by a Teaching Artist contracted to The Song Room and working in partnership with the classroom teacher at the school of placement.

CAIPE was a pilot program aimed to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents with their children's learning and development. The Song Room implemented three program elements of the CAIPE project: The Song Room In-School Workshop program, the Early Literacy Storytelling program, and a Creative Community program. The Song Room In-School Workshop program placed locally based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teaching Artists in three participating schools for one day per week over an 18-month period. Session content was themed around local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and music. In the Early Literacy Storytelling program, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers participated in sessions with their children at the school and in outreach locations in the community. Session content was themed around stories and local culture. The Creative Community program consisted of community events which involved activities such as school art installations, school murals, the production of CDs/DVDs of music and dance, and school exhibitions/performances.

Parental engagement has a strong impact on student outcomes, which is especially powerful in the early years of education (Education Endowment Foundation, 2017). Parent-child reading activities can improve students' learning outcomes by up to an additional four months of learning (Education Endowment Foundation, 2017). Epstein's parental engagement framework provides an extensively-employed classification system that spans six categories (Epstein, Sanders, Salinas, Jansorn, & Van Voorhis, 2002; Epstein & Sheldon, 2006). The six types of parental engagement are: 1) parenting, 2) communicating, 3) volunteering, 4) learning at home, 5) decision making, and 6) collaborating with the community. The implementation of the six types of parental engagement within the School-Family-Community-Partnerships program in 80 schools (primary and secondary) in Baltimore was found to increase communication with parents, increase parental participation in school activities, and improve student attendance and achievements (Epstein, Sanders, Salinas, & Simon, 1997).

Parental engagement can act to strengthen some of the four types of school capital important to school transformation: intellectual capital, social capital, spiritual capital, and financial capital (Caldwell & Harris, 2008; Caldwell & Spinks, 1998). The action of parents as volunteers within the school community can lead to increases in social and intellectual capital as identified through a literature review and case studies within Queensland Schools (Educational Transformations, 2007b). Social capital is defined as the "strength of formal and informal partnerships and networks involving the school and all individuals, agencies, organisations and institutions that have the potential to support and be supported by the school" (Caldwell & Harris, 2008, p. 10). Intellectual capital refers to "the level of knowledge and skill of those who work in or for the school" (Caldwell & Harris, 2008, p. 10). The CAIPE program incorporates the six categories of Epstein's parental framework and has a focus on creative arts and parental/community cultural capital.

An appreciation of the cultural capital of the parents and a program responsive to the needs of the parents was important to ensure parental engagement (Bull, Brooking, & Campbell, 2008; Educational Transformations, 2007a; Saulwick Muller Social Research, 2006). A year 1-12 school (combined primary and secondary) in regional Queensland with 40% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students implemented the Families as First Teachers (FAFT) program in 2007. FAFT encouraged parents to work alongside their children to "construct learning materials and read books, and also create books" (Educational Transformations, 2007b, p. 3). The implementation of FAFT resulted in improved parental engagement at the school (Educational Transformations, 2007a). A key element of extending school and family partnerships through school-based projects that contributed to the engagement of parents was a personal approach, or a demonstration that the school understood the parents' needs (Saulwick Muller Social Research, 2006). Adaption of the New Zealand based Home-school Partnership Literacy program to be responsive to "the needs of their different parent groups" resulted in successful engagement of the school's Pasifika families (people living in New Zealand who have migrated from the Pacific Islands or who identify with the Pacific Islands because of ancestry or heritage) (Bull et al., 2008, p. 23).

Student attendance was improved through parental engagement programs which focused on creative arts and literacy (Hara & Burke, 1998) and literacy and culture (Educational Transformations, 2007a). Attendance rates for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students within a Queensland school that implemented FAFT improved by 40% over a one-year period (Educational Transformations, 2007a). An art-based parental involvement program in Illinois showed slightly improved attendance (Hara & Burke, 1998).

Students' outcomes in literacy have been shown to improve through parental engagement programs based on creative arts and literacy (Hara & Burke, 1998) and literacy and culture (Bull et al., 2008; Hertz-Lazarowitz & Horovitz, 2002). The School-Family Partnership (SFP) program was implemented in 21 first grade classes in Israeli schools (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Horovitz, 2002). Parents participated in bi-weekly activities within schools and between schools, which included workshops for parents and their children, parent child reading, parent volunteering, and community-wide celebrations related to literacy and culture (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Horovitz, 2002). The degree of implementation of the SFP program affected student outcomes, with the

degree of the application related to statistically significantly higher academic scores in literacy (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Horovitz, 2002). The New Zealand Ministry of Education Home-School Partnership: Literacy program involved 100 schools, 75% of which reported a small positive impact on students' literacy results (Bull et al., 2008). Grade three students who had participated in the inner-city parent involvement in Chicago showed gains of over a year and half-a-year in vocabulary and reading grade level, respectively (Hara & Burke, 1998). In summary, students' literacy outcomes have shown improvement through increased parental engagement in programs that involved a literacy, creative arts, and cultural focus.

An in-depth study into the outcomes of 757 students in New Zealand in response to a parental engagement initiative called the Flaxmere project identified that there was an indirect relationship between parent involvement and student achievement, which was facilitated through gains in school climate (Clinton, Hattie, & Dixon, 2007). Self-efficacy is the extent or strength of one's belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy can be described as children who "believe they can be agents in creating their own futures and are more optimistic about what the world has in store for them" (Catterall & Peppler, 2007, p. 559) which can assist them in "getting through many road blocks" (Hattie, 2009, p. 29). Students' self-efficacy increased with time in the program which led to increased positive attitudes toward achievement and student learning strategies, which in turn improved student achievement (Clinton et al., 2007).

Another element that may contribute to students' literacy outcomes is their engagement in the arts. Students involved in creative arts programs have shown increased expertise in literacy (Bamford, 2006; Caldwell & Vaughan, 2012; Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanaga, 1999; Education Endowment Foundation, 2017; Hunter, 2005; Spillane, 2009; Vaughan, Harris, & Caldwell, 2011a; Wetter, Koerner, & Schwaninger, 2009). Participation in the arts has been shown to encourage changes within the cognitive functions of the brain (Koelsch, Fritz, Schulze, Alsop, & Schlaug, 2005; Levitin & Triovolas, 2009; Sacks, 2007; Schlaug, Norton, Overy, & Winner, 2005; Sluming, Brooks, Howard, Downes, & Roberts, 2007). Catterall (2005) proposed a theory about the transfer of learning through the arts which can be considered as "change in knowledge, skills, dispositions, and orientations stemming from neural processes stimulated by learning in or participation in the arts" (p. 7), which encompassed two main points:

1. Arts learning and experiences, to varying degrees, reorganize neural pathways, or the way the brain functions. Extended and or deep learning in the arts reinforces these developments.

2. The development and re-organization of brain function due to learning in the arts may impact how and how well the brain processes other tasks. (Catterall, 2005, p. 7)

The above studies provide important insights into how learning in the creative arts and parental engagement can affect students' academic outcomes and attendance.

# Methodology

The study focused on students from grades three, four, and five (children aged nine to 12). Eight schools were involved in the research, selected based on their location so that there was a fair

spread across the three trial sites. The Department of Education and Training (DET) in Queensland gave its approval for the study. The effectiveness of CAIPE in encouraging improved student outcomes was assessed in the three trial sites through 1) student outcomes and 2) indepth ethnographic case studies at schools.

There were three cohorts of schools involved in the study, which were the three trial sites of CAIPE; metropolitan, regional, and remote, as detailed in Table 1. The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale of socio-educational advantage (ACARA, 2011). Demographic data about the schools was gathered from the My School website on ICSEA and through enrolment numbers. The three cohorts showed large differences in their ICSEA, which was expected considering the diverse communities surrounding the three trial sites. All schools involved in CAIPE have an ICSEA below the mean of 1000; three schools were considered to be highly disadvantaged with an ICSEA over two standard deviations below the mean. The regional trial site had the highest weighted mean of ICSEA at 953; next was metropolitan with 862, and the lowest was the remote trial site with 702.

CAIPE trial site	School	Enrolments	ICSEA	Number of participating students	Percentage of participation in cohort
Metropolitan	School 1	248	786	109	38.8
	School 2	434	896	83	29.5
	School 3	221	924	89	31.7
	Weighted mean	294	862		
	Total participants for cohort			281	
Regional	School 4	731	977	342	45.4
	School 5	198	894	98	13.1
	School 6	645	946	313	41.6
	Weighted mean	625	953		
	Weighted mean (no School 6)	612	958		
	Total participants for cohort			753	
Rural	School 7	133	638	28	66.7
	School 8	87	830	14	33.3
	Weighted mean	117	702		
	Total participants for cohort			42	
Total participants in the study				1076	

Table 1: Demographics of the three cohorts of schools for the impact on student achievement

The average weighted mean enrolments at the trial sites varied with 294, 625, and 117 for the metropolitan, regional, and remote trial sites respectively (as shown in Table 1). School 4 and School 6 had enrolments of 731 and 645 respectively, which were well above that of the other schools, and the data were analyzed with and without these schools, as school enrolment numbers have been shown to influence students' outcomes (Lee & Loeb, 2000). The average weighted mean enrolment for the regional cohort (no School 6) was 612, and the ICSEA was 958. School 6 was identified as showing different outcomes than the other two schools in the regional

cohort; thus, for the English Grades and NAPLAN results, the analysis was performed without School 6. As the magnitude of the outcomes in the regional schools was found to vary, the data were considered within the theoretical framework of the multifactorial model where multiple factors play a part.

The student outcomes data were collected centrally by DET except School 8 for which data collection was undertaken at the school. Data was collected for a total of over one thousand students as detailed in Table 1. Matched data sets with pre (2010) and post measurements (2011) were collected for attendance and English grades. The data collected included: 1) Three sets of "normal" and CAIPE days for each school, taken from term 2, weeks five to seven (30 May–17 June 2011); 2) Days absent in semester one for 2010 and 2011; 3) Grades for English for semester one for 2010 and 2011; and 4) NAPLAN literacy results for year 5, 2010 and 2011 for all schools except School 2 as year 5 students were not involved in CAIPE. Statistical analysis was performed on the data using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20 with various statistical tests.

The case studies involved hour-long interviews with open-ended questions individually for the principals, teachers, and parents, as well as student focus group discussions with 12 students in a group. Involved in the case studies were four principals, eight teachers, 12 parents, and 27 students at the four participating schools. The participants were recruited after informed consent was gained, and they were selected by the leadership at the school to meet the requirements of the study (e.g., year level of student). Case study notes were taken at the time of the interviews. The case study notes were analyzed for themes that were categorized according to the major foci of this study: local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, student engagement, parent engagement, and The Song Room and academic engagement.

# Results

#### **School Attendance**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the regional trial site showed significantly increased attendance on a day with The Song Room in comparison to a "normal day" in the same week, and significantly increased attendance when three of The Song Room days were compared to three normal days. The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander regional students absent on a The Song Room day was reduced by 9.4 percent in comparison to a normal day in the same week, which was a three-fold reduction as shown in Figure 1. There was 67 percent less absenteeism for the regional cohort with 44 percent reduced absenteeism when all three days were considered together. This is consistent with the 65 percent reduced absenteeism reported for a previous study of schools in The Song Room program in some of the most disadvantaged schools in New South Wales (Caldwell & Vaughan, 2012).

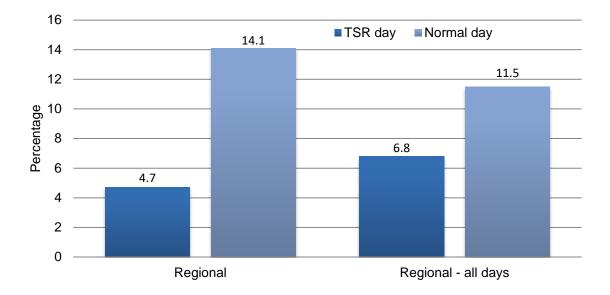
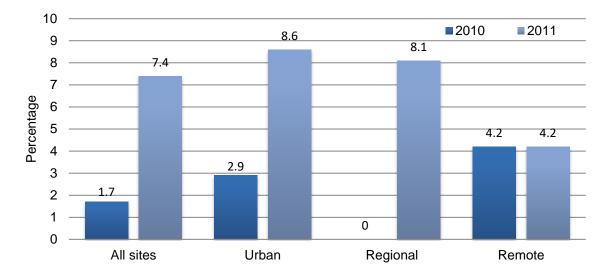


Figure 1: Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander regional students absent on a The Song Room day in comparison to a "normal day"

Regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students showed the highest increase in percentage of students with zero days absent, with 8.1 percent in semester 1 of 2011 (during CAIPE) in comparison to 0.0 percent in semester 1 of 2010. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from all sites showed an increase of 5.7 percent students with zero days absent as illustrated in Figure 2.



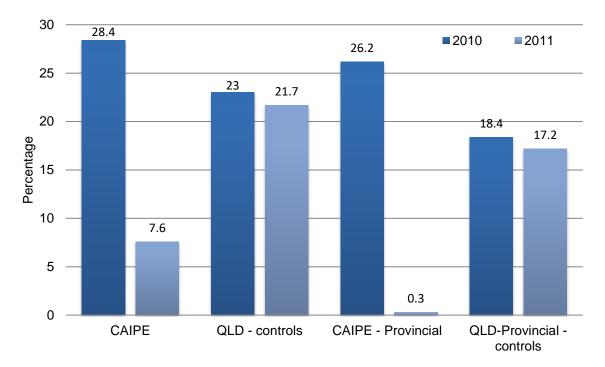
*Figure 2: Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with zero absences in semester 1 before (2010) and during (2011) involvement with The Song Room according to trial site* 

#### Literacy

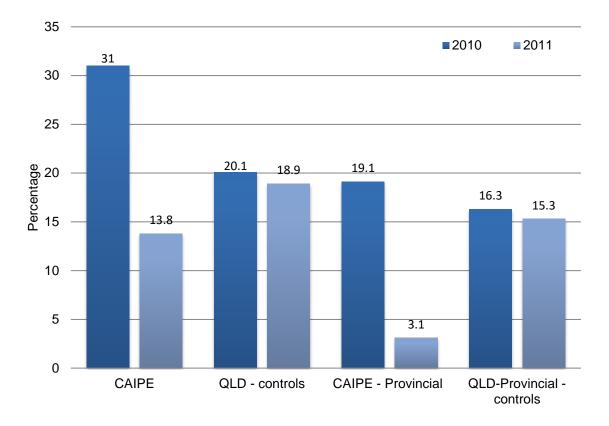
All regional students showed significantly increased English grades in 2011 in comparison to 2010. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from regional and remote trial sites showed higher grades in English in 2011 in comparison to 2010, which were significantly higher for the remote students. The achievement gap between year 5 NAPLAN literacy results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in comparison to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in comparison to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in comparison to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in comparison to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students showed the following key findings: 1) difference scores decreased from "significantly different" in 2010 in reading, spelling and grammar, and punctuation to "no significant difference" in 2011 in regional schools; 2) 26 percent fewer students fell below the national minimum in grammar and punctuation in 2011 in regional schools; 4) 16 percent fewer students fell below the national minimum in grammar and punctuation in 2011 in remote schools; and 5) 13.9 percent fewer students fell below the national minimum in spelling in 2011 in metropolitan schools.

The percentage of students found in the gap below the minimum standard in reading was substantially lower for those students in the CAIPE program in 2011 in comparison to 2010. The Song Room's CAIPE program has been 20 times more effective in closing the gap in literacy than the overall improvements of all programs, as illustrated in Figure 3.

A similar effect was seen within the domain of writing; the gap decreased by 16 percent for students in the CAIPE program as compared to a decrease of one percent in the rest of the Queensland population, as shown in Figure 4. This reduction of the gap in outcomes is large in comparison to the control group, which has shown a reduction of 3 percent of students in the gap for reading for a period of nine years.



*Figure 3: The percentage gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students below the national minimum in year 5 reading for 2010 and 2011* 



*Figure 4: The percentage gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students below the national minimum in year 5 writing for 2010 and 2011* 

Themes	School					
	Metropolitan			Remote		
	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4		
Arts involved in program	Drumming, rap phonics, and visual arts	Storytelling and self-publishing	Dance and beatboxing	Dance and rap		
Student Engagement	All students engaged. Program fun and creative within a safe and supportive environment.	All students actively engaged. Program fun, creative, and challenging. Increased engagement of "high risk" students.	Majority of students engaged. Program provided outlet for physical energy.	Majority of students engaged. Program fun and creative.		
The Song Room and students' social emotional and academic outcomes	Increased student confidence. Increased attendance on The Song Room day reported by some stakeholders.	Increased empathy and self- identity. Increased attendance on The Song Room days. Increased academic achievement in literacy.	Increased student confidence. Increased attendance on The Song Room days.	Some contribution to students' academic outcomes reported by some stakeholders. Student reported increased confidence. Student reported increased attendance on The Song Room days.		
Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture	Program drew on some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.	Program provided in-depth exploration of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Students' individual cultural identity employed as a resource.	Program reflected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. Program encouraged a creative culture.	Program did not involve local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.		

Table 2: Summary of the findings of the case studies of the In-School Workshop Program

#### **Case Studies**

Four case studies of CAIPE schools were conducted in Semester 2 in 2011. The case studies explored the impact of The Song Room In-School Workshop programs on students' engagement, social-emotional outcomes, and academic achievement, as outlined in Table 2. It was reported that students' self-confidence (a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgements) and self-identity (the consciousness of one's own identity or individuality) were increased through

the participation in The Song Room In-School Workshop programs. A principal reported the impact of the CAIPE regional program on their students:

I rate the Song Room very highly because it was reaching indigenous students ... fostered a team approach, linked teachers and students in a common goal that allowed meaningful relationships to develop, it involved parents and the community in the project so they came to school and it created a vehicle for understanding and empathy by non-indigenous students. It was very highly valued by the community. (Principal, Regional Primary School)

Themes	Area				
	Metropolitan	Regional	Remote		
Arts involved in program	Self-publishing, craft, poetry	Self-publishing, craft, poetry	Self-publishing, creative arts, dance		
Engagement of children	All children engaged. Program of excellent quality and captivating.	Children and parents actively engaged in craft.	Children highly engaged by storytelling.		
Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture	Program explored local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.	Program explored local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Parents' individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture employed as a resource.	Program involved a small amount of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Program reflected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity.		
Parental engagement	Increased parental engagement through Creative Community program. Increased number of parents engaged through the Creative Community program.	Increased parental engagement through Creative Community program and Early Literacy Storytelling program. Increased number of parents engaged through both programs.	Increased parent engagement through Creative Community program and Early Literacy Storytelling program. Increased number of parents engaged through the Creative Community program.		
Resources produced	Self-published books produced from both Early Literacy Storytelling program and Creative Community program.	Self-published books produced from Creative Community program and Early Literacy Storytelling program.	Self-published books produced from Early Literacy Storytelling program. Artwork produced from Creative Community program.		

Table 3: Summary of the findings of the case studies of the Creative Community program and Early Literacy Storytelling program

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art is "dynamic and receptive to change" (Grishin, 2014, p. 19) and is often used to explore "the importance of country, land and belonging" (Wright, 2012, p. 41). The three elements of CAIPE enabled the production of culturally relevant resources (books) and visual arts (mural and artworks) which drew from the cultural capital of parents, students, and community members (Table 3). The presence of these resources and art works that reflect the cultural capital of parents, students, and community members within the school would help to encourage the sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life, culture and identity (Bull et al., 2008; COAG, 2009; Educational Transformations, 2007b; Saulwick Muller Social Research, 2006).

The employment of an Aboriginal Parental Liaison Officer in the metropolitan trial site was found to encourage parental participation within the Creative Community program, which involved over 17 parents from six surrounding schools. The Aboriginal Parental Liaison Officer was able to inform potential participants of the program. The Community Liaison Officer's active involvement through the provision of "face time" to potential participants was identified as important to the engagement of parents.

In the regional trial site, The Song Room CAIPE programs for both the Early Literacy Storytelling Program and the Creative Community Workshop were timed to be directly preceding or after other programs, which was thought to encourage increased parental engagement. Some of the parents engaged in these programs do not have access to transportation, so the provision of transport to the various programs was found to encourage parental participation. The Creative Community program was held within the school grounds for the Metropolitan and Regional trial sites, which showed the highest numbers of parental participation.

The key factors of program design to enable parent engagement were identified through the case studies: 1) participation of local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Teaching Artist; 2) active involvement of local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Parental Liaison Officer; 3) active involvement of local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Liaison Officer; 4) local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community Liaison Officer; 4) local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture within the program; 5) provision of transport; 6) activity for parents/children directly preceding or after engagement with The Song Room; and 7) Creative Community program location within the school grounds. These key learnings in program design may be useful for the consideration of future programs.

# Discussion

Before summarizing the most significant findings, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study. The schools involved were located in specific communities in Queensland. The findings of an individual research study cannot on their own be generalized to other similar settings, so there can be no assurance that schools that choose to participate in The Song Room programs will experience the same impact.

Nevertheless, the findings warrant the most serious attention on the part of policymakers because they are consistent with national and international research and because the differences in experiences of students in The Song Room programs are consistently significant, and occasionally dramatic, compared to the general experience of students. The findings presented in this paper were similar to those the researchers reported in *Transforming Education through the Arts* (Caldwell

& Vaughan, 2012), which was their study of the impact of The Song Room programs on students from some of the most disadvantaged schools in New South Wales.

The first significant finding was increased gains in literacy results (NAPLAN and English grades), which may have been driven by the changes observed for student attendance (significantly increased attendance observed on The Song Room days and increased percentage of students with zero absenteeism). Parental involvement has been shown to influence school climate (Clinton et al., 2007). Parental engagement in CAIPE may have improved student outcomes through improved school climate.

A second finding was that students' self-confidence was increased and self-identity was improved when they participated in The Song Room In-School Workshops. Similarly, increases in self-confidence were identified through case studies and the Social Emotional Wellbeing survey (Bernard, Mangum, & Urbach, 2013; Bernard, Stephanou, & Urbach, 2007) when the impact of The Song Room was measured in disadvantaged schools in New South Wales (Vaughan, 2012; Vaughan, Harris, & Caldwell, 2011b).

A third finding was that students from the regional trial site showed the greatest magnitude of impact of the CAIPE program in comparison to the metropolitan and remote cohorts, with significant differences identified in NAPLAN results, English grades, and attendance. The increased gains in literacy results within the regional cohort may have been driven by the changes observed for student attendance (significantly increased attendance observed on The Song Room days and increased percentage of students with zero absenteeism). The differences between the implementation of the programs and impact on parental engagement between the trial sites may have influenced the observed differences in the student outcomes, and these are discussed below.

A fourth finding was that a focus on creative arts and drawing on the parental, community, and student cultural capital was crucial to the success of the program. The regional program had the strongest focus on drawing from the parental, community, and student cultural capital. The case study of one school involved in the regional program revealed that the program had provided an in-depth exploration of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, where students' individual cultural identity was employed as a resource for the class. This type of interaction exemplifies agentic thinking, which sees the students and parents "as having many experiences that are relevant and fundamental to classroom interactions" (Bishop, 2013, p. 76).

In conclusion, the students from the regional trial site showed the largest impact of the trial CAIPE program in comparison to the metropolitan and remote cohorts, with significant differences identified in NAPLAN results (gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students), English grades, and attendance. The regional program had the strongest focus on local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. This cultural identity of students was explored using visual arts within the self-published books. To encourage a similar impact of creative arts programs, it is suggested that the program content be heavily embedded in local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture, requiring the presence of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Teaching Artist, preferably one from within the community, to facilitate links with the community.

#### Acknowledgment

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# (Co)Existing in the Finnish Landscape

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**Abstract:** This essay reflects on the urgency of retelling personal narratives and histories through contemporary art, critiquing the singular trauma narratives, victimization, and exotification of the *Other* in the stories narrated in the West, specifically in art and its knowledge production. The text is based on postcolonial, feminist, indigenous, and decolonial theories, and it expands on narratives particularly in a Finnish context. I bring up examples of personal narrative in my practice and research, and further critically address the dominant and imposed stereotypical narratives of women of color in Finland, particularly women with Southwest Asian roots (politically known as the Middle East). The essay elaborates on alternative narratives of truth while building on interconnections across the globe.

Keywords: Intersectional feminism, representation and national identity, retelling stories, contemporary art, colonialism, Eurocentrism, Southwest Asia and North Africa politically known as the Middle East

خلاصه

این مقاله فوریت بازگو کردن روایت ها و تاریخ های شخصی را از طریق هنر معاصر منعکس می کند، در عین حال که مسائلی همچون روایت های منحصر به فرد آسیب پذیری، یا قربانی جلوه دادن و تاکید کردن بر متفاوت بودن افراد غیر غربی در داستانهای روایت شده در غرب، به ویژه در هنر و مساله تولید دانشِ مربوط به آن را به نقد می کشد. این متن بر اساس نظریه های پسا استعماری ، فمینیستی، بومی و ضد استعماری نوشته شده و به طور خاص به روایت های مربوط به جامعه فنلاند می پردازد.

در این مقاله نویسنده نمونه هایی از روایت شخصی خود را در کار هنری و تحقیق اش ارائه می دهد، و علاوه بر آن روایت های کلیشه ای غالب و تحمیلی بر زنان غیر سفید پوست در فنلاند ، به ویژه زنانی که ریشه در جنوب غربی آسیا (خاورمیانه) دارند را به طور انتقادی بررسی می کند. این مقاله ضمن بررسی روایت های متفاوتی از حقیقت، بر ارتباطات متقابل در جهان تاکید می کند.

كلمات كليدى

فمینیسم اینتر سکشنال ، بازنمایی و هویت ملی ، بازگویی روایتها ، هنر معاصر ، استعمار ، اروپا محوری ، آسیای جنوب غربی و شمال آفریقا که از لحاظ سیاسی به عنوان خاورمیانه شناخته می شوند. He who does the classifying classifies himself among the classified (the enunciated), but he is the only one who classifies among all those being classified. . . Those who are classified as less human do not have much say in the classification (except to dissent), while those who classify always place themselves at the top of the classification. (Mignolo, 2015, p. xv)

I hope this text will have meaning for those who have followed a similar path while trying to make sense of discussions surrounding the *Otherness* in the West and the necessity of retelling narratives to those who simply want to know more. For I have seen first-hand how dislocation, relocation, and re-contextualization often result in the loss of meaning. In this essay, the West refers to the white racial position, particularly to relations of Eurocentrism and whiteness to knowledge production and power structure.

What does it mean to be a member of a marginalized, displaced people, or to count oneself among those whose being is physically overlooked, intellectually disapproved, and overdetermined by stereotypical and symptomatic modes? It all starts with a sense of loss without the hope of being (re)united with that which one has been deprived of physically, mentally, or intellectually. This loss is compounded by the exhaustion of leaving and arriving, but rarely settling.

Everything that surrounds a displaced person has impact on this sense of loss. However, reflecting on the feeling of loss of a place — its geography, its memories, and its people — may engender a new condition. This feeling of loss can become a generative condition; it can effectively produce new forms of meaning, particularly when one becomes actively involved in their new locality. By entering into situations, one may alter them, and this involvement may lead to changing perceptions.

In this essay, I aim to reflect on the urgency of retelling personal narratives and histories through contemporary art, critiquing the singular trauma narratives, victimization, and exotification of the *Other* in the stories narrated in the West, whether in the art scene or in art and knowledge productions. The critique will particularly be in a Finnish context, creating alternative narratives of *truth* while building on interconnections across the globe. I will present an example of personal narrative in my own practice and research in contemporary art. My aim is to challenge the dominant and imposed stereotypical stories to and of women with roots from Southwest Asia and North Africa (politically known as the Middle East<sup>1</sup>) in a Finnish context. Constructing narratives, one may develop and critically challenge the dominant stories by forming new narratives in a global context.



Figure 1. Memory of the Sea I (Performing in Caspian Sea where I grow up in Northern Iran, 2013) Diasec print, Exhibited at Current state, Cable Factory, Helsinki, 2015

#### **Problematizing the Victim Oriented Narratives: Eurocentric 'Authentic' Narratives & Dehumanization**

Racism becomes part of the structural based of the state, permeating the cultural life of the dominant society both by its exclusive narrative of dominant experienceand mythology, and by its stereotypical rendering of the "Other" as peripheral and unidimensional. (Thobani, 2007, p. 274)

The question of the Other in this context and in knowledge production, artistic research and practices is the question of the West in relation to its past and present. In fact, it is related to the Western epistemology and strategies of dealing with other peoples and geographies throughout hundreds of years of colonizing and holding power over them. Nevertheless, addressing the histories of this relation is also a matter of reclaiming one's own histories and place while going beyond them. Therefore, the position of the Other cannot be thoroughly understood or decolonized without an in-depth investigation into its relations: its relation to the world's power structures, geographies, politics, and the socio-cultural structures of the States in which peoples live. I would borrow from Simon Ceder's (2016) elaboration on relationality as a decentering concept in education: that relationality creates the "condition of decentering" (p. 18).

Attempts to answer the question *Who is unseen, particularly in the West*? reveal that *invisibility* is a condition imposed on marginalized peoples by normalized colonial structures and institutions. One *is* not invisible, but *becomes* invisible by force, as so-called invisibility is a distinctive position that is imposed through the highlighting of differences. According to several postcolonial and decolonial thinkers, the Western hegemonic epistemology is constructed by and deeply invested in associations based on difference rather than similarity (Dabashi, 2015; Grosfoguel, 2011, 2013; Mignolo, 2009, 2015; Mohanty, 2003; Smith, 2012). Western ideology and thinking are built upon differentiating oneself, one's culture, and one's nation againstmonolithic Others — the so-called Asians, Africans, Latin Americans, and so on. This *epistemic racism* — which bleeds into social, intellectual, and institutional spheres, hidden beneaththe normalization of certain ways of being and thinking — produces *Eurocentric knowledge*. Racism is not only the devaluing and dehumanizing of certain people by forcibly stripping away their humanity, but is also the *naturalization* of Western ways of thinking and being. It is the glory and joy of classifying without being classified.

Accordingly, the position of the Other is deeply rooted in rebelling against or conforming to the process of classification and categorization. Thus, categories related to race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability, among others, reinforce the binaries of privileged and underprivileged, insider and outsider, visible and invisible. The West enjoys (and economically benefits from) imposing its hegemony and normalized modes of being and thinking on others. In critiquing the Eurocentric epistemology, Ramón Grosfoguel (2011) argues that "they still continue to produce knowledge from the Western man point zero god-eye view" (p. 6). Furthermore, by "hiding the location of the subject of enunciation, European/Euro-American colonial expansion and domination was able to construct a hierarchy of superior and inferior knowledge and, thus, of superior and inferior people around the world" (p. 7). Eurocentric epistemology and knowledge production endeavors to produce the *universal* single story. In doing so it ignores, dismisses, or strips away the subjectivity and agency of Others in any form of production or expression. Consequently, in representations of non-European subjects, whether

in arts or mass-media productions, ethnographic or victim-oriented narratives often become the center, the prevailing *authentic narratives*. Authenticity is at the center of Eurocentric evaluation for acceptable visual representation of other peoples in masses. It seems these subjectivities cannot be understood – by most white people – without being reduced, dehumanized, or objectified as victims/subjects. The dehumanization in this context is a process of years of colonization of their cultures and subjectivities. Therefore, their ways of being and their cultures have been actively dismissed. These narratives are often over simplified or lack complexities in representing the Other. In their scholarship, decolonial thinkers such as Walter Mignolo (2009), Hamid Dabashi (2015), Ramón Grosfoguel (2011, 2013), feminists of color Chandra Tapade Mohanty (2003) and Sara Ahmed (2017), among others, together with indigenous thinkers such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) and Emma LaRocque (2010) have beenaddressing how deep the problem of colonialism is; we still live with its consequences today. Today, imperialism and colonialism continue and have taken different forms; therefore it is wrong to assume that colonial times are over.

Colonial binaries are central to Eurocentric thinking and production, such as the repeated argument of civilization confronting savagery and barbarism, which has brutalized manypeoples and their sociocultural lives to the present day. Eurocentric thinking produces inhuman and reductionist victims. Decolonial scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) highlights the connection between being human and being capable of creating indigenous history, knowledge and society, and notes that indigenous societies "had their own systems of order which [were] dismissed through what Albert Memmi referred to as a series of negations: they were not fully human, not civilized enough to have systems...their languages and modes of thought were inadequate" (p. 29). Currently, similar arguments are employed in portraying Middle Eastern peoples, particularly Muslims. In Western narratives, these people are often depicted as less human, barbaric, and fragmented submissive-powerless victims who lack subjectivities. According to Smith (2012), fragmentation in narratives "is not a phenomenon of postmodernism as many might claim, but a consequence of imperialism" (p. 29).

#### Whiteness & Colonial structures within the Nordic and Finnish Art Scene

In the introduction of *Scandinavian Studies Journal Volume 91 on Nordic Colonialisms*, Höglund and Andersson Burnett (2019) declare that while some European "studies have long discussed colonial pasts and postcolonial presents, historical research on the European North has not until recently begun to consider the ways in which this region contributed to, benefitted from, and now inhabit colonial histories" (p. 1). They continue, "this is arguably because the nations of the region have often been imagined, internally and externally, as champions of global equality andminority rights" (p. 1). It is evident that reluctance in addressing and engaging with the Nordic colonialism and its history and present impacts in the Nordic societies. More specifically, "in Finland, the general climate seems to be one that refuses to problematize the power of whiteness to produce both white and non-white subjectivities" (Kallio-Tavin & Tavin, 2018, p.69). Helena Oikarinen-Jabai (as Cited in Kallio-Tavin & Tavin, 2018) gives an example of the denial of the production of whiteness, where the word race is hardly ever used in Finland. She writes:

Many Finns believe there cannot be racism in Finland because there is very little use of the term race. Even in the academic context, the concept of racism is often bypassed by acknowledging the ideologies of the democratic society; recognition of difference is not needed since everybody should have the same rights. (pp. 69-70)

Santiago Mostyn (2019) in his article in the *Nordic Art Review* (the leading Nordic journal of contemporary art) criticizes the whiteness and privileges within the Swedish art scene. His article addresses his experience of co-curating the *Moderna Exhibition*, Moderna Museet's quadrennial survey of contemporary art.<sup>2</sup> The article is titled "Explaining the Blind Spot of Swedish Art World Exceptionalism: A small and comfortable cultural elite, convinced of their own progressive values, retains authorship over Sweden's consensus-driven identity." Mostyn extensively reminds the Swedish art critics about Sweden's colonial past and its present impact, which seem to be entirely dismissed. While emphasizing the lack of inclusivity and diversity within the scene, hearticulates privileges of the white man and reductionist understanding of the non-white artists' works within the art field:

As an active participant in the Swedish art scene, I work from a place of privilege, but also within a void. 'Culture' is still accorded an intrinsic value in civic life here, a positive legacy of the welfare state ideal . . . The concession is having to operate within what sometimes feels like an echo chamber of a bygone age, constantly needing to explain my background or clarify my role and being forced to push forward through a society with a relatively comfortable self-regard. . . it is part of a cycle, both within the art world and in Western society at large, that in subtle ways keeps giving preferential treatment to white men. When [a Swedish male] art critic can only see a 'multicultural agenda' in the fact that artists of color, or simply artists with non-Swedish sounding names, are active in Sweden, it says more about his own blindness to a cultural reality than anything else. (Mostyn, 2019)

In the article "Intra-Nordic Differences, Colonial/Racial Histories, and National Narratives: Rewriting Finnish History," Suvi Keskinen (2019) explains the Finnish colonial history and its complicity. Keskinen explains that the imperial and colonial world order of these periods shaped the context in which people living in Finland, and later in the newly established nation-state, operated. Many of the policies and practices were already developed during Swedish and Russian rule, but the projection of the Indigenous Sámi and the Roma minority as the Others of the modernizing Finnish nation-state intensified the governing and racialization of these groups in the post-independence era. Further, Mira Kallio-Tavin (2018) notes the pervasive color-blindness throughout Nordic discourse, and the resulting refusal to problematize the power of whiteness to produce both white and non-white subjectivities. She points out that Nordic countries have a particular relationship to whiteness and to the ignorance of racism; "the image of the idealized democratic Nordic nations needs to be scrutinized in the context of indigenous Sámi people. Some families even wanted to hide their Sámi background" (p. 1). This "kind of colonization of mind rooted in the racist behavior of the nation had long affect for the future generation" (p. 2). Oikarinen-Jabai (2011) in her research with a focus on life of Somalian youngsters as secondgeneration migrant children and youth states that "all participants have experienced verbal or physical assault because of their race or ethnic background. Harassment seems to be part of their everyday lives" (p. 156).

Considering the existing Nordic exceptionalism and general refusal to acknowledge the power of whiteness, contemporary art and institutional practices in Finland are not better than Sweden. In fact, the argument of not being complicit in colonial history (Keskinen, 2019) has been used in Finland to ignore any current-day criticism towards the colonial structures and wrong practices. Whiteness has in general been refused to be critically addressed in art institutions, both in contextualization and realization of the programs and in representations. Regarding whiteness and colonial history, Kallio-Tavin (2018) explains that Finland, like other Nordic countries, has been able to take an outsider position, which has given the possibility to take an innocent position as a bystander and as a pure Nordic reviewer of the rest of the world. In fact, lack of critical self-reflection within the Finnish art and cultural institutions has resulted in maintaining the prevailing homogenous and exclusive whiteness and art productions by mainly white artists. As a result, the system creates the structural discriminatory treatments towards the non-white and non-Finnish born artists on the scene, leading to their exclusion and marginalization in the field. In best cases, these artists' work is showcased in other categories known as *ethnic art* or *multicultural art* and so on.

Colonial and discriminatory structures within Finnish art and cultural institutions manifest themselves in contextualization of the annual programs and exhibitions of publicly funded and private institutions, or in representations and collections. The exclusion occurs when people in leading and decision-making positions within the institutions do not recognize or consider foreign born artists or cultural workers as equally professional and competent as white Finnish and Western artists. We rarely see (or in some cases do not see at all) a person of color<sup>3</sup> in leadership or decision-making positions in highly ranked institutions, funding institutions, and particularly not in Finnish higher education. Eurocentrism seems to be at the core of educational structure and decision making at all levels from the public to the private sectors. In advancing diversity within the art scene, it seems that the private sector at some level has been more progressive than the public sector. Here I would like to bring an example of recent research done on attitudes within the art institutions in Finland and conditions of foreign-born workers in the art field.

According to Avaus/opening<sup>4</sup> (2017-2020), a research study and project done by the Finnish Centre for Cultural Policy Research (Cupore), the working condition of non-Finnish born artists and cultural workers is crucial. Cupore carried out the research to review the status of foreignborn arts and culture professionals in Finland. The research also focused on the related practices at the museums, theatres, and orchestras within the central government transfers system, at the national arts and cultural institutions, and more closely, at the National Museum of Finland, the Turku City Theatre, the Kuopio Symphony Orchestra, and Arts Promotion Centre Finland. The purpose of the project was to investigate and promote models that support the employment opportunities of foreign-born professionals to work in the Finnish cultural field. I would like to briefly explain some results from the survey presented in the Nordic Seminar by Emmi Lahtinen (2019). The result confirms the problematic structural discriminatory attitudes within the Finnish art scene. Consider the answers to the question: have you faced hardship in your professional career in Finland? From 95 respondents, 86 percent answered yes, and only 15 percent said no. The most reoccurring challenges mentioned by participants among other issues are: economic challenges such as lack of work opportunities, the feeling of being an outsider, lack of networks, language problems, lack of possibilities to take part in decision-making, and harassment. And from 98 respondents to the question, do you consider yourself treated as equal with Finnish born

artists? 58 percent said no. Similarly, in the Barometer reports<sup>5</sup> (2017–2018), from 1168 responses to the question in the survey, is equality realized in the arts sector? 42 percent disagreed and only 3 percent completely agreed. This may help us to have a better understating of the current noninclusive and general practices in the art and cultural scene in Finland. In relation to the number of employees with a non-Finnish background, the amount of discrimination based on language is considerable. Other common reasons for discrimination were "nationality, (ethnic) origin" (presented by Lahtinen, Statistics Finland/työolotutkimus,<sup>6</sup> 2013). In 2020 Cupore published an extensive and in-depth final report of their research on *The Status of Foreign-born Art and Culture Professionals in Finland*, which in summary is states:

The structures and practices of the Finnish arts and cultural field do not in every respect support equal work opportunities. The problems brought forth by our research have also been identified in previous studies, which for its own part shows that sufficient progress has not been made ... In fact, financial problems are the most commonly encountered problems among the foreign-born arts and culture professionals. Their situation is further undermined by established, at times discriminating practices, a lack of professional networks in Finland, prevailing attitudes and failures to recognize or value education and professional experience gained outside Finland. Overall, discrimination based on ethnic background is quite common on the labour market In Finland. If a person encounters discrimination on multiple grounds, the less likely they are to gain equal opportunities. (Emmi Lahtinen et al. 2020, p. 4-5)

After nearly eight years of observation and actively working in the art scene, it is evident to me that voices of minorities as authors and artists of diaspora, and particularly of non-European immigrant women artists, are most excluded. In exercising inclusion and exclusion within the institutions, among other factors, gender, race, geography, religion, background, and nationality seem to play an important role. Although in the last few years it seems that there have been some changes in strategies within the art institutions, still more concrete structural reforms are needed to have any significant and sustainable change toward a more inclusive art scene in Finland.

Lacking minority critical leadership can be a reason why Finnish art institutions systematically continue ignoring the existing capacity of the international professional art workers in Finland. So much space is given to (white) Finnish artists to create their *universal single story of others* by co-option and consumption of difference. Appropriation and representation of something about others and their cultures in exotic, orientalist, and problematic ways are results of such conditions. The structure continues functioning in ways to underrepresent foreign born professionals in Finland. Even though the institutions' international programs are relevant to these artists and cultural workers' practices, opportunities are offered to white Finns to advance their career. The practice of racism in the art scene is mostly exercised and validated under the guise of freedom of expression, which thus guarantees artistic freedom and the art's role of being provocative for Finnish white artists in the scene. Simply put; most institutions care for their own by ignoring the Others. In the long term, exclusion of artists and cultural workers of color has been normalized. In the visible absence of people of color in the structure - we see how Finnish scholars, artists and curators write papers on the orient, curate showsand programs, conferences, and seminars about or of the Others and their cultures. Thus, these people claim their knowledge rather than taking any major action in dismantling the existing discriminatory and structural

barriers for the racialized artists and cultural workers. In doing so, they fail to combat inequalities, racism, and whiteness.

In a series of writings in a blog Inside-an-airport,7 Hami Bahadori, a Helsinki-based artist, addresses the problematic matters in the Finnish art scene. He elaborates on the general lack of criticality within the art institutions and artistic practices. He criticizes Finnish art education, particularly in the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts. He elaborates on two examples of recent racist and oriental narratives of the Middle East and its sociocultural and political conditions by Finnish artists: 1) A Middle Eastern perspective on the recent wave of Orientalist exhibitions in Helsinki: Pekka Niskanen's exhibition Tehran Dark Metal (2019) and its opening event' Ajankohtainen Iran' at Gallery Hippolyte, and 2) the exhibition Oriental Spa at Kuvataideakatemia(Finnish Academy of Fine Arts). In the first case, Hippolyte Gallery, which curated/hosted Finnish artist Pekka Niskanen's exhibition, organized an event titled discussing the current political and social conditions of Iranian society in Finnish language. The gallery included all-white-Finnish experts in the panel discussion and did not include any expert from the existing Iranian community of artists and scholars in Helsinki. Consequently, Elham Rahmati, an Iranian artist and curator based in Helsinki, made a post on Facebook criticizing Hippolyte Gallery to stop the exclusive Finnish (all white) event about Iran. The request by Rahmati was not made to ask them to include English as the event's language or simply to tokenize an Iranian expert in the event to legitimize it, but to problematize the structural problems and to draw attention to the repetitive dynamics and unfair practices in the art scene. In this case, the problem surely was the exotification of Iranian people and their culture. Several members of the art community including Iranian artists, artists of color, and others responded to the debate under the post. The majority who commented requested that the gallery's staff cancel the event. The discussion under the Facebook post unraveled debates on the unjust practices within the gallery's representation or curation and the Finnish institutional practices in general. It seems that most people who work in the Finnish art and cultural institutions lack proper understanding of the current global postcolonial and decolonial debates and actions in the sector. Therefore, the debate under Rahmati's post widely questioned the given space of such colonial and missionary approaches to other cultures. In this case, the claim of the political expertise of the Finnish (white male) artist after his short visit to Iran to represent the political climate of country through its underground music or to become an expert on politics of Iran and its contemporary society was questioned. Who but a white man can in such a short period of time understand a complex society and become an expert on its politics or arts? People who commented under the post collectively asked for the accountability of the institutions in carrying out such practices. Hippolyte Gallery was asked for an explanation on that. Although no constructive explanation was provided by the gallery, shortly afterwards, the gallery shared a public notice stating "due to the artist's sickness the event was cancelled." Parallel to Rahmati's critique, Bahadori too in his text "Pekka Niskanen is the Best Example of White-Privilege 'Profiting' From Pain of Others," criticizes such practices/structures and writes:

Niskanen identifies himself as a researcher who helps the Finnish society "understand Iran." He is an artist who not only doesn't see his white privilege which allows him to freely travel the world and represent minorities, but he is also 'profiting'from this cultural violence. However, what is shocking is that art venues such as Hippolyte gallery, and Bioart Society is giving space to such artists...We usually don't hear about these topics [about the ongoing colonial forces towards indigenous Sámi people by Finnish government], yet so many artists and researchers including Niskanen are quick in changing the subject to somewhere else in the world and ultimately bringing a nationalist argument on how Finland will be affected by migration and refugees. (Bahadori, 2019b)

In a second case, after visiting the exhibition titled *Oriental Spa* in the Finnish Academy ofFine Arts, Bahadori explains his observation as follows:

*Oriental Spa* used all the racist stereotypes of the orient. Visiting the exhibition felt like reading the most contemporary orientalist book that has ever been written. There was no significant collective complaint or institutional attention paid to the matter, as there are less than five students from Asia and North Africa in the whole institution. Not to mention, there aren't any brown and black faculty and staff at the whole academy. There isn't even any data on diversity in the Finnish art scene since the culture sector doesn't monitor anything aside from nationality. (Bahadori, 2019a)

To change the current condition, one needs to emphasize ethics as the most important and integral principle within artistic, educational, and institutional practices. It is the principal and global responsibility which can create a caring system and solidarity in creating equity for everyone. Regarding the "Finnishness beliefs and attitudes the ideas of democratic and equal societies are so inherently valued that there has been little room for critical self-reflection, especially around the notions of traditional, Nordic, and Finnishness, and their relationship to white culture" (MacEchrane as cited in Kallio-Tavin & Tavin, 2018, p. 73). By challenging whiteness, surviving it, and voicing the problematic and systematic exclusionary structures, one might become the problem themselves. As Ahmed (2017) explains the walls of institutions often feel like they are made of the most resistant materials. The brick walls of institutions create practices of exclusion; they consolidate through the erasure of the fundamental relational asymmetries on which they are premised, until the latter become invisible. They have become so commonplace that we do not see them anymore.

Existing in a small art scene where everyone knows everyone, when confronting people behind the institutions and holding them accountable for their actions, one might become concerned about whether confrontation is the best strategy in the Finnish context. It is apparent that the first and most common reaction to such criticism is a defensive act. In defense of the structural problems, most Finnish actors transform the critic of the problem to the main problem. The criticism in most cases is considered as a personal problem rather than a constructive one; therefore it is systematically dismissed, ignored, or silenced. However, in the difficult times we live, it is mandatory to respond to our local issues and problematic structures which are interlinked to the wider problematics on a global level. We must acknowledge that our actions have impacts as we live interdependently on the planet; therefore, we cannot afford to be silent in such circumstances.



*Figure 2.* In Transition, *Poster, Two channel video installation at Virka Gallery, Helsinki city Hall, 2017-18, Sepideh Rahaa* 

### Of National Narratives: Discomforting and Existing in the Finnish Landscape. 'In Transition' a Response to the Centenary Finnish Independence

Undoing ingrained racial and sexual mythologies within feminist communities requires...[becoming] fluent in each other's histories, it also requires unlikely coalitions...and clarifying the meaning of its dialogue. What are the conditions, the knowledges, and the attitudes that make a noncolonized dialogue possible? How can we craft a dialogue anchored in equality, respect, and dignity for all peoples? In other words, I want to suggest that one of the most crucial challenges for a critical multicultural feminism is working out how to engage in ethical and caring dialogues. (Mohanty, 2003, p. 125)

To understand the dynamics of narratives, we must ask which narratives are acceptableand which are not. For whom are the narratives produced and by whom? Most current practices within contemporary art, even on a small scale, do suggest that the discursive and embodied tendencies have historically and contextually favored a particular aesthetic, the Western aesthetic and gaze. To change it, we need to listen and include multiple voices in our practices. It enables us to understand the world from a more inclusive, constantly shifting, non-hegemonic point of view. Moreover, we need to shift the geography of reason which is part andparcel of the decolonial turn (Maldonado-Torres, 2011). Paula Moya (2011) urges us to take seriously the political and epistemic significance of different kinds of identities in order to investigate *who we are and from where we speak*. It's important with regards to the kind of knowledge we produce. Indeed, *who we* 

*are and from where we speak* is highly relevant for the intellectual projects which we are likely to pursue. Under this conception, identities are "socially significant and context-specific ideological constructs that refer in non-arbitrary (if partial) ways to verifiable aspects of the social world" (p. 80). On the other hand:

[When] hegemonic narratives tend to divide us, producing and reproducing cultures of narration, visibility, and accessibility our locations must be challenged for another kind of freedom that empowers our differences to emerge. By shifting our locations, we inhabit spheres of interconnected existences that are in constant motion. (Agudio et al., 2019, p. 3)

The representation of women with Southwest Asian and North African (Middle Eastern) roots is one of the most complicated and problematic matters specifically in the West. Hazel Carby (2009) notes that Western narrative "is trundling Third World women onto the stage only to perform as victims of barbarous, primitive practices in barbarous, primitive societies" (p. 451). In such representations, one cannot dismiss the colonial perception which has massively contributed to the current stereotypical perceptions of Southwest Asian women among others in the West – the exotic other which Western feminism has strongly defined or theorized itself against. These are the so-called hopeless, helpless, submissive, passive, and oppressed women of non-Western cultures. As argued earlier, the postcolonial histories and colonial structures in relation to today's conditions of the Middle East and Western perceptions of it is obvious. For the West to define itself and for its pursuits, it will never recognize the East fully, but only on the periphery. However, I agree with Mohanty (2003) that we are "no longer in the same relationship with the Western states, so that the contemporary definitions of the Third World can no longer have the same geographical contours and boundaries they had for industrial societies" (p. 44).

In the last eight years of my life and work in Finland, it has become clear that race, gender, nationality, and religion, among other factors, are inextricably interrelated. I have learned to live in relation to gendered, racial, and national structures embedded in Finnish societal structures. In most of these professional years, making art, educating, and investigating through art has been the main site of my learning and (in some cases) unlearning. In my personal life, living three decades in Iran and almost one decade in Finland, borders have become visible in many ways; although I have repeatedly failed to accept them and continue to ignore them, I currently try to live with them both outside and within me. If I find enough strength, I would try to challenge them. The presence of these physical and mental borders in my life and work is same as what Talpade Mohanty (2003) explains in her case: "It has been both exclusionary and enabling...to envision a critically transnational (internationalist) feminist praxis moving through these borders" (p. 2). For me, learning, researching, educating, and resisting through art has structured my days, weeks, and years significantly as an inseparable part of me. It is where I can be myself: a site for provocation in questioning the power dynamics in society and in knowledge productions within and outside artistic practice.

As an immigrant woman artist being situated in a migratory context, I agree with Olivier Marboeuf (as cited in Void Network, 2013) that "by staying outside, one literally understands nothing. It is thinking through experience" which enables us to make a profound understanding of such conditions. It is important "to be in the position of an inspective which starts out from positioning us in the middle of the world, in its events, in which we have sometimes a greater,

but often a smaller role" while "humans cannot freely position themselves outside anyhing, because they are anyhow immersed in everything" (Varto, 2009, p. 36).

In this article, Iwould like to bring one example of my current practice. The work is from my longterm projectitled *A Dream that Came True?* (since 2016). The project questions migration as a dream from a migratory woman's perspective, with an aim to reflect on lived experiences, different ways of being, socio-cultural adaptions, and resistances. It brings together personal narrations of everyday life, home, and hybrid identities of women including myself who live in Finland and have Southwest Asian and North African roots. The project aims to challenge preconceived stereotypical perceptions of women and their roles in Finland. Going beyond this, it resists the accepted norms and conventions and privilege these women's perspectives over the other ones, avoiding them from becoming/being only a side-track in the narratives. As Smith (2012) powerfully states, "the need to tell our stories remains the powerful imperative of a powerful form of resistance" (p. 36).

In 2017, I was invited to produce a series of artworks to engage with the theme of national identity in the Finnish centenary independence year. The first question was: in the national narratives, who is included and who is not? And what forms of womanhood and Finnishness have existed in those narratives? As a response, I produced a series of artworks to state our active presence in this landscape. Following Moya's question about who we are and from where we speak, my aim was to give a human face to our everyday struggles and resistances while positioning myself within this narrative. I had already investigated the concept for over a year and decided to tell a multiform story; I invited and hired two performers-narrators who had roots both in SWANA and in Finland and employed certain visual and contextual strategies in the production. One of the strategies was to have strong combinations of words and poetry in some of languages which are spoken by Southwest Asian people in Finland. The text was intertwined with the symbolic imagery in a nonlinear narrative. Furthermore, the Finnish landscape has been widely used by Finnish artists to establish the national identity. To establish our (diverse) existence in this narrative, I used Finnish elements and local spaces both indoor and outdoor, particularly the natural landscape. The aim was to bridge the personal perception to the social perception. By drawing the line between the various points in this investigation, I attempted to create a counternarrative. As Smith (2012) states, "developing counter-discourse may best be understood as a resistance to gross misrepresentation" (p. 4). The project was established to combine a holistic reflection of some recorded parts of lived experiences together with critical imagination and embodiment in the production. "[I]t is through reflective practice that theoretical knowledges and lived experiences can be embodied, made meaningful, and thus contribute to the generation of new understandings" (Barbour, 2006, p. 1). In Transition was a two-channel video work where women were symbolically set in similar locations yet separated from each other. They did not meet each other, therefore they had an indirect dialogue in the video.

*In Transition* was centered on positionality of immigrant women rooting in Finland yet resisting against any conformity and imposed roles. It was a poetic response of being present in this locality in its hundred-year celebration, addressing the complexity, hybridity, and multiplicity of beings and identities. Elaborating on our womanhood and existence, women like myself who have roots elsewhere – particularly in the SWANA – are not confined only to that. But rooting meaningfully in Finland, they appear actively in its landscape and offer a flexible understanding of Finnishness. In this context, when I write "us," it refers to and includes both first and second generations of

women who live in Finland and may or may not share the identity of an *immigrant woman*, we who are not the same. In such presentation, still one needs to be careful with naturalizing the structure of presence, of ways of thinking and being. My attempt was aligned with both Stuart Hall (1995), where he defines *national culture as imagined communities* while understanding how nationalism and national identity play a key role in an individual's life, its perpetual relation to space as territory, and its impact on construction of identity, self-definition, and self-positioning in the society. I agree with Haraway (1998) when she emphasizes "commitment on mobile positioning" for seeing "from the standpoints of the subjugated in order to see well" (p. 585).



Figure 3. In Transition, Installation at Virka Gallery, Helsinki city Hall, 2017-18, Sepideh Rahaa

The video work was a manifestation of an act of resistance by the performativity of bodies that resist against stereotypical perceptions or notions which recognize and categorize non-White women as the monolithic Other. Therefore, they (the women) are not included within the national narratives. I aimed to construct a narrative to critically challenge the dominant stories while forming a new narrative which could be best interpreted less with Eurocentrism, but more with situated understanding. In creating the story, the aim was to intersect the spaces with the bodily experiences in the form of sound combined with dance performances by the two performers Razan Abou Askar and Ramina Habibollah. By retelling an intertwined narrative, I endeavored to create possibilities for recognition, claiming, and beyond. The narrative begins on a Finnish island called Suomenlinna. The island itself has a long history of resistance. In May 1918, the fortress was renamed Suomenlinna (Castle of Finland) to reflect Finland's independence, and it was annexed to the state of Finland. In the beginning of the video in a dreamlike vision, a woman

(one of the performers) receives the unspoken knowledge of eternal life from the pomegranate tree located on a hill on the island. Receiving such knowledge is a metaphor in Persian literature. It is where the pomegranates in the video are rotating. The narration starts with the ringing of bells, sound, and poetry (see Figure 4):

*I, the passenger of lifeIn this place I, the dreamer Floating in time and space Pomegranate tree passed its life to meTo spread and to flourish* 

> I am a dreamer But not the only one I live to become a story I live to become a dream

The Pomegranate has a strong allegoric meaning of rooting, prosperity, and life. I transplanted the pomegranate, originating from Persia, (with an invisible string) to the Finnish indigenous tree which grows all over Finland, metaphorically offering abundance to it.

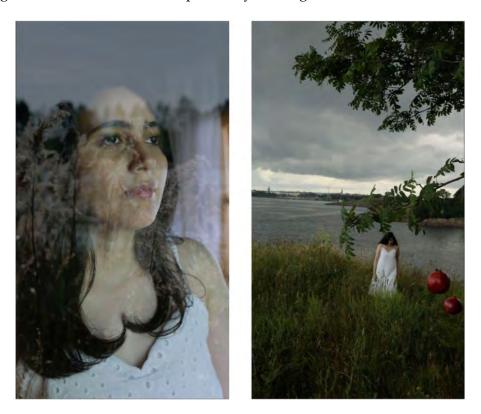


Figure 4. In Transition, Beginning of the video work, Installed at Virka Gallery, Helsinki city Hall, 2017-18, Sepideh Rahaa

Plants have migrated for millions of years on the planet as have humans. In one part, when the woman looks through the window of the Finnish wooden house, she witnesses the growth of the Finnish rowan tree within herself. It symphonizes the co-existence and mutual growth of becoming; it was to explore how beings are interconnected. Additionally, the sea (water) is present as a psychological element, being limitless, in motion, and connected to everything and in every land. Being present in the Finnish landscape, dancing in nature, running and sitting

whether in an industrial site or in a Finnish household, knitting or unknitting, the video work offers the nuanced Finnishness. It is for us to claim our place and to be the way we are or want to be, to resist, offer and to carry on. In the video one of the women is knitting a flag where some words appear. Words are in four of the common languages (among other ones) spoken by Middle Eastern people in Finland: Arabic, Farsi, Finnish, and English. The words nationalism, Kulttuuri (in Finnish culture), Identity & hybridity, Kieli (in Finnish language), زبان (in Farsi language), Home, وطن (in Arabic homeland) are related to the question of identity (see Figure 2). When the first woman is knitting, the other woman (in the other screen) takes the thread and undoes the knitted flag. When one of the women testifies on her status in the video, she starts running symbolically in the forest with the thread from the knitted flag in her hand (Figure 3). She runs to free herself from existing boundaries of terminologies and definitions in the knitted flag, yet in the end, she is captured in a web made by herself in the forest. Don't we sometimes trap ourselves more deeply while trying to escape from the boundaries? Being caught, she stands and gazes upon the sunlight's reflection from the top of the trees. There is no single solution to any struggle. In another part of the video, in an industrial setting, both women sit in front of each other (in two separated screens). While one is knitting and the other one is unknitting, they start an indirect dialogue (the first part is in Farsi and second part in English):

*First performer (briefed as FP):Reclaim your place in this wordWhat makes you Who you are Who you become This echoes in my mindHere, now and then* 

*FP: The responsibility to live SP: As we believe (they continue in this order)FP: As you gaze upon me SP: Imagine an island* 

*FP: Imagine the sea World is ours to make SP: It is an enormous burdenFP: Loud, proud and free I will not be statisticsI will not be silenced And in the end both performers/narrators repeat: But I will be a dreamer* 

In the last scene of the video when the first performer releases the pomegranate to the sea to continue its journey, the second performer narrates the open-ended journey. This scene is accompanied with a strong sound track by sound artist Ana Gutiezsca:

It's a journey I am not afraidEquality Be considered equal to those around meI am not afraid You have me and I have you

> I will remainEquality It's a journey

Hamid Dabashi (2015) asks: *can Europeans read?* My agreement with him is not only on geopolitics of knowledge and its productions, but also on ability of (responsible attempts) in understandings of the currents in the world which are applicable in the arts as well. The title of the work *In Transition* refers to being truly present in this moment (the hundredth-year-of- independency) to the present time in a current passage which one must take to transform from passiveness to pro-

activeness. In the present moment, our perceptions increase, and we may see on the horizon possibilities for change. I also agree with Haraway (2016):

[in] urgent times, many of us are tempted to address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe. ..... staying with trouble does not require such a relationship to times called the future; it requires learning to be truly present.. as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters and meanings. (p.1)



*Figure 5.* In Transition, *Ending part of the video, Merging figure of the woman with Finnish rowan tree in the Suomenlinna island, 2017-18, Sepideh Rahaa* 

# Conclusion

To be the Other is not an end, but rather an opportunity to practice new modes of being, thinking, and narrating. To be "Other" is to transform the everyday through a resistance against conformity and all the contrived identities and conditions that conformity imposes. According to Stuart Hall (1996), "identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not who we are or where we came from, so much as what we might become" (p.4). The identity based on becoming creates the possibility to monitor and contemplate life on both sides of the border separating inside from outside. It also allows us to complicate concepts instead of being limited to simplified definitions, to defy narrow

assumptions about identity, race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability, to embrace the interdependency and relationality of the world, and to continue to exist in non-Western contexts while living in the West and outside of its borders.

For us as ones who see from both within and outside, the Other must *delink* from the *disciplinarity* of imposed positions, the *geopolitics of knowledge*, and normativity. Delinking implies disobedience (Dabashi & Mignolo, 2015); by delinking, one breaks free from structures that have negatively impacted generations of people and structures whose effects continue to be felt into the present. Delinking demands self-awareness, persistence, and determination in consciously seeking new alliances. Delinking requires acceptance of oneself as a point of departure; it is certainly not easy to move beyond the state of life-long limbo that has become the normal mode of living for many Othered peoples. Delinking enables us to come up with alternative visions of reality more rooted in the lived experiences of people around the globe, an approach which allows meaning to be generated from within.

And through art and its mediation and educational power, we should reach out to other people by first looking into ourselves and into the depth of our condition. By doing so, we can facilitate more compassionate forms of interaction by remaining open to contingency. This creates a space for more direct and non-hierarchical connections to take place between people. In imagining different futures, we must create alternative physical and mental spaces and make room for greater closeness and proximity to the (non-Western) world and to each other.

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# Endnotes

- 1 The usage of the political term Middle East in this text is only a matter of clearance, and I prefer using termSouthwest Asia and North Africa (SWANA) to avoid the former colonial term.
- 2 Read more here: https://kunstkritikk.com/the-blind-spot-of-swedish-art-worldexceptionalism/?fbclid=IwAR0eR7\_BonyagTRuo2-6pBPrReigteDYjooQu0jJ3QjMrZpmpRhFkOZqHJA
- 3 Person of color refers to any person who is not considered white; the term emphasizes common experiences of systemic racism.
- 4 The survey is done by Cupore in collaboration with Culture for All Service, Globe Art Point year 2019. Read more here: https://www.cupore.fi/en/publications/cupore-s-publications/opening
- 5 The annual survey that maps the current values and attitudes in the arts and culture sector in Finland. Collaboration between Cupore and Arts Promotion Center Finland.
- 6 Read more here: https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/en
- 7 inside-an-airport is a study-group consisting of artists and scholars mainly from Middle Eastern backgroundswho are gathering regularly in Helsinki International Airport. The group is interested in topics related to migration, colonialization/decolonization, subjectivity, violence, surveillance and paranoia.



# The Bag of Passports: On Mobility, National Identity, and Migration

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**Abstract:** The burden of mobility, national identity, and the questions arising from migration are the spirit of this paper. By studying my maternal grandparents' passports, I adopt autoethnographic approaches, examining the history of my family's movement in this paper. I shaped this personal narrative, keeping in mind the declining value of Pakistani passports in the passing decades and the context of migration from Pakistan to North America. I analyze the contextualization of identity politics for Pakistanis in the diaspora, in particular through the works of two Pakistani-Canadian filmmakers, Sharlene Bamboat and Arshad Khan, who address growing up in Pakistan in the 80s under the Islamic dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq from a queer perspective, and challenges of racism and homophobia in Canada upon migrating.

Keywords: Migration; Pakistan; Queerness; Art; Film

نقل و حرکت، قومی شناخت کے بوجھ، اور ہجرت سے اٹھنے والے سوال اس مقالے کی روح ہیں۔ اپنے نانا نانی، دادا دادی کے پاسپورٹوں کے مطالعے سے، میں آٹو ایتھنوگرافک نقطہءنظر اپناتے ہوے، اپنے خاندان کی تحریک کی تاریخ کو اس مقالے میں جانچتا ہوں۔ اس ذاتی بیانیے کو میں نے گزرتی دہاءیوں میں پاکستانی پاسپورٹ کی گرتی قدر، اور پاکستان سے شمالی امریکہ ہجرت کے رجہان کے سیاق و سباق کو مد نظر رکھ کے تشکیل کیا۔ دو پاکستانی کنیڈین فلمکار، شارلین بمبوٹ اور ارشد خان، کے کام کی مدد سے میں پاکستانیوں کے لیے ڈایاسپورا سے اٹھنے والے شناخت کے مسایل کا مزید سیاق و سباق بیان کرتا ہوں۔ دونوں فنکاروں کے کام میں، ضیاالحق کی حکومت کے تحت، ۸۰کی دہایی میں بڑے ہونے کو، اور کینیڈا ہجرت کے بعد نسلی تعصب اور ہوموفوبیا سے ٹاکرے کو، کویر نقطہ نظر سے مخاطب کیا جاتا ہے۔ "While some of us who have escaped our cages may start looking for ways back into the zoo, others may try to rebuild a sanctuary in the wild, and a few fugitive types will actually insist on staying lost" – Jack Halberstram, 2011

### Introduction

As far back as I can remember, I had the desire to travel outside Pakistan – to immigrate, or at least live in another country for an extended period of time. There was always the sense that the world beyond was better – that somehow, I did not belong in my country of birth on a fundamental level. Much of this feeling of not belonging and of seeing Pakistan as a lesser and backward space was the result of a combination of things. On a personal level, as an effeminate boy who was bullied a lot at school, I found solace in making art, reading books, and watching Western television; perhaps I was looking for escape. This desire to escape was further reaffirmed by the stories I heard from family relatives who traveled, sharing their exciting adventures along with photographic and video evidence re-affirming that, indeed, life outside Pakistan had much more to offer.

Within my lifetime, I also saw my family move from being middle class to upper middle class, which involved *upgrading* from a Pakistani-run private school to an international one. As a result of this, I also found myself surrounded by children who came from families more affluent than mine – those who had traveled outside Pakistan, or had more *superior* foreign passports than my Pakistani one. The latter, I now understand, I saw as failure. Perhaps as a result of this personal history, I applied for Canadian immigration in 2015 and was approved for permanent residency in Canada in September 2018. And though I had made many journeys out of my hometown, Lahore – including living in the UK and Finland as a student – leaving Pakistan with *immigrant* stamped on my passport carried a strange sense of shame, betrayal, and abandonment toward Pakistan.

Reflecting on these memories and thinking about failure as proposed by Jack Halberstram (2011) – where success is established in relationship to a heteronormative and capitalist society – I also realize that growing up in the 80s or 90s in Pakistan, I was not alone in having migratory aspirations or feeling a sense of failure in my country of birth. Historically, this idea may very well be traced to the political ideologies, struggle, and movement that led to the very formation of Pakistan as an independent state in 1947 from British colonial rule and India as a separate homeland for the Muslims of the region as well as other minorities such as Christians, Zoroastrians, Hindus, and Sikhs who decided to stay.

Within this paper, I examine the history of movement within my family by studying my grandparents' passports, situated within the larger context of how the Pakistani passport devolved over the decades, and immigration from Pakistan to North America. I analyze how that informed the contextualization of identity politics for Pakistanis in the diaspora, in particular through the works of two Pakistani-Canadian filmmakers, Sharlene Bamboat and Arshad Khan, who address growing up in Pakistan in the 80s under the Islamic dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq from a queer perspective, and challenges of racism and homophobia in Canada upon migrating. By doing so, my objective is to present a complicated perspective on movement and national identity through a Pakistani and queer point of view, and in particular, respond to the thematic focus of this book, *Borderless: Global Narratives in Art Education*, by methodologically

taking a narrative inquiry approach to highlight South Asian artistic investigations into migration.

## **Historical and Regional Context**

Iftikhar Dadi's (2006) article "The Pakistani Diaspora in North America" is useful in understanding the formation of Pakistan as an independent homeland for the Muslims (as well as other minorities) of India, and trying to make sense of what being *Pakistani* might mean within the context of having immigrated to North America. Providing historical context, Dadi (2006) states:

Pakistan was carved out of British India in 1947, comprising the geographically divided East and West Pakistan, with the territory of Kashmir in dispute with India. The partition of British India led to massive migrations and set the stage for a series of hostile encounters between Pakistan and India, which have continued until today, as violent exchanges in the form of war and clandestine operations, but also in terms of symbolic struggle. In 1971, after widespread civil unrest in East Pakistan, its brutal suppression by the (overwhelming West) Pakistani army, and the break out of war between India and Pakistan, East Pakistan broke away to form Bangladesh, leading to further transfer of populations between the three countries. Therefore, in the last six decades, the question as to what a Pakistani might be has witnessed at least two large-scale shifts in meaning. (p. 39-40)

Much of this turbulent history has had a natural impact on most, if not all, segments of Pakistani society. As each decade went on and the rise and fall of democratic governments interspersed with military dictators, the country has undergone a range of *official* and state-led initiatives to define Pakistani cultural identity. Within media, this has been evident with the way female news telecasters were expected to dress up, which involved mandatory hijabs during General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamic dictatorship (1977 – 1988). Similarly, in response to art and literature, in different times, writers and artists have undergone a range of censorship, as well as the visible shifts that have taken place in visual appearance of the Pakistani passport, as I will discuss shortly.

Furthermore, as Simone Wille points out, "when talking about Pakistani cultural identity, one also has to consider the great neighboring cultures (Iran and India), as well as all the modernizing trends that have influenced the country before and after partition" (Abbas, Abid, Khan, Qayyum & Wille, 2011, p. 166). In relation to Pakistan's complex political history, Wille writes, "many attempts have been made to impose a unitary vision of Pakistan based on religion" (Wille, 2005, p. 24). An obvious example is the green in the Pakistani flag that represents the color of Islam and thus brings the people of Pakistan together. As mentioned above, though Pakistan was created as an independent homeland for Muslims as well as other religious and ethnic minorities of India, considering recent cases of minority and sectarian related violence, "a fact clearer today than ever before: the only real alliance between the people of Pakistan, was, and has always been, that of 'Islam'" (Wille, 2005, p. 22). Much of this violence that various religious and ethnic communities were and continue to be subjected to in Pakistan led to their migration – often because they feared for their own or their families' safety or as a result of diminishing economic opportunities for minorities.

Addressing the religious diversity that was present within South Asia prior to partition, and which continued to exist post 1947, Dadi (2006) points out how when discussing the Pakistani identity within scholarship, oftentimes it almost entirely reads as a monolithic representation of Muslim identity, although this in itself is incredibly complex considering different sects such as Sunnis, Shites, Hanafis etc. This makes it impossible to articulate any single definition of being *Pakistani* within the context of the diaspora; it becomes more complicated when we bring in the perspective of gender and sexuality, which outside the realm of heteronormativity is also read as un-Islamic.

# The Pakistani Passport



*Figure 1. Pages from my grandfather, Shameem Sarfraz's passport (1954 – 1959). From the personal archives of the author.* 

In an increasingly globalized world, mobility across geographical borders plays a significant role in the opportunities that are available to people, particularly related to education and economic emancipation. The model of the European Union, despite its challenges, demonstrates this. In contrast, Pakistan, even regionally speaking, remains an incredibly restricted territory where the crossing of the border with India requires reciprocal high-level government clearance, and similarly requires visas for all other neighboring countries including Afghanistan, Iran, and China. Within South Asia, Nepal and Sri Lanka remain open to most countries in the world, including Pakistan.

At the moment, according to Passport Index (2019), the United Arab Emirates is ranked highest with visa free access (VFA) and visa on arrival (VoA) to 167 countries. Germany is number two with access to 166 counties, followed by the United States of America, Singapore, South Korea, and several European countries third with access to 165. Canada is ranked fourth, alongside Japan and other European countries that can visit 164 countries with pre-approved visas. Meanwhile, Pakistan is ranked third-lowest at 92, having VFA access to 8 countries, VoA for 27 (usually with the condition of already possessing a UK, US, or a Schengen visa), and requiring visas for 163. However, this was not always the case.

Going through drawers back at home in Lahore, I discovered my grandparents' old passports, which date as early as 1954, just 7 years short of Pakistan's formation. Tracing the history of the Pakistani passport, Nadeem F. Paracha (2016) fills the gap prior to 1954 showing that the first Pakistani passport issued was largely beige, with only the binding and two flags being green.

Paracha continues to explain that the two flags represented the country's two wings, East and West, and the languages featured on the cover included Bengali, English, and Urdu. Going through earlier versions of the Pakistani passport, one can see that Pakistanis did not require prearrival visas to all countries of the world—including India. By 1954, as is evident within the case of my grandfather as well, the Pakistani passport had become dark green with the name of the passport holder and passport number captioned on a beige background. The two Pakistani flags remained. Pakistani passports from the mid 50s show that apart from Israel, the Soviet Union, and Afghanistan, Pakistanis could still get visas on arrival for most countries in the world. Commenting on the political unrest that followed between East and West Pakistan in a few years, Paracha (2016) writes:

Due to tensions between the state and the Bengali majority of East Pakistan, the government had introduced the One Unit scheme, which treated the ethnically diverse West Pakistan as a single province and the Bengali-dominated East Pakistan as the other province.

Consequently, West Pakistani passports had *Pakistan Passport* written only in English and Urdu, whereas East Pakistani passports had the same written in English and Bengali. (para 10-11)

From the beginning, the political situation in Pakistan has rapidly evolved, constantly shuffling between democratically elected governments struggling to complete their term, and military rule. In terms of foreign relations, Pakistan has historically maintained a tense relationship with neighboring India with the Kashmir issue<sup>1</sup> at the very center; this has led to two wars in the past, and at present, the conflict is heightened once again. During the Cold War, Pakistan was considered a "frontline" ally of the US in the war against the USSR in Afghanistan (Sunawar & Cuotto, 2015, p. 1), as well as a sanctuary for the Afghan resistance movement (Weinbaum, 1991). Following the Cold War, "the US disengaged itself from the Afghan problem and Pakistan was left alone to face the consequences" (Mahmood, 1997, p. 101). From a cultural point of view, these internal and external political struggles have shaped Pakistan and Pakistani national identity, where not only did the visual appearance of the Passport change, but the languages used also went from English, Urdu, Bengali and French (perhaps used in an effort to be more global) to just English and Urdu. As a consequence of Pakistan's weakening position geo-politically and economically, its travel document saw a steady decline with fewer and fewer countries allowing visa-free access.

# My Family's Journeys

Recalling the partition of Pakistan and India, during an interview for the 1947 Partition Archive, my paternal grandfather, Shameem Sarfraz (1931–2017) said: "It was a calamity of the worst kind, and for days it seemed like it was not going to stop. People were on the move, trying to relocate without getting harmed" (Qureshi, 2016). He was born in 1931 in Sialkot, a city located in the Punjab region of Pakistan. Shortly after completing his education in 1952, he was offered a job at Aramco, the American Arab oil company. Much of this is reflected within his passports across the decades where most of the pages are covered with Saudi stamps. My grandmother, Bilqees, accompanied him a few years later, and so her passports carry similar marks throughout the pages.

By the 1980s and well into the 1990s, various members of my father's side of the family resided in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States of America (USA). Every time they returned to Pakistan from these locations, they would come bearing gifts that were otherwise not available in Pakistan. Often times these were simple things such as jeans, shoes, or even chocolates, but the brands would reveal that they were imported. My aunt in the UK had a son the same age as me. As a way of offering me the same exposure that was available for her son, she would record the cartoons he watched on British television on video home system (VHS) and send them to Pakistan for me. They would never work, as the videocassette recorders (VCR) in Pakistan were not compatible with the VHSs produced in the UK. I had to wait several years until my aunt moved back to Pakistan in the mid-90s and brought her British VCR along, allowing me to watch the backlog of recorded material.



Figure 2. Video Still from Video Home System, 2018, Sharlene Bamboat. Courtesy of the artist.

Prior to the introduction of satellite television in Pakistan in the late 1990s, VHS remained the only major way of being exposed to cartoons (as well as other films) from abroad. This is further picked up by Pakistani-Canadian artist Sharlene Bamboat's work *Video Home System* (2018), who traces how popular culture and politics are intertwined within Pakistan, and in particular, how this manifested within the 1980s and 1990s. Born in Karachi in 1984 to a Zoroastrian household, Bamboat's family immigrated to Canada when she was just a child. The piece *Video Home System* is centered around three main characters: Aaditya Aggarwal, who is referred to as Aadi in the film, and two children listed as DM and AN in the cast. Beginning with a black and white interview of the late Pakistani pop star, Nazia Hassan (1965–2000), the three characters are shown sitting on a sofa as if watching the interview on television. There is static in the interview video, appearing like it was recorded on an old cassette that seems to now be showing the wear and tear of time or having been overplayed. Nazia Hassan and Zoheb Hassan were popular as a sibling

duo singing sensation in the 1980s and 1990s in Pakistan and India, as well as some other parts of the world. Famous for songs such as *Aap Jaisa Koi* (Hassan, 1979) and *Disco Deewane* (Hassan & Hassan, 1981), they are credited for introducing pop music, specifically disco, to the Pakistani musical scene. However, within Bamboat's video we see how this upset the dictator at the time, General Zia-ul-Haq, who saw their songs as a mockery of his regime and responsible for corrupting the youth; thus, a ban was placed on their music in Pakistan. Shortly after, the two young musicians were summoned to the presidential palace in Islamabad, where the two were lectured on what it meant to be Pakistani and good Muslims by the general himself.



*Figure 3. Screenshot of Disco Deewane [Music Video], 1981, by Nazia Hassan and Zoheb Hassan, Producer: Biddu, Label: HMV India.* 

General Zia-ul-Haq's period is often described as the most conservative time in Pakistan's history, where various policies were enacted to make Pakistan more *Islamic*. Though the country's official name had changed to *Islamic Republic of Pakistan* in 1973, it was in 1984 that it started to appear on the passport (Paracha, 2016). The arts also went through heavy censorship, as observed by Salima Hashmi (2001), where literature, dance, and theatre were the first to be impacted for their obvious outreach, the film industry collapsed, and visual artists were expected to explore subjects such as landscapes and calligraphy. Though from very early on in Pakistan's history, the state, and by extension the military, was "invested in in the production and policing of foundational truths about the nation-state and its apparatus of imperial violence" (Rajani & Malkani, 2018, para 4), it was under Zia-ul-Haq that a clear strategy and force was developed to counter liberal dissent.

Shortly after Nazia Hassan and Zoheb Hassan's meeting with General Zia-ul-Haq, the ban on their music was lifted, says the narrator's voice in Bamboat's (2018) *Video Home System*. However, upon the end of Zia ul-Haq's regime with his death, the music, film, and theatre industries would never be the same. Over the last decade or so, these industries have all been going through a revival of sorts, but are often unable to address challenging and critical issues due to existing legal and societal restrictions as well as a lack of funding from non-state and non-corporate sources. Within visual arts, during the Zia period, resistance was seen from a group of women artists, including Lala Rukh (1948–2017) and Salima Hashmi (b. 1942), amongst others, who led the writing of a Women Artists Manifesto (1983) in secret (made public for the first time in 2001),

where each one of the signatories acknowledged the pioneering role of women in art education in Pakistan and condemned the anti-women and anti-arts sentiment at the time (Hashmi, 2001). And though many of the signatories, and in particular Lala Rukh as one of the founders of the Women Action Forum, were also heavily involved in activism, given that most of them were educators, pedagogy was the space where dissent was fostered – a fact evident when looking at the political contemporary art that emerged from Pakistan in the 1990s (for example, by Shahzia Sikander, b. 1969, Rashid Rana, b. 1968, Bani Abidi, b. 1971, as well as others).

## **Migration: Anxieties and Failure**

On my mother's side of the family, there was very little travel outside Pakistan. However, in the 1970s, my maternal grandfather, Masood Sheikh (1937-1999), unsuccessfully tried to immigrate to Canada. Though immigration policy in Canada had started opening up around 1962, "Ottawa ended racial discrimination as a feature of the immigration system" introducing a points-based system in 1967 "to rank potential immigrants for eligibility" (Dirks, 2006, para 14). Instead of race, color, or nationality, the points-based system ranked potential candidates based on work skills, education levels, language ability (in speaking French or English), and family connections (Dirks, 2006). This was also the period when "immigration from South Asia to the United States dramatically increased after 1965s and the 1960s also witnessed the beginning of large-scale Pakistani immigration to Canada," and in most cases, these individuals were "educationally well endowed" (Dadi, 2006, p. 45). Very little is known about my grandfather's life in Canada during these years, apart from the fact that he spent most of his time in Toronto and Ottawa. Additionally, he only had an educational certificate rather than a diploma or degree, so caught between the years when various policy level changes were taking place in Canada and not being sure of how it would end up for him, after seven years being away from his family, he decided to move back to Pakistan. My mother would proudly narrate this story that her father came back home for her; however, along with his passports, I also discovered many of the cards that he used in Canada, which he had kept safely in his briefcase till his death in 1999. These included bankcards, shopping center account cards, and his social security number, perhaps as a painful reminder of wanting to immigrate and failing.



Figure 4. Various Cards from Canada belonging to my grandfather, Masood Sheikh. From the archive of the author.

On a personal level, my anxieties around living in Pakistan hit a peak once I started studying in London in 2006 and for the first time got a chance to explore my sexuality in an open space. However, this was also a time I found myself emotionally most vulnerable and alone, and I feared moving back to Pakistan. During a trip in Karachi, in 2008, the intensity of my fear manifested in the form of a dream:

I am standing in Dadabu's (paternal grandfather) room. It seems larger, like a king's room, almost out of Shakespeare's Macbeth. The mood is somber, and the air seems still.

Dadabu is in the bed, looking old and frail, but alert. Chachoo (father's younger brother) is standing on his left, and it seems like he's explaining himself, giving hasaab (accounting report) of some sort. On the bottom right side I, see Muna Chachoo (youngest uncle), just standing and witnessing it all.

Everything burns, and I run from the situation.

The scene changes, and I return to my house. It's a long hall, and I see lots of other people eating at cafes and realize that my house has been turned into a public place, like a shopping center.

I try to go into my grandfather's room but there is a barricade set by the police, and I am told I can't go in. I tell the officer that this is my house, and he hands me a bag full of my passports, telling me that that's all that survived.

I remember waking up scared from this dream. For years to come, it continued to haunt me, revealing to me my angst around losing home, not having anything to go back to, and that my running away from family would have a price to pay.

Addressing the idea of home, Sara Ahmed writes,

it is the 'real' home, the very space from which one imagines oneself to have originated, and in which one projects the self as both homely and original, that is the most unfamiliar: it is here that one is a guest, relying on the hospitality of others. (Ahmed, 1999, p. 330)

Once having moved, and in transit, she writes, "The journey between homes provides the subject with the contours of a space of belonging, but a space which expresses the very logic of an interval, the passing through of the subject between apparently fixed moments of departure and arrival" (Ahmed, 1999, p. 330). In Ahmed's case, she was writing about being born to Pakistani and British parents, having been born in the UK, moved to Australia, and still having family (and hence, some part of home and *origin*) in Pakistan. In my case, even though most of my early life had been spent growing up in Pakistan, the unfamiliarity of home is an issue I continue to grapple with. Psychologically, it is clear to me that my need to escape home is very much rooted in a long history of trauma experienced through sexual abuse and violence; but equally, studying the history of movement in my family alongside the history of Pakistan which led to the mass movement of people, one could argue that perhaps displacement of some sort is inherited through decades and generations.

The Pakistani-Canadian filmmaker, Arshad Khan, also examines many of these ideas through his film *Abu* (Khan, 2017) – a feature length autobiographical documentary that follows the journey of his family as they immigrate to Canada and deal with issues of sexual and religious identities. Interestingly, *Abu* also begins with a nightmare, where Khan describes driving in the rain with his brother and encountering a monster wearing a light blue shirt. Later on in the film, we discover that this was in fact a prophetic dream about his father. Growing up in Pakistan, Khan talks about resenting his father as he was coming to terms with his sexual identity and was expected to be *manly*. Similarly to me, Khan's molestation started very early on, at 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  by a neighbor. The family immigrated to Canada for a better life and economic opportunities; however, in the 1990s, Mississauga was not so open and welcoming to brown immigrants, and neither was being *gay* and *brown* in high school for Khan.

As Khan continued to come to terms with his sexual identity in Canada, his father was also having a crisis of his own, where due to the lack of a decent job, feeling inadequate at being able to provide for his family, and seeing his children become *Westernized* as failure, he started to become more conservatively Islamic. This resulted in Khan and his father moving in polar opposite directions.



*Figure 5.* Abu: Father [*Feature Length Documentary*], 2017, Director, Screenplay and Producer: Arshad Khan, Animation Artist: Davide Di Saro.

The film ends with the death of Khan's father, and both of them facing each other and finding peace. However, it is the journey of getting there that makes it a significant story to tell. Furthermore, in contrast to the narrative of my grandfather, where he attempted immigration and failed, and my own experience where as an adult I consciously made the decision to seek another home, in Khan's story we see the complexities of immigrating and experiencing racism as a brown family in a predominantly white setting, and in his individual case, also experiencing homophobia.

# Conclusions

Drawing conclusions, I am reminded of a memory from Lahore, where in marketplaces there are often vendors selling birds. These are usually sparrows and crows, caged, being sold for a few hundred rupees. The idea is that you would set them free, and they in turn would pray for you as thanks for granting them their freedom. However, the macabre reality behind this tradition is that the birds are never really free—or at least not for long. Usually the birds perish from dehydration in the city, away from their natural habitats. For the birds that survive, the vendors know where they return or where their usual feeding grounds are, and before long, they are caught again and probably find themselves right where they began – in those cages.

Extending this metaphor of the birds within the context of this text, we can also think of the inherent failures embedded within the migratory journey illustrated through the caged birds, who despite being granted *freedom*, often find themselves destined for failure. Looking at the history of the Pakistani project as a whole, where migration and displacement form its very core, exasperated by turbulent political governments and dictatorships and weak foreign policies and relations, 73 years on, the vision of a *safe homeland* begins to crumble. Within the context of migration from Pakistan, in particular to North America, the difficulty and futility of defining a Pakistani identity as a diverse group of people becomes more apparent, as highlighted by Iftikhar Dadi (2006). This complexity of migration from the Pakistani perspective is often heavily echoed in artistic work in the diaspora. In the case of Bamboat (2018), we see this through exploration of visual culture and censorship during a difficult political time in Pakistan's history, and with Khan (2017), we see an autobiographical account of a brown family migrating to Canada, struggling to hold onto cultural values and shifting individual attitudes internally, and encountering issues of racism and homophobia externally.

Within the context of art education, in particular within the context of Northern Europe where the recent influx of migration through the so-called *European Migrant Crises* is opening up new challenges and discourses, I feel a more complex dialogue on the migratory experience presented through first-hand accounts is very much needed. I have made these observations during the last three years conducting my doctoral studies at Aalto University in Finland. Taking a personal narrative approach to highlight the history of Pakistan, movement in the region, and artistic explorations of identity in the diaspora, I have attempted to do so from a queer South Asian perspective. I hope in the coming years, we can see this complicated further.

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### Endnotes

1 For further information: https://herald.dawn.com/news/1153341.



# Global Narratives of Refugee Youth: Examining the Interwoven Strands of an Interdisciplinary Arts Process

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**Abstract:** The following is a critical analysis of the pedagogical and creative practices developed as part of a new community-engaged interdisciplinary arts graduate course which partnered a range of educators pursuing a Master's degree in interdisciplinary arts infusion with high school students who are refugees. This article explores the question of how the arts can be a vehicle to effectively and ethically share the global stories and narratives of refugee youth and how sharing those stories can affect change. The author first describes the unique context of the project and its participants and then lays out the framework of scholarship that informed the course and its culminating artistic products. The second half of the essay describes the three main artistic strategies that grew out of the collaborative efforts, how they told the global narratives of refugee youth offering nuance and complexity, and how that, in turn, held potential for change. The three interwoven strategies include the creation of an original performance script, a photo essay, and a series of visual art installations. The project director reflects on these efforts as a means to uncover some of the core values important for future replication of the work as well as more broadly applicable insights.

When I looked into the possibility of an arts-based service-learning partnership with a local organization that supports refugee youth at a nearby city high school, coming across the student newspaper headline: "Fear and Miscommunication Keeping ESOL Students, Native English Speakers Apart" was quite revealing. The fact that the students at this school named this issue for themselves verified a hunch and quickly led to an idea for how my graduate students and I might meaningfully contribute. The city has long been a destination for refugees in the Mid-Atlantic region, and partnering with a local program called Mid-Atlantic Refugee Youth Organization<sup>1</sup> (MARYO), which has been providing tutoring and afterschool enrichment for refugee youth from 17 different countries since 2003, seemed like a natural fit. So too did the particular city high school, 17 miles from our university campus, where MARYO offers its afterschool programming. Fifty percent of the current 1,100 students at the high school are English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students. A significant student refugee population comes from the Middle East and Africa as well as from Central and South America. As a university arts educator, I have long been invested in the intersecting practices of collaborative artmaking and dialogue as a means to build bridges between disparate groups and foster intercultural communication. Thus, I believed this setting held great potential for reciprocal learning exchanges.

This paper offers a critical analysis of pedagogical discoveries made during the unique learning laboratory framework developed for this new service-learning course and partnership. More specifically, this paper explores the three distinct but interrelated ways with which we employed a range of arts practices to share the stories and global narratives with and for our refugee student partners. Our efforts allowed us to create space for self-expression as well as provoke awareness and change.

# **Partnership Goals**

Graduate students enrolled in this interdisciplinary arts service-learning course expressed eagerness for an intensive project-based learning opportunity that would allow them to work alongside refugee youth. The long-term goal of the newly established service-learning partnership was to include high school students—both Native English speakers *and* ESOL speakers—to learn to become engaged and informed allies to one another through extended artmaking practices embracing collaboration, collective problem-solving, and dialogue. Given logistical and funding issues and the newness of our endeavor, we chose to initiate our work with just the refugee students at our partner high school so we would have sufficient time to understand their needs and circumstances. This choice meant that our initial focus would be for my graduate students, who are largely public school teachers, to become better equipped to support ESOL students and more informed allies of refugee youth.

#### Partners: Graduate Students/Teachers

Fall 2017 was the first offering of the course. The class included eleven students pursuing their Master's degrees in a graduate program focused on arts integration and infusion at a state university in the Mid-Atlantic region. I am the director of this graduate program. Within the graduate student group were teachers of second grade, elementary music, elementary and middle school physical education, middle and high school drama and English, and high school German, Spanish, and dance. Experience with full-time teaching ranged from one year in the classroom to more than a dozen. Additionally, there were two professionals who worked outside of schools

with career paths that focused on the intersections of youth, communities, education, and the arts. The commonality between every student in this course (and in our program) was the interest in and dedication to deepening knowledge and skills for arts integration with young people.

#### Partners: High School Students/Refugees

Ultimately, the 14 refugee youth who chose to join the program were from Syria, Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. There were six boys and eight girls who ranged in age from 14 to 18. Multiple languages were spoken within this group, but Arabic and Tigrinya (spoken in Eritrea) were the most prominent. Levels of English acquisition ranged significantly. We met one night a week for eight weeks at the high school, directly after the tutoring program offered by MARYO. Pizza dinner, service-learning credits, and transportation were provided as incentives for consistent attendance for these very long Tuesdays at school.

# A Learning Laboratory Framework

This interdisciplinary arts special topics course was designed to focus on social action and conceived of as an arts learning laboratory utilizing a generative process. The scholarship that informed the process and the resulting arts products were necessarily wide-ranging, arming us with the tools and insights needed for a meaningful arts-based learning experience. The aim was to create a mutually beneficial space for learning about arts for social action where graduate students could take on a different role, not as teachers or even tutors, but as collaborators working side-by-side with our youth partners.<sup>2</sup> The secondary aim was to create a culminating arts event that would allow the group to share our creative efforts as a form of action on our university campus and in the broader community. The art form(s) we would utilize and how our process and culminating products would take shape were wide open and meant to be responsive to our young partners.

After an examination of the literature that informed our process, this paper reflects on the three tangible outcomes of our creative work that were shared at two culminating public presentations. Each creative strand – a performance script, a series of visual art installations called *Conversation Pieces*, and photo documentation of our entire process – shared the global narratives of our young partners in different ways. All three will be explored in the latter part of this essay.

#### **Refugees: Schools and Representation**

As of 2018, the number of refugees permitted into the U.S. was capped at 45,000, the lowest number since 2002 (Gomez, 2018). For the newcomer children who do make it to the U.S., the school environment allows them to integrate into American life, which can be important for regaining a sense of stability in their lives (Carnock & Garcia, 2015). Research reveals, however, that "the histories of resettled refugee children are often hidden from their teachers and other school staff in the United States by factors such as language barriers, privacy concerns, cultural misunderstandings, and stereotypes" (Dryden-Peterson, 2015, p. 3). This presents some genuine challenges for teachers and schools welcoming these new students, as many refugee children experience trauma and frequently interrupted schooling (Carnock & Garcia, 2015). The information that schools receive can often be limited, and each learner has a different story.

Refugees in this nation and across the globe frequently struggle with the limitations of an oversimplified narrative which can quickly influence how they are perceived when arriving in American schools. Historically, after World War II, the stereotype transitioned from political hero to traumatized victim (Pupavac, 2006); more recently, the stereotype of Syrian refugees in particular has evolved to dangerous, threatening, and associated with terrorism (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2015). Even now, the representations of refugee advocacy organizations inspired by compassion for victims tend to leave out the masses of ordinary refugees (Pupavac, 2008). The persistence of these over-simplified and highly biased representations of refugees in mass media is compounded by the ways in which our own current government rhetoric and policies have perpetuated these problematic narratives. The problem is compounded yet again by the fact that relatively few Americans have contact with refugees, and therefore have no firsthand experience that causes them to call these false narratives into question.

#### **Arts Education with Refugees**

Creative expression and communication (Brown & Bousalis, 2017) are important roles that arts classrooms can play in supporting refugee youth in schools. According to Wellman and Bey (2015), for example, the visual arts might help them build their confidence and life skills that extend beyond the school setting, such as cultural preservation, language acquisition, self-advocacy, and self-esteem. The skills acquired in arts classrooms can help refugee students with overcoming obstacles. Just as with any student, "[r]efugee students deserve to move beyond harrowing experiences and build a better life" (Brown & Bousalis, 2017, p. 49). The arts provide this opportunity by creating space for them to "discover, be heard, and tell about their experiences" (p. 49). Yet another critical benefit of using the arts is the possibility to develop culturally responsive pedagogical practices that bring community members into the classroom as well as students into the community (Roxas, 2011), which might increase a sense of community for refugee students and their families.

#### **Dialogue and Listening as Art**

Art historian Grant Kester (2004) coined the term *dialogical aesthetic*, which reflects a "shift from a concept of art based on self-expression to one based on the ethics of communicative exchange" (p. 106). Those who engage in this practice "define themselves as artists through their ability to catalyze understanding, to mediate exchange, and to sustain an ongoing process of empathetic identification and critical analysis" (p. 118). Central to that is the practice of *listening*, which Kester (2004) asserts, "is as active, productive and complex as speaking" (p. 114). While we did not have a pre-conceived notion of what our culminating work would be, it was inevitable that these values would be imbued in whatever we created. These values also meant that the processes we moved through each week were as much "the art" as the culminating works we eventually created.

#### **Projects in Humanization**

Beyond the aesthetic realm, literacy scholars Kinloch and San Pedro (2014) have much to offer in defining the priorities of this project and the weekly encounters between graduate and high school student partners. Both scholars regularly engage in action research with youth and write together about what they call Projects in Humanization (PiH).

We understand such projects as experiences we have *with* people that are directed by the desires for social, political, and educational change that can only happen if relationships are forged in light of, and because of, human differences. PiH are framed within a discourse of care (Greene, 2000; Noddings, 1993) and

listening (Bakhtin, 1981, 1990; Schultz, 2009) as relationships with people are created, as conversations among those people are exchanged, and as interactions rooted in difference, conflict, vulnerabilities, and respect are forged. (p. 28)

To support their conception of PiH, Kinloch and San Pedro (2014) draw upon Bakhtinian theoretical concepts which include the notion that "we are continually helping others further their understandings of themselves by answering their stories, listening, and being present in the conversation" (p. 24). Furthermore, they add that "our identities are a collection of how others see us, believe in us, and know us" (p. 24), which validates the importance of engagement with the other in efforts of coming to know ourselves. This also aligns with education scholar Greene (2000) who advocates for people engaging in collaborations: "once they are open, once they are informed, once they are engaged in speech and action from their many vantage points, they may be able to identify a better state of things—and go on to transform" (p. 59). By design, the participants on all sides of the project were exposed to multiple vantage points, which indeed became transformative for all.

#### Our Space as a "Third Space"

In contemplating asset pedagogies such as *third space* (Bhabha, 2004), it is not surprising to find that service-learning opportunities (Gannon, 2009), community art studios (Timm-Bottos & Reilly, 2014), and intercultural exchanges (Kramsch & Uryu, 2013) have been conceptualized as such. For instance, Gannon (2009) offers that when working "with young people designated as 'at risk' in and out of school, the metaphor of the third space evokes a hybrid, in-between, disruptive space that can operate to disturb normative and deficit perceptions and to disrupt preservice teacher subjectivities" (p. 21). Third space, then, became an apt way to frame our own dynamic after-school engagements where normative teacher-student relations were disrupted and replaced with side-by-side collaboration. This arrangement meant that the grad students were able to look

carefully at individual members of [the] group [to] dispel stereotypes about the needs of all people from particular backgrounds, while at the same time [gaining] a more complete understanding of how group membership affects the contexts in which students live. (Nieto, 2008, p. 30)

To achieve this, listening was prioritized. The multiple languages of our students became centered and viewed as assets for our creative processes, along with their rich and complicated cultural identities and narratives.

# The Three Strands of Our Creative Efforts

In the coming pages, I address three distinct ways in which we approached the question: how can educators invested in arts integration interpret, communicate, and work with the global narratives and stories of our youth refugee partners? In the process, we would become more informed educators, allies, and arts integration specialists. Sharing our creative efforts became a form of action that offered a more complex and nuanced image of refugees than is typically conveyed through mass media. Each strand reflects the three major aspects of what we created and shared at our two public events at the end of the semester. These strands also reflect the various strategies for conveying the stories of refugee youth and our collective group. One event

where we shared our work was on our university campus. This was important for sharing our work within the university community, but also because the university was a coveted space to which most of our high school students earnestly aspired. Being connected with a university was a big motivator for the youth who joined our project. The second event was an invited opportunity at a major art museum in our community, which allowed us to share our efforts in a larger public forum.

#### Strand One – The Script

The first strand involves creating and sharing the text of a performance script that I compiled in the early weeks of our project. The script revealed for the high school students what we were learning from the time we spent together. Without identifying any one individual's words, the script folds together pieces of the high school students' personal stories gleaned from mini-oneon-one interviews conducted by the graduate students on our second night together. The script points out places of overlap and distinction in their stories, along with elements that stood out to us as we listened. It was early in the project when we first shared this script. Initially, I composed it just for our group with no plans for sharing it elsewhere. I hoped it could be an effective way to use art to make it clear to our young partners that we were truly listening and invested in them. I also wanted to model for them how their stories could become impactful art that could effect change – an idea that was initially challenging to convey by simply explaining in English. We figured out early that modeling and examples worked well for conveying complicated ideas, and so I crafted this script. The first night my graduate students and I read the script aloud to the high school students (see Figure 1), there was laughter at first, then some tears, and then silence. The facial expressions and body language of our young partners told us – they wanted to hear every word.



*Figure 1. Graduate students and professor reading the newly crafted script to our high school student partners for the first time. Photo by Michael Bussell, 2017.* 

#### Contextualizing the script

As one reads the script included below, note that there are no distinct characters indicated – only graduate student readers along with myself. It is intentionally written so that the high school

students, who were still learning English, would find it accessible. The script is meant to be read aloud at a steady clip. Hyphens at the beginning and end of sentences indicate that a thought is continued as if a single person were speaking. Listeners are essentially hearing our collective voice. The technique is adapted from theatre artist Michael Rohd. While Rohd typically choreographs these scripted works, which he refers to as choreographic docu chorales (M. Rohd, personal communication, January 16, 2018), ours remained an un-staged reading. By performing our reading with scripts in hand, we provided the sense of transparency one might find with documentary theatre while also conveying that the understandings we shared were still unfolding; the narrative was a work in-progress. In reading the script, the word "ALL" indicates moments that all of the graduate students and myself speak in unison as if sharing the same thought at the same time. Italicized directions should be self-explanatory and indicate a sense of tone. The very last segment of the script was added once we determined that we would be performing our script at our two public events.

AUTHOR: After seven weeks of waiting, we finally-

STUDENT A: -finally-

STUDENT B: -FINALLY-

STUDENT C: -got to meet our young partners,

STUDENT D: -refugee students at a Baltimore City high school-

STUDENT E: -on a Tuesday night in mid-October.

STUDENT F: They were probably nervous and didn't know what to expect.

STUDENT G: Us, too.

STUDENT H: BUT, we were definitely excited.

STUDENT I: We played some ice-breakers, got a little silly-

STUDENT J: -learned each other's names-

STUDENT K: -and had-

ALL: -a lot of fun!

AUTHOR: We laughed A LOT! (See Figure 2)

STUDENT A: On our first night, we broke up into groups-

STUDENT B: -so our new partners could teach us a bit of their languages.

STUDENT G: We have students in our group who are from Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Iraq-

STUDENT K: -Eritrea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo-



STUDENT F: -and they've actually *lived* in more countries than that.

*Figure 2. Upon our request to teach us some of their languages on our first night together, the high school students happily used songs and dance to teach us some basic Arabic, Somali, Swahili, and Tigrinya. Author photograph.* 

STUDENT C: Most of the students speak at least three languages, with English being the newest.

STUDENT D: Arabic, Tigrinya, and English.

STUDENT I: Arabic, Kurdish, and English.

AUTHOR: Somali, English, and Swahili.

STUDENT E: Some French-

STUDENT F: -and a bit of Turkish-

STUDENT D: *and* – there's probably more.

STUDENT G: Wow. I speak one language.

STUDENT H & STUDENT E: Me too.

STUDENT I: Me... four?

STUDENT J: Okay, hey, I do teach Spanish.

STUDENT K: And I teach German. But we were still a little in awe of our new partners.

STUDENT A: And we had a blast learning some words and phrases together.

STUDENT B: Our language lessons involved dancing and singing as a way to help us remember.

STUDENT C: And laughing. And generally making fools of ourselves.

STUDENT D: It was a pretty great first night.

STUDENT H: We decided pretty quickly ... we LIKE these guys.

AUTHOR: So, on week two, we came back and paired up.



Figure 3. One-on-one interviews between teachers and high school students led to the insights that informed our script. Photo by Michael Bussell, 2017.

STUDENT E: Just one high school student with one [graduate] student- (See Figure 3)

STUDENT F: -so we could get to know each other better-

STUDENT G: -and here's some of what we learned:

STUDENT H: My partner is from Eritrea but has never actually set foot there. She's mostly lived in Sudan.

STUDENT I: My partner too.

STUDENT J: Mine too.

STUDENT K: My partner lived most of her life in Syria, but then she was in Turkey for 3 years, and then came here.

STUDENT A: My partner has lived in Kenya, Bombasa, Kakuma, Somalia, and now here.

STUDENT C: Wow. That's a lot of moving. A lot of starting over.

AUTHOR: With all of that moving, we got curious about what they missed-

STUDENT E: -what they thought of the U.S.,

STUDENT F: -their surprises and challenges,

STUDENT C: -likes and dislikes-

ALL: Soccer!!!!

STUDENT G: -and what they looked forward to as they think about the future.

STUDENT H: We also talked about things the world needs to do better.

STUDENT I: We had some pretty great conversations.

STUDENT J: My partner talked about language barriers, adapting to school, and facing discrimination.

STUDENT K: My partner talked about being robbed and beaten up here in [the city].

STUDENT A & STUDENT D: Mine too.

STUDENT B: And not feeling safe anywhere but home or school.

ALL: << Pause. Deep breath.>>

STUDENT C: My partner misses his brothers and his little nephews still in Syria.

STUDENT D: Mine misses her sisters and *their* children, still in Sudan.

STUDENT A: Mine misses sleeping under the stars. She misses how peaceful and comfortable those moments were.

AUTHOR: And a lot of our partners missed their friends-

STUDENT E: -and their favorite foods.

STUDENT F: Since most of us are teachers, I was really interested to hear my partner's impression of American schools.

STUDENT G: My partner shared that the teachers here in the U.S. are much nicer – they don't *hit* you.

STUDENT D: BUT the *students* are much less respectful.

STUDENT H: My partner said the same thing.

STUDENT I: Mine too. Respect was a big topic.

STUDENT J: Yes. It really bothered my partner that students here don't respect their teachers-

STUDENT A: -and that cell phones are allowed in schools!

ALL: (GROAN of classroom teacher recognition)

STUDENT K: Didn't she also say that the school periods were longer here, but you learn less in more time?

STUDENT J: Yup.

ALL: (flatly) Huh.

STUDENT B: Our conversations were certainly eye opening. (short pause)

STUDENT C: My partner is really determined to focus on her goals and her family.

STUDENT D: My partner wants to be a doctor.

STUDENT I, STUDENT E & STUDENT B: (raise hands) Mine too!

STUDENT F: (raise hand) Dentist!

STUDENT G: (raise hand) Nurse.

STUDENT J: (raise hand) Air Force pilot.

STUDENT H: (raise hand) Software developer.

STUDENT C: (*raise hand*) Mechanic.

STUDENT A: (*raise hand*) Dad.

STUDENT C: (*PAUSE. Surprise, then delight*). ... That's cool.

STUDENT J: I have no trouble believing they'll do it, too.

STUDENT K: I was really interested in the things our partners talked about that the world needs to do better.

STUDENT A: No more guns-

AUTHOR: Yes. "No more killing people from different places with guns," my partner said.

STUDENT I: You mean no more war?

AUTHOR: - (adamantly shakes head in agreement) No more war. (pause)

STUDENT E: My partner offered that people don't talk to each other enough.

STUDENT B: They spend too much time in their comfort zones, not speaking to new people.

STUDENT F: (pause) You had smart partners.

STUDENT E & STUDENT B: (not surprised) I know.

STUDENT G: My partner talked about how it's not easy being a refugee.

STUDENT H: "Coming to the U.S., people look at you differently," she said.

AUTHOR: Even when you *try* to "be more American" – they look at you differently.

STUDENT C: (*exasperated*) Just going to the super market... it's SO different from Syria or Lebanon.

STUDENT J: My partner put it really simply: "Refugees are new. You have to help them."

STUDENT K: And mine said, "most people think that refugees know nothing."

STUDENT A: Sure, sometimes language can be a barrier-

STUDENT K: -but in reality, they know the same-

STUDENT A: -and more.

STUDENT B: I loved getting a small peek into my partner's life-

STUDENT J: - and hearing their stories.

STUDENT D: We just had genuine conversation. It was really nice.

STUDENT E: My partner told me: "people don't know that we're all individuals—we all have different stories."

STUDENT I: But we're lucky. We get to see that.

AUTHOR: And *my* partner said she thought art is cool because "it tells a story."

STUDENT G: *So* – let's use the art we make together to help others hear the stories of our refugee student partners.

STUDENT A: Get a glimpse into our conversations.

STUDENT H: And see them-

- STUDENT I: -Really see them-
- STUDENT B: -for the funny, smart, loving-

STUDENT A: -and dynamic individuals they are.

STUDENT C: I like it. Let's do it.



*Figure 4. Students and teachers busy at work on their visual art installation during an all-day Saturday gathering at a local community center. Photo by Michael Bussell, 2017.* 

STUDENT F: Since a lot of important conversations were had during our time together-

STUDENT K: -we created these works as a way of digging deeper into the ideas that resonated most. (See Figure 4)

STUDENT J: Some of the works are still in progress, just like *WE* are. Still learning. Still figuring out how to say what we want to say.

AUTHOR: But they've been a wonderful way to talk about goals, impressions of the U.S., things we miss, commonalities we discovered, things we need to do better in this world-

STUDENT H: -where we come from and where we hope to go.

STUDENT G: We call them our *Conversation Pieces*.

It was clear from the initial student reactions that they found the script powerful, and so while it was not the original intent, we chose to repeat our collective script reading again for our two public presentations at the conclusion of our project (see Figure 5). We realized performing this script would be a helpful way to frame our project for others who would be learning about it for the first time while providing insight on how we spent our time together. It was not until some closing conversations, however, that several of the high school students pointed to the script and our collective performance of it as something that they would remember most from this program; they felt listened to and acknowledged.



*Figure 5.* All of the graduate students and professor collectively performing a reading of our script for our first public performance at our university. Our visual art installations were displayed directly behind us. Photo by John Bidlack, 2017.

#### Strand Two – Conversation Pieces

The second strand of our storytelling is the creation of visual art works by the graduate and high school students working collaboratively on a series we called Conversation Pieces. The works were titled partly as an homage to Grant Kester's (2004) book with the same title, but more importantly, they were a way to celebrate, document, and share the important conversations that occurred each week. When it became clear that the majority of our group would be too uncomfortable with any kind of public performance, I came up with the overarching structure of these visual art installations as a way to embrace what we all found most meaningful about the time we spent together – our conversations. These pieces invited the student-teacher collaboration teams to go deeper into their prior conversations and consider what they would like others to know about them. Some wanted to share their goals and aspirations; some wanted to celebrate their partnership and talk about their commonalities as a means to say "we are not so different;" some wanted to infuse elements from their culture and use their own language(s) to share the cultural distinctions they were proud of; and others chose to talk about what the world and our city needed to do better. It was a challenging task. The group was provided with only a basic framework to follow: incorporate everyone's silhouette and integrate text that somehow revisited their conversations. The rest of the creative decision-making was theirs to make. Each pair or group worked through the conceptual and implementation decisions together.

The *Conversation Pieces* allowed the students to work with their collaborator-teacher as equals in a non-hierarchical setting, devising a concept and telling their stories on their own terms. The silhouettes of teachers and students facing one another in conversation reflected our unique third

space dynamic and highlighted the reciprocal relationships that became such a valued part of the experience for everyone. For the high school students in particular, the works served as an important vehicle of self-expression and agency. At the same time, for our two public events, they became dialogic works in that they served as a point of entry for communicative exchange (Kester, 2004) between people who may otherwise never interact. Our public presentations involved the artist-collaborators being present and ready to converse with viewers as they engaged with each *Conversation Piece* (see Figure 6).

Each artist team had the choice to make their messages as literal or abstract as they wanted. By revisiting conversations and ideas from our time together, we made it clear to the high school students that their ideas and stories were important and that they had something significant to teach all of us. Still, everything included was on their terms, and they only shared what *they* were comfortable sharing. Furthermore, each small group or pair had the autonomy to decide how their teacher collaborators' personal thoughts and ideas would be integrated. It was a collective decision made independent from me as the facilitator. When and if confidence or experience with conceptualizing or artmaking was lacking, the graduate student partners assisted. This allowed the high school students to bring their ideas to scale and present them in a visually interesting manner of which they could be proud (see Figure 7). The narrative elements students chose to share with their *Conversation Pieces* offered a powerful window into individual lives as well as the distinct partnerships formed through our project. Any generalizations or over-simplified understandings of refugees held by viewers in light of historic and current media depictions could be challenged and replaced with ideas that foster connected knowing and empathetic insight (Kester, 2004).



*Figure 6. Students and teachers stood with their Conversation Pieces as guests at our first event toured around and asked questions. If students struggled with English, their teacher partners were there to support them. Author photo.* 

#### Strand Three – The Photo Narrative

The third strand of our storytelling involves the photo documentation that has been included throughout this essay. Whereas we are only able to share nine photos in this article, our two public events included a 90-image slide show of our weekly engagements. The time spent eating

pizza, co-creating, conversing, working intently with partners, teaching one another, writing poems, finding the right words to express our thoughts, communicating through gestures, searching the Internet for translation assistance, and taking on new creative challenges together was all part of our art, our process, our collective story of high school student refugees and graduate students coming together as creative partners (see Figure 8). All of these elements and the ensuing laughter, joy, and struggles they shared informed the relationships we established. Our stories would be incomplete if we did not also share these images that in many ways reveal more about what we created together than words on a page ever could; they transcend the languages that could sometimes be a barrier for our group. Oral communications were often complicated, but the photos reveal how very much was communicated, nonetheless.



*Figure 7. These two women graduate students worked closely with this young man through our entire project. Here they applaud the thoughtful poetry he chose to incorporate into the graphic background in both English and Tigrinya. Photo by Michael Bussell, 2017.* 

#### Humanization through photos

Projects in Humanization place primacy on listening, so it might seem counterintuitive to claim evidence of listening through photographs. Nonetheless, I argue that the 90-image slideshow documenting our week-to-week activities provided tremendous evidence that a great deal of listening took place with this project. The images reveal countenance and body language, smiles and laughter, growing levels of comfort and informality, and all of the things that happen to our bodies and faces when we feel welcome, safe, and acknowledged (see Figure 9). I would further argue that these are qualities that can be captured in watching people create something meaningful together, which cannot be fully appreciated in only viewing their final works. Listening and sharing stories are critical acts for redefining human relationships within a discourse of trust, care, and ethics (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014). Given that, I offer that the telling of our collective story through photo documentation was absolutely essential for supporting a narrative that reveals the tremendous capacity of our youth partners. In addition, the photos offered a more expansive narrative of refugees that has not been made readily available to the public.

# **Thoughts on Moving Forward**

In addressing the central question of this essay – how we as educators invested in arts integration can use the arts as a vehicle to learn from, translate, and share others' global narratives or stories as a form of social action – this project helped us identify three rich possibilities as demonstrated through the script and accompanying photos. More importantly, the values that informed those choices are critically important for the work moving forward. Each story strand supported and fed into the others, creating space for individuality and complexity. This all came about through an investment in ethical engagement, educator responsiveness, and above all, deep listening, the fruits of which led to student ownership, open sharing, and strong relationships. In a space of multiple languages and vast cultural differences, trust had to be earned over time. Feelings of vulnerability, displacement, trauma, and loss were often tangible. Accordingly, the graduate students' roles as co-collaborators – their openness, adaptability, joyful presence, and collective problem solving – were critical for creating space for the important global stories of our young partners to unfold. Consequently, I now recognize the importance of being even more intentional about authentic listening as part of our preparation and as a practice that we must constantly attend to throughout the process.



*Figure 8. A graduate student and two high school students trace silhouettes with great focus and care for our first night working on the Conversation Piece installations. Photo by Michael Bussell, 2017.* 

The descriptions in this essay along with the photo documentation of the project have offered readers a window into the varied artistic strategies we used throughout our weeks together — dance, music, visual arts, poetry, and theatre. Our process was not limited to a single art form because as an interdisciplinary arts program invested in better understanding the potential of the arts to support and engage learners; our mandate and desire was to examine a wide variety of arts practices and draw upon the innovations and new research with each form. This choice allows us to build upon the range of artistic strengths already present with the teachers and students in the space. Furthermore, by identifying a variety of artistic possibilities to explore and share narratives, we are better able to effectively tap into our student partners' still-unknown and still-developing talents and passions, as well as their many ways of knowing and sharing

experiences. It served our project well to be framed as an interdisciplinary arts effort as it allowed us to draw upon a wide-reaching toolbox and body of scholarship.



*Figure 9. This group of female teachers and students ended up working together nearly every week and created their Conversation Piece together. It was not uncommon for students to share that "This (program) is the only time I smile." Photo by Michael Bussell, 2017.* 

Employing a generative process that did not have a specific arts project in mind from the outset also served us extremely well and allowed us to be truly responsive. By being consistent with our values and embracing a range of arts practices, we could ensure that each creative tactic complimented the next and filled in the gaps in the narratives of our partners and our own unique partnership. If language failed us, we had images. If images failed us, we had movement, music, and poetry. Embracing all of the art forms and a spirit of experimentation and responsiveness allowed for a range of varied narratives conveying depth of character for each young person and educator who became a part of this project.

In closing, there are still many questions to contemplate in order to reap the rewards of this pilot project. As for the broader implications of our efforts, we made important discoveries about the ways in which educators invested in arts integration can meaningfully interpret, communicate, and work with the global narratives of refugee youth. An inter- and multi-disciplinary arts approach that allows for multiple ways of engaging with narratives, both verbal and non-verbal, was key to our effectiveness. So too, was embracing dialogue, deep listening, and authentic presence in order to cultivate trusting relationships at every stage of engagement. These priorities allowed us to better understand and shed light on the distinctions that so often are not permitted in the over-simplified descriptions of refugees. Very importantly, these practices allow us to employ the arts in a manner that simultaneously expands the cultural competency of working educators while supporting the agency and creative capacity of refugee youth. Our collaborative efforts allowed our youth partners to feel valued, supported and known while also co-creating a space where they could tell their own stories on their terms. At the same time, the teachers who are invested in innovative arts-based learning can go back to their classrooms and learning spaces with confidence, knowledge, and strategies. The experience gained by these teachers will surely cause a ripple effect not only for the immigrant and refugee youth who enter their schools and classrooms, but for every learner.

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### Endnotes

- 1 MARYO is a pseudonym for our community partner to protect the anonymity of our participants.
- 2 It is worth noting that the thoughts and feelings of the high school students about being referred to as refugees varied greatly. Some did not know what the term "refugee" meant or said they had not heard it before; others did not want to claim refugee as a group to which they belonged or a topic about which they wished to speak. Moving forward in the project, we typically referred to the high school students as *our partners*.



### Anatomy of Nancy Grossman's Masks: Leather as Sculptural Material

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**Abstract:** The work of sculptor Nancy Grossman is an artistic and psychoanalytic inquiry into emotional ties and social prohibitions. Her research on psychic pain, the multiplicity of identity, and the ambiguity of sexuality led her to seek information from both mythology and psychoanalysis, anchoring herself in the social events that marked her time. This is concretized plastically in her drawings, paintings, assemblages, and sculptures of masks, totems, and tied bodies. Her work starts from the classical and Renaissance sculptural tradition, adapting it to the technology of the assembly and the abstract expressionism that marked the 60s and 70s in the United States. This chapter is based on the homologous article published in Spanish in the *Tercio Creciente* journal. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17561/rtc.n15.3

Keywords: Sculpture, Psychoanalysis, Fetishism, Masks, Leather, Michel Foucault

**Resumen:** La obra de la escultora Nancy Grossman es una indagación artística y psicoanalítica sobre las ataduras emocionales y las prohibiciones sociales. Su investigación sobre el dolor psíquico, la multiplicidad de la identidad y la ambigüedad de la sexualidad, le llevaron a indagar en la mitología y el psicoanálisis, anclándose en los acontecimientos sociales que marcaron su época. Esto se concreta en sus dibujos, pinturas, ensamblajes y esculturas de máscaras, tótems y cuerpos atados. Su obra parte de la tradición escultórica clásica y renacentista, adaptándola a la tecnología del ensamblaje y el expresionismo abstracto que marcaron los años 60 y 70 en Estados Unidos.

### 1. Introduction to the work of Nancy Grossman: Methodology and Referents

The contemporaneity of classical mythology and the validity of archaic rituals manifests in Grossman's work. They are at the root of the current and always eternal search for identity, physical and psychic, of the interrogation about sexual relationships and the problem of radical and subversive sexualities, of knowledge and understanding of the world that surrounds us, and of human behavior. Therefore, we will rely on Comparative Methodology to decipher the meaning of Grossman's works, using various analytical disciplines. The mythical structure is the origin of the anthropological investigation of Mircea Eliade, and it is also the reference point of the psychoanalytic interpretation, from Freud to Lacan. The relationship between violence and the sacred that appears in Grossman's works will be based on the archaic and sacrificial rituals on which Bataille relies for his concept of "excess" and eroticism.

The analysis of Grossman's works, sculptures, assemblages, paintings, and drawings implies research on the sociocultural context of the United States of America in the 60s and 70s, especially the feminist, gay, and human rights protest movements, the Vietnam War, etc. This text will deal with the facets in which Grossman's creative work is diversified, taking into account the unity of concept and techniques used, as well as the artistic, cultural, social, political, and personal influences that intervened in the evolution of her career.

Foucault is the main philosophical reference taken for the conceptual analysis of Grossman's work. The relationship between sexuality, violence, and the sacred that we see reflected in her works will be based on the archaic and sacrificial rituals on which Bataille bases his Sadian concept of "excess" and eroticism. We will confront the artist's works with the myth of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, with artificial creatures such as robots, cyborgs, or Nexus replicants from the film *Blade Runner* (1982), and especially with the extreme cultures of BDSM, body art, and performances of *Los Modernos Primitivos*. Her main plastic references range from Renaissance art to the avant-gardes of the 20th century: abstract expressionism and assemblages. We will also focus on the affinities or dissonances between the work of Nancy Grossman and that of other visual artists such as Richard Lindner, Robert Mapplethorpe, or Hans Bellmer.

# 2. Development: Nancy Grossman, Heiress of Medusa, the First Sculptor – Materials, Techniques, and Processes

At the Origin and at the End are the Mask and Medusa. This is an intuited and sought-after origin, which begins metaphorically in Medusa and her conversion of human beings into stone as the genesis of sculptural creation and is specified in Grossman's decapitated heads as a sign of her artistic mastery in carving gestures and emotions of the human face. The diversity of origins of the masks and their multiplicity of meanings are specified in Grossman's works in different manifestations such as ritual, shamanic, anthropomorphic (man-animal), Greek, symbolic phallic, androgynous, the armed heads, and even the fetish masks.

Among the materials used by Grossman in the creation of her sculpture-masks, the supremacy corresponds to the suggestive and disturbing black leather that becomes the essential element to reflect the inflicted wounds, external and internal. The tanned and dyed black skin acts as the protective second skin, the flexible, threatening, or castrating armor that constitutes the fascinating essence of the mask and contributes to its fetishization. Grossman's works made with

this material bear a great formal similarity to the fetishes, masks, and clothes of BDSM culture (Bondage, Discipline, Sadism, and Masochism), although they transcend them with their own language and expressiveness.

#### 2.1. Family Context, Academic Influences, and Artistic Beginnings.

Nancy Grossman was born in 1940 in New York to a Jewish father and Italian mother, although she grew up on a farm in Oneonta in New York State. She combined her studies with working in her parents' garment factory and raising her younger siblings. The example of her Italian mamma, always self-sacrificing at home and a seamstress in the factory, was a model she rejected and from which she wanted to escape; she did not want to be an extension of her mother, nor to be the property of her father, strict and repressive, which prevented her from starting her studies as an artist. Paradoxically, the training she received drawing and cutting patterns in the family garment factory was decisive when it came to expressing the traumas of her childhood and adolescence. This forced learning was one of the sources for the further development of her artistic technique; it gave her a knowledge of the human body as that of a fragmented being, composed of cut and assembled pieces, their parts joined by painful stitches.

Being an artist was a rarity, and being a female artist was doubly strange in the late 1950s; however, Grossman managed to study at the Pratt Institute (New York) from 1957 to 1962. There she became imbued with the current of Abstract Expressionism that so influenced her work thanks to her main mentor and friend, Richard Lindner, who taught her ethical values associated with the work of art, as well as the works of Freud and Jung as an analytical basis during the process of making the most private feelings public. According to Raven (1991), Lindner's works referred to the world of childhood, with sinister portraits of children and corseted maidens, considering the other as a human object, often in the form of a toy.

Lindner's works reminded Grossman of her childhood years, in which she made puppets and costumes for her brothers' dolls. This also became the basis for her interest in the creative possibilities of sewn pieces of paper or cloth for its later development and evolution in collages and in her final pieces of masked heads-figures. David Smith, another of her teachers and mentors, was a great influence on her work; in fact, when she obtained the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1965, she was able to build her assemblies inspired by those of Smith. The influence of her mentor turned out to be fundamental in the development of three-dimensional materials and in research on fabrics and corsets. The relationship with Smith was interrupted by his death in an accident, and the artist dedicated some of her works made with the materials that he had given her and continued to expand her techniques toward assembly.

This procedural technique has among its most renowned teachers Jasper Johns, Kienholz, and Robert Rauschenberg. Assembly is the sensitive transfer of forms and materials and the appropriation of pictorial languages similar to sculpture. From this encounter the symbiotic work is born. Mixed techniques recreate the strange world of objects in the absence of man; industrial design objects make up the artificial landscape created by primitive industrial society, chosen for their evocative qualities, forming a subversive vocabulary full of reminiscences.

## 2.2. Sculptural Materials and Processes: From Two Dimensions to the Three-Dimensional Figure

Grossman's mastery of materials and manufacturing techniques from the family factory—fabrics, leathers, dyes, cuts, rivets, zippers, etc.—were the initial basis of her creative process, giving them a new use and turning them at the base of her sculptures, drawings, paintings, collages, and assemblages. She resignified them and included them along with other materials more associated with the sculptural tradition, such as wood and iron, which were also part of the environment of the family farm: machinery and farm implements, nearby trees, a horse harness in which she rode, etc. All this is included to a greater or lesser extent in her works.

Grossman's work is a journey that encompasses various techniques and means of creative expression. She evolves from drawing, shifting to painting and the incorporation of pieces into her collages and assemblages, and finally to freestanding sculpture. Her search begins in two dimensions and leads her toward the three-dimensional figure, although she never abandons drawing as either a preliminary sketch of her sculptures or as an end (goal) in itself. The collages are made starting from previous drawings, using strips of paper or cloth twisted and lined with wrinkles, dyed with aniline and washed, or pastel, ink and the masking pencil.

Grossman used plaster on a glued grid support, a base on which she painted or glued her cut-out papers, tickets, letters, and drawings – other people's detritus, as she called them. These first trials are the basis of her creative research since the materials are based on the original idea, and she gives these elements a new identity. The mixed techniques used in the assemblages recreate the strange world of objects in the absence of man; industrial design objects make up the artificial landscape created by primitive industrial society, chosen for their evocative qualities, and forming a subversive vocabulary full of reminiscences. Grossman applies them as complements or as supports, forming a unique work, a bastard organism that appropriates the organic and the metallic with all the burden of estrangement that it entails.

The multiple techniques and materials used lead her to a hybridization of forms, to a metamorphosis that combines the human and the animal, the masculine and the feminine, the telluric and the mechanical. It is especially reflected in her totemic sculptures, made with wood and mechanical gears, in her paintings of cut and sewn men, in her assemblages made with saddles, and in her carved wooden figure-heads covered in leather with their mouths attached by leather straps.

At this same time, in the mid-60s, she began her assemblies using materials and tools of a shoemaker and blacksmith: jackets, gardener's aprons, shoe soles, typewriters, mechanical gears, etc. She became legendary among the artistic community for her romance with non-artistic material-objects. The elements she incorporates are deliberately thought out and sought after, not chosen at random, which is why she rejects the denomination of "objects trouvés" (found objects) that is usually applied to these works. Her assemblies are made starting from previous drawings and the elements are incorporated based on that drawing.

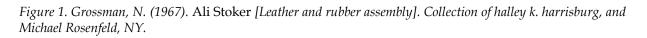
The artist built many pieces with the materials that evoked memories of the family farm: harnesses and saddles, woods, agricultural machinery, leathers, rubber bands, jackets, and aviator glasses, plus the traditional acrylics on canvas. The assemblages combine pieces of leather and metal, forming a visceral and sexual imagery that shows the interior of the body emerging to

the exterior (revealing that the language centers in the entrails are the places where the feelings of anguish or fear reside when one feels scared or nervous). The muscular envelope is torn, emerging through its interstices with visceral forms like stomachs and leather intestines interspersed with strange rubber tracheae.

We see in these works references to the works of desiring machines by Duchamp and Picabia and to the tubular beings of Léger, who combined the organic and industrial forms, but with a different sensibility, not so ironic but more intimate and painful. Her works have structures between Cubists and Dadaists, but they are filtered by the confused energy of Abstract Expressionism, which affects the anatomical-sexual aspects.

In the work *Ali Stoker* (1967), we see an assembly that combines leather, rubber, and metal. The piece shows the description of war equipment, or it seems like a residue of a nuclear holocaust in which the human being was melted and only the ineffective protective remains stay. The leather and artificial prostheses of the breathing tubes of gas masks look like the monstrous tracheae of a being that has been liquefied; everything organic has disappeared, and only the indestructible traces of the inorganic remain. This work echoes, on a formal level, Giger's constructions of organic and metallic beings, those terrifying women who become the "Alien" of a "mortal species."





The materials contain forms that cannot be ignored, although they are hidden; they are like surreal objects that evoke the ghosts contained in leather jackets, the presence of the absence of being diluted in nothingness, drowned by inorganic matter. The bodies have become matter in liquefaction, and only the metallic or plastic prostheses remain; the only remainder of life remains in the materials.

#### 2.3. Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus or the Ordeal of Bondage

The fascination with automatons, sexed and mechanized, belongs to the traditional creation of inorganic life that we often find in mythology and in the history of art. Examples include Pygmalion and his Galatea of stone, Olympia in the story of *The Sandman* by E.T.A. Hoffman (1817), the robot María de Metrópolis by Fritz Lang (1927). They continue with Hans Bellmer's dolls, be it his articulated mannequins or his own wife, Única Zürn, turned into a flesh doll, his

object-human toy. We see examples even in the creature imagined by Mary Shelley or the Nexus replicants from *Blade Runner* (1982).

The myth of Prometheus is exalted and complemented by another being cursed by its creator: Frankenstein's creature, the dismembered colossus made of scraps of skin, stitched limbs, and confused identities. Nancy Grossman, like Victor Frankenstein, Mary Shelley's alter ego, is the creator, the creature, and the writer at the same time. The artist is a kind of anatomical-forensic doctor who sews, cuts, carves, polishes, and tortures all kinds of skins, limbs, and organs. Feelings and concerns seek to embody her modern Prometheus (included in the original title of Mary Shelley's novel), reviving him in her works, tying him and gagging him to show the vulnerability that his imposing strength hides. The myth of Prometheus, chained and condemned to be eternally devoured by a vulture, is reflected in her drawings of men subjected to the eternal torture of bondage (both slavery and servitude and, in its double aspect, social and sexual), of enslaving ties and of the nullifying jaws of the rebellion of the one who dared to defy the gods. Her works reflect the concerns of groups that remained outside the established society.

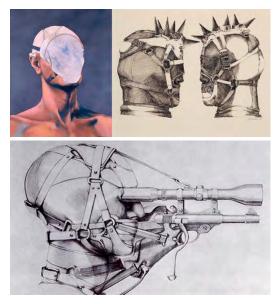
The movements of sexual liberation, feminists, and gays, and that of Civil Rights in the 50s, 60s, and 70s in the United States of America, and by extension in Western culture, are part of the so-called micropolitical by Guattari and were resignified by Michel Foucault as a result of the May 1968 revolution. These movements are described as a redefinition of politics thanks to the intervention of minority or marginalized individuals and groups who enter the political scene with a series of demands despised or neglected by government politicians. Guattari and Deleuze canonized micropolitics in Capitalism and schizophrenia in 1980, and lauded their real power to transform society at all levels: education, social, cultural, racial, family, etc., based on the feminist motto of "the personal is political," also used in the Paris riots of May 1968.

Nancy Grossman, involved in these revolutionary movements in her country, gave her particular vision through the different images of modern Prometheans with heads tied by reins and harnesses, or by other bicephalic monsters: men-arms that represent the arms obsession of the United States. Her drawings from 1965-1967 show anthropomorphic machinery in which she links intestines and mechanical gears, representing symbolic biomechanical figures of animal-machines and human-machines. The works represent figures tied with belts such as the bits, girths, harnesses, and reins of horses. Her constant concern is the dehumanization of the human being and her conversion into an organic machine in the social gear, reflecting her interest in political events. She especially saw in the Vietnam War a monstrous war machine that turned men into instruments of killing.

In the second half of the decade, her pieces became more sculptural and made mainly with leather covering the base wood carving. In 1967 she has started her first head sculptures. In 1968 she changed the abstractions of the internal configurations to represent the exterior of the human physiognomy. It is the beginning of her first decapitated heads of undetermined sex, with covered eyes and gagged mouths, silent and blind images of anguish.

In the exhibition in 1974 at the Cordier & Ekstrom Gallery in New York, she already shows a complete figure, *Male Figure*, a masculine body, encased in a narrow leather suit edged with zippers. It is a twisted body, a Prometheus in chains or perhaps a BDSM practitioner convulsed by death rattles. The Renaissance tradition is revealed in this work; the beauty of its forms and

the tragic nature of its situation make it heir to the sculptures of powerful titans and at the same time fragile and vulnerable slaves of Michelangelo.



*Figure 2. Grossman, N. (1968).* Heads [*Drawings of men with masked heads and weapons*]. *https://www.pinterest.es/corkerartist/nancy-grossman/?lp=true>* 

Other enslaved figures draw convulsed torsos whose ties exalt the beauty of the tormented body. Their dark mirror is the leather-boy addicted to BDSM and willingly subjected to bondage. However, it is not the virtues of bondage that Nancy Grossman represents, but the pain and impotence that a mainstream education and a castrating society produce in the different; from the daily and underground aggressiveness that is exerted in the same family bosom to the hyperbolic violence of the police and military machinery of the State. For Grossman, it is in the human body where all conflicts are reflected, leaving their painful scars as indelible and still bleeding memories, and this is how she translates it in her works.

#### 2.4. Masks: Totem and Taboo in BDSM culture

The universality of the mask makes it one of the most archaic ritual objects, and its original ritual and magical function has become an artistic work that still carries part of that sacred character that combines the animal, the divine, and the human, as well as the conscious, but above all the unconscious. The mask is fundamental in the processes of disintegration and reintegration of the body, as well as in the representation of the most hidden secrets. The secret is the most primitive level of the organic body, and the process contains the fight between fear and death.

In almost all primitive cultures there has been a representation of the human figure, often wearing a mask. From the beginning, therefore, there is duality in the masked figure, which embodies a double-hybrid that can be an animal, a spirit (a deceased or a god), another human being, or the Other of being. Any of these variants of the mask tries to appropriate (put itself in the place) or defend itself from the Other or the Unknown. It is the threshold – the limit to be crossed – that allows the vision of that supernatural world. Almost always the masked man is a being with superior powers like the shaman, whose trances and rituals promote the manifestation of the supernatural, the advent of the spirit of the ancestors or the gods. The manifestation of the divine, of force and power, of unwritten law, must always be overwhelming since what the mask invokes is that unknown and often sinister immanence that death is inscribed in itself.



*Figure 3. Grossman, N. (1967).* Bondage Head [*Drawing*]. <u>https://www.pinterest.es/corkerartist/nancy-grossman/?lp=true</u>

There are other masks that act as helmets of passive (concealment) or active (terrorize) protection against the same summoned forces. There are others that protect the deceased against the dark forces of the afterlife and keep them present in the memory of the living. The animal-mask tries to promote the hunting of the animal that is intended to be captured, or with which it is identified as a totemic animal, the double-taboo of the clan. The diversity of the mask is therefore infinite, and it is the first artistic work that starts from the fundamental interest of the investigation and representation of the human face as the reflection of a deeply enigmatic being with multiple aesthetic manifestations of itself.

Through the mask one can cross the threshold of the physical and psychic limits of being. The mask does not represent, but embodies the being. That is why it is associated with the invisible mirror, internal to the unconscious; it is not a mere disguise since it does not belong to the domain of appearance and simulation but to that of transformation and metamorphosis, as Morey (1995) points out in *Conjeturas sobre la Máscara* [Conjectures on the Mask]. The mask thus becomes the manifestation of the presence of an absence. The metamorphoses that promote the mask allow the detachment of the others that inhabit the interior of the being, not only the double animal or divine, but fundamentally of the Other hidden in the unconscious. It is this double that gives the mask the monstrosity character, since it is often a sinister double, due to its repressed condition which emerges under the trance of drugs, during the ecstasy of the sacred orgy, or in the representation of the Greek tragedy.

In these sculptures, we see a synthesis of totems and a reminiscence of primitive rituals that tried to capture the spirit or the double animal of the human being. Their heads symbolized the continuation of dark rites that are reflected in multiple masks of mutant identities and sexualities pushed to the limit. They also remember the person contained in the masks from Greek tragedies. The Greek stage mask is called *prosopon*, and from which the Latin term *persona* is derived; the impulses that it reflects – envy, jealousy, melancholy, anger – are included under the single name of hubris (the excessive affirmation of the self), disgracefulness, daring, pride, or arrogance. The mortals who suffered from hubris were cruelly punished by the gods, as it was a challenge to the Olympians themselves. as indicated by Doods (1983) in The Greeks and the Irrational.

However, when the mask degenerates into a single voice and expression, into a single person, that is, in the tragic and moral serenity of the Socratic mask, there is another term that turns the repressed excess into "excess" without limit (if we coined the Batallian name): the Greek term *gorgoneion* (Morey, 1995). The impulses and states of excesses that this Gorgon mask reflects are those of ecstasy and agony, drunkenness, drowsiness, and death. The palpable example is Medusa, one of the three Gorgons (or Gorgo) that gives its name to this monstrous mask, the decapitated head with the expression of death arrested in the still alive countenance. A fatal head bristles with serpents, mute and defeated by the reflection of Perseus's shield-mirror and which, nevertheless, still retains the power to petrify with its gaze.

Medusa is the representation of the masculine fear of the jagged vagina, according to Freud (1983). And it is the sword, or symbolic phallus of Perseus, that ends this ghost of male castration. However, the operation also happens in reverse, and it is the mythical femmes fatales such as Salomé, Judith, and Dalida who wield the phallic sword to behead / castrate the man. In Artemisia Gentileschi's painting, *Judith Slaying Holofernes*, we already see this vindication of phallic power in a very explicit way, perhaps too obvious, although male artists are not too subtle when it comes to capturing their castration ghosts. In fact, male castration is one of the most recurrent motifs in the plastic or literary arts. Perhaps what surprises and frightens men is that it is the woman herself who interprets and recreates the ghost of the devouring woman par excellence.

Nancy Grossman takes due account of this and becomes, not without irony and perhaps without intention, the victorious Medusa of Perseus. It is her decapitated head-phallus that is exhibited as a trophy by this Athena (warrior goddess and protector of the arts) who wears the Gorgon mask on her shield and thus achieves her revenge against the castrating power of the phallus. That is why their mutilated head-figures cause ambivalent feelings of fascination and fear. The anguish of castration and the loss of strength and virility is represented in these works, where the phallic heads show us the teeth of the toothed vagina. The incestuous union between the decapitated heads of Medusa and Holofernes (or Goliath or John the Baptist) is the embodiment of one of the sadomasochistic ghosts.



*Figure 4. Photograph S / T. Nancy Grossman in her New York studio with her wood and leather heads; c. 1975. https://www.pinterest.es/joan626/nancy-grossman/?lp=true* 

These aspects that we observe in Grossman's work have points of contact with that of Francis Bacon, who is one of the artists who best reflects the manifest aggressiveness of the mouth and dentures, since they contain a strong load of sadomasochistic implications. Medusa is therefore the alter ego of Nancy Grossman, the tutelary demon who guides her in the search for her feminine identity, rebelling against the power of the phallocratic father and against the passive role attributed to women, making her appropriate the supposedly masculine attributes of strength, determination, and creativity which in their own right belong to her and had been denied her because of her sex.

#### 2.5. Masks of Masculinity and Androgyny

When contemplating the haunting black leather heads of Nancy Grossman, numerous questions arise: Are they an appropriation of the symbolic power of the phallus by a female artist, or are they a metaphorical castration of this male phallocracy? Grossman constructs them as if they were an embodiment of her male double, a manifestation of her creative bisexuality. In her work we see the ambivalence of the masks with which her male heads are covered, hidden, or protected. The mask becomes the fundamental symbolic element in the selection of the social role; it is what allows the exchange of external attributes that alternately reinforce or hide masculine and feminine attitudes.

For Grossman, the head is the most powerful organ, where power, intellect, and instinct reside, not in the penis or vagina. Grossman considers it castrating that female artists like Judith Chicago limit themselves exclusively to painting vaginas to reaffirm their feminine identity; this is seen as a continuation of the stereotypes imposed by male sexism. Grossman refuses to identify the woman with the vagina; The main thing for her is to develop the potential of her brain, her intellect, her power, and her aggressiveness; they are all feminine-masculine attributes. Although, her sculptures show more the appropriation of what Joan Rivière defines as "the talisman, the invisible sword, the organ of sadism" (Riviere, 1929), obviously the paternal penis, turned into a phallus and settled in the territory of the symbolic.



*Figure 5. S / T photograph of Nancy Grossman's heads with leather masks.* 1975. *https://www.pinterest.es/joan626/nancy-grossman/?lp=true* 

Grossman understood masculinity, like femininity, as a masquerade (mask / masquerade), according to Rivière's (1929) term in his essay *La feminidad como mascarada*. The social constructions of genders involve very marked and stereotyped character traits, attributes, and behaviors. However, subjects, both men and women, adopt to a greater or lesser extent the interchangeable external features of masculinity or femininity, regardless of their sex or sexual inclination. According to Riviere (1929): "Women who aspire to a certain masculinity can adopt the mask of femininity, both to hide the possession of masculinity and to avoid the revenge they fear from the man" (p. 34).

#### 2.6. Black Leather Fetishism and BDSM Culture

Grossman's works became famous in the New York culture of the 60s and 70s, as they were equated with the aesthetics of the usual leather-bar sadomasochists. There is a markedly sexual aspect in the works of Nancy Grossman that bring them closer to the world of BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Sadomasochism). Although the artist denies her relationship with this world and it was surprising for her that her sculptures related to it, the formal and conceptual similarity with this "subculture" is evident. The interpretation of the sexual aspect of Nancy Grossman's work is very ambiguous. It can be understood almost as a warning against the invisible specter of latent fascism that the fetishization of black leather uniforms implies, as Susan Sontang (1987) points out in *Fascinating Fascism*:

Hay una fantasía general acerca de los uniformes. Los uniformes sugieren comunidad, orden, identidad (...) competencia, autoridad legítima, el ejercicio legitimado de la violencia. Pero los uniformes no son lo mismo que las fotografías de uniformes \_que son materiales eróticos\_ y las fotografías de uniformes de las SS son las unidades de una fantasía sexual particularmente poderosa y difundida. ¿Por qué las SS? Porque los SS eran la encarnación ideal de la abierta afirmación del fascismo sobre la virtud de la violencia, el derecho de ejercer un poder total sobre los demás y tratarlos como absolutamente inferiores. Fue en las SS donde esta afirmación pareció más completa, porque la desempeñaron de manera singularmente brutal y eficiente; y porque la dramatizaron vinculándose ellos mismos con ciertas normas estéticas. Las SS fueron creadas como una comunidad de élite militar que no sólo sería supremamente violenta sino también supremamente hermosa. (p. 116)

[There is a general fantasy about uniforms. The uniforms suggest community, order, identity (...) competence, legitimate authority, the legitimate exercise of violence. But uniforms are not the same as photographs of uniforms – which are erotic materials – and photographs of SS uniforms are the units of a particularly powerful and widespread sexual fantasy. Why the SS? Because the SS were the ideal embodiment of fascism's overt assertion of the virtue of violence, the right to exercise total power over others and treat them as absolutely inferior. It was in the SS that this assertion seemed most complete because it was carried out in a singularly brutal and efficient manner, and because they dramatized it by linking themselves to certain aesthetic norms. The SS was created as an elite military community that would not only be supremely violent but also supremely beautiful.] (This is not the original text in English but a translation of the quote from the book published in Spanish.)

The artist investigates the nature of power in personal relationships and intimate wounds using the fetishist clothing associated with BDSM. However, it is not necessary to live immersed in this subculture to make these works. The fascination for the fetishism of black leather is palpable in multiple cultural manifestations. In the 1999 film *The Matrix*, we see how in real life humans dress almost in rags and in their virtual reality they imagine themselves wearing black latex and leather suits. The fascination for these materials is inseparable from the content of power and domination that they transmit: from Marlon Brando in the film *The Wild One* (Laslo Benedek, 1953) turning the black leather jacket worn by the actor and accompanying some attitudes of rebellion and punishment, to Keanu Reeves and his end-of-the-century messianism, leather always refers to the "black rebels," to the fallen angels.

If Grossman's sculptures refer us to a first vision of the BDSM world, even more evident is that this imagery is full of ambivalent suggestions that go from the sexual to the political, from the mystical to the perversity. Her sculptures and the S&M aesthetic are images that glide through all the nuances of ecstasy and torture, images that transgress the limits of normative sexuality and the physical and mental limits of the person with respect to his/her resistance and submission to pain. The connections of this subculture with the works of Nancy Grossman are evident, although they are not limited only to the world of bizarre sexual practices, but also reflect the universal dynamics of existence, the symbolization of power relations, and the fetishization of slavery.

Some of her masks leave no doubt about the masculinity of the figures that underlie them. Faces with high cheekbones and powerful jaws tell us about the special resistance, not only physical but also psychic, that must be exercised to immerse oneself in the world of BDSM, as well as the strong charge of sexual desire that the fetishism of black leather exerts. The acceptance of the fetish object symbolizes the total rejection of castration, in such a way that the image becomes reassuring rather than dangerous. As Laura Mulvey (1988) points out in her seminal essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*: "This fetishistic scoptophilia builds by accumulation the physical beauty of the object, turning it into something satisfying in itself."

The suggestive and haunting black leather of Nancy Grossman's masks becomes the essential material to reflect the inflicted wounds, external and internal; it is the protective, threatening, or castrating second skin that constitutes the fascinating essence of the mask and contributes to its fetishization. Leather is the metaphor of the skin-canvas where the human being inscribes his history, based on incisions and scars in the skin tissue, fired with metals, embedding the color in the pores; by relief or injection, the skin is marked, furrowed, pierced, kissed, and flayed, desecrated or sacred.

Circumcisions, tattoos, surgery, piercing, brandings, etc. are modifications that seek either an identification with society itself or a rejection of it, a personal demarcation or re-identification, a narcissistic, testimonial reinforcement, not without self-aggression in a conscious and mutant search. Being accepted or being stigmatized, beautiful or cursed, is inscribed on the skin and on the leather of these sculptural masks. Likewise, on that skin-leather surface, the invisible traces of indelible caresses coexist, stored in the most fragile cortex of memory, as a subcutaneous extension of the skin itself. The evocation of tactile sensuality is inseparable from the skin. Nancy Grossman recomposes a mask with the excised fragments of skin in which blood, sweat, tears,

caresses, and calligraphic lashes are engraved on that testimonial leather parchment in the orography of the skin.

The artist uses leather for its similarity to human skin, for its physical and symbolic properties. The contact of leather with human skin is a sensation of absolute sensuality, a protective coating against external aggressions and at the same time evokes the internal landscape that underlies the skin itself. The symbolic ties are the repressors of the corporal and emotional expression, of the sexuality repressed by the prejudices, norms, and limitations that hide everything related to the body, a body that must break the symbolic barrier of the imposed limits. The zippers, with their gear similar to an instrument of torture, furrow their tight leather sheath, and play with the unveiling and perhaps the incitement to penetrate the body; they are like suggestive openings to the secret skin, to the invisible but foreseen flesh.

Their androgynous heads, decapitated and masked, transmit a disturbing force reminiscent of voodoo dolls that exorcise the bondage of their childhood, or perhaps they are the fetishized essence of BDSM. The acceptance of the fetish object symbolizes the total rejection of castration in such a way that the image becomes reassuring rather than dangerous. According to Laura Mulvey (1975), this fetishistic scopophilia builds by accumulation the physical beauty of the object, turning it into something satisfying in itself.

Grossman's sculptures are based on a previous drawing and a feeling of helplessness and frustration that is specified in the ties, reins, harnesses, and snacks that girdle the masks and that compress the emotions and grip desire. During the creation process, Grossman sculpts like a surgeon with a scalpel, making a perfect anatomical dissection of the face from the base of the skull; the heads are carved out of wood, painted, and polished, with dentures embedded in their jaws. In Figure 5 we see the meticulous process of creating the sculptures. The precision with which the artist endows all her figures with dentures, whether visible or not, reminds us that teeth are the psychic archetype of pain, a metaphor for impotence, and fear of death, closely related to mutilations, punishments, and the sins of the flesh: lust and gluttony.

And yet all this technical precision will remain hidden, being covered with the final masks: a first internal red leather mask, which she treats as if it were a muscle fiber, like a bloody skin-dermis, is attached to the smallest expression that wrinkles and covers the wooden surface. The second and final mask is the second outer skin-epidermis, made of black or brown leather, it is the visible mask, so closely fused with the first skin that it continues to draw the muscles that throb with a stopped and contained life. Their weathered skin is frequently streaked with scars and wounds represented by zippers and rivets.

This superposition of skins plays with the real content of the face and its protective masks from vulnerable feelings, or on the contrary, from contained or uncontrolled aggressiveness. In this underground combat against oneself and against others, there are the latency of the sinister and the anguished manifestation of the death instinct, which give the mask the character of monstrosity: it invokes the mysterious and the magic of forbidden powers.

The masks are traversed by all kinds of ties, reins, and muzzles, which paradoxically demonstrate the impossibility of holding or girdling, castrating the most tortuous drives and the most painful desires. All these artificial prostheses become an extension of the personality; the masks become ambivalent armor, and they give the sensation of an energy so brutal that it must be contained, like that of runaway horses. At the same time, they reflect the vulnerability of being masked, chained, and assaulted. Bindings are intrinsic to the person, imposed external limits, or internal self-limitations.

Each of the personalities shown by the androgynous heads has its own entity that is dark, ambiguous, and murderously disturbing. Fascinating warriors, mercenaries of unknown gods, mute kings, blindfolded Oedipus, victims and violators of desire, S&M addicts, mutilated freaks, vulnerable devils, etc. all act on the scene of torture, punishment, and death, like Homeric heroes dragged by their hubris, their excessive pride and ambition.

There are decapitated with ferocious faces, they are gorgonic masks of expressions contracted by a monstrous energy and a manifest aggressiveness. The precision is such that they are even endowed with real teeth, pronouncing the jaws that are compressed in gestures full of rage, showing and gnashing the teeth which look like steel. The aggressive face indicates the warrior ready to fight; it is part of the ritual of terrorizing the rival. Or perhaps the mask freezes the samurai's gesture while doing harakiri; the decapitated head is the result of his bleeding gesture of honor.

Other sculptures reflect Nancy Grossman's concern for the fate of the soldiers who participated in the Vietnam War. She tried to capture in them the mortal casualties and aggressive male behaviors that are revealed in war and that also have their manifestation in civil society against being different, against the repressive power that blinds, mutes, and annuls them as persons. Also, the aggressiveness of society against the being that goes outside of its heterosexual norms is reflected in this sculpture of a man who cannot freely express his sexual inclination, who is forced to hide it, to silence it, or, on the contrary, to increase his external male image by dressing himself with the hardness attributed to black leather. Again, we see masculinity worn as an ambivalent mask, both by homo- and heterosexuals.

In other works, we see heads completely asphyxiated and blinded by the harnesses and straps that surround them. These masks also reflect the influence of animist art; they are like gifts of the tribal art that so influenced the artistic avant-gardes. Let us remember Picasso, or Breton fascinated by African or Oceanian heads riddled with sharp objects. The fascination was purely formal, not conceptual, since they failed to delve into the magical character of these objects, intimately linked to the symbolism of the totem and the corresponding taboo. This interconnectedness makes them life-changing talismans. They have the power of the object that symbolizes the unknown and death. In the exorcism against the inevitable, Nancy Grossman invokes catharsis with her fetishes.

The friendship and artistic affinity between Nancy Grossman and Robert Mapplethorpe can be seen in the photographs that the latter took of their works. They both studied painting and sculpture at the Pratt Institute, albeit in different years. Noteworthy is Mapplethorpe's sculptural treatment of his bodybuilding and African-American models; he turned the faces of his portraits into masks that revealed the lies, the frivolous, the dark, or the demonic that his models hid. Nancy Grossman, in a reverse operation, turned her masks into faces with almost the same attributions.



*Figure 6. Suet, 1977\_Blunt, 1968\_TR, 1968. Nancy Grossman. Mixed media. https://www.pinterest.es/corkerartist/nancy-grossman/?lp=true* 

### 3. Conclusions

In the work of Nancy Grossman, we have found the myth of the sadistic woman from Sacher-Masoch's story, *The Venus of Skins* (1870),<sup>1</sup> who takes pleasure in inflicting all erotic violence on the skin, wounding androgynous, male, and female bodies. But at the same time the ambiguity is very present, since she, as an artist and dominatrix, participates in the double condition of victim and executioner.

The bondage that grips their men also has to do with the family and religious repressions suffered in childhood, and also with the social restrictions on ethnic, racial, social, and sexual minorities in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States of America. Sexual behaviors outside the norm have the triple condition of moral sin, social crime, and clinical pathology, and the representation of these attitudes is equally rejected and censored. Nancy Grossman's work delves into masculine territory: the artists who deal with sadomasochism are mostly men who, depending on their sexual orientation, represent either submissive or dominant women or men in similar situations. What is exceptional is the woman-artist who uses the figure of the man as a sexual fetish. As Robert C. Morgan (1988) comments in "Nancy Grossman: Opus Volcanus:"

Grossman's vision is not far from that of the French Surrealist poet and playwright Antonin Artaud. Grossman shares with Artaud the knowledge of an inarticulate space between the masculine and the feminine, between the rational mind that represses the desire and the desire of the body to release itself to the forces of an unmediated experience.

If Grossman's sculptures have sent us in a first vision to the BDSM world, it is no less true that the aesthetics of this subculture is full of ambivalent suggestions that go from the sexual to the political, from the mystical to the perverse; they are images that they slide through all the nuances

of ecstasy and torture and transgress the limits of normative sexuality and the physical and mental limits of the person with respect to their resistance and submission to pain. The connections of this subculture with the works of Nancy Grossman are evident, although they are not limited only to the world of bizarre sexual practices, but also reflect the universal dynamics of existence, the symbolization of power relations, and the fetishization of slavery.

Sadism and masochism are not only extreme sexual behaviors, but attitudes that, to a greater or lesser extent, become natural for humanity. They are the emblem of the physical and psychic forces that express emotional conflicts and life and death drives. These mergers of forces, of roles, of interchangeable identities allow us to feel in the place of the other, acting as mirrors with two faces. Sadism becomes a cultural construction for Michel Foucault (1973) in *Madness and Civilatión*:

Sadism is not a name definitely given to a practice as old as Eros; it is a solid cultural reality that appeared exactly at the end of the seventeenth century, and which represented one of the most important transformations of Western thought: desire, the insane dialogue between love and death in the unlimited daring of appetite. (p. 10)

Sadism, as Foucault (1994) also pointed out *Watch and Punish*, collects Western imagery about desire. The evident sadism of society against different beings is reflected in these figures. The condition of an individual in the social context is represented in the works of Nancy Grossman: sculptures of enslaved or dying beings suspended between life and death, figures that symbolize the behaviors of power among human beings. Sigmund Freud (1983), in *The I and the It: Three essays on sexual theory and other essays: Beyond the pleasure principle*, also considered that:

El sadismo es el conductor de la experiencia y el dominio. Es parte de la humana necesidad de placer, para olvidar el dolor de las contradicciones internas del ser, y junto con el masoquismo expresa el juego dinámico entre fuerzas físicas opuestas."

[Sadism is the conductor of experience and mastery. It is part of the human need for pleasure, to forget the pain of the internal contradictions of being, and together with masochism it expresses the dynamic game between opposing physical forces.] (This is not the original text in English but a translation of the quote from the book published in Spanish.)

Sexuality has always been subjugated by the biopower practices of discourse, and at the same time, sexuality is the irreducible "other" of the dominant culture; it is its discomfort and at the same time the key to its continuity. In his funeral speech for Bataille, Foucault asserted that only sexuality was capable of filling the void of finitude. It is sexuality that makes possible that transgression that allows us to move on to the other of the cultural and moral discourse, as we have seen in the works of Nancy Grossman, a reflection of the most transgressive and therefore the most repressed unconscious drives.

All these psychic signs, conscious and unconscious, are contained in Grossman's work; appropriation is not strange, although her personal vision is much more painful and profound. The use of fetishist and SM clothing in Grossman's work is an artistic option capable of reflecting

the feelings of attraction and/or repulsion for that murky fascination that beats in this subculture, which belongs to the underworld made with the waste of the higher cultural world, in the domain of formless myths and unconfessed passions where a certain and compromising beauty is born.

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#### Endnotes

1 Translators note: *The Venus of the Skins* (Venus im Pelz in German) is a work of the Austrian writer Leopold von Sacher-Masoch published in 1870



## Action Research: Introducing Gender Equality into Fourth Graders' Visual Art Education

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**Abstract:** In this study, the researcher used the self-designed "Gender Stereotypes A-R-T Curriculum Program" as a tool to guide a class of fourth grade students (13 boys and 13 girls) for a period of six weeks to let them examine, reflect, and criticize gender stereotypes hidden in our daily visual cultural products. The students were empowered to express or modify the concept of gender through their art works.

By analyzing qualitative data, this paper aimed to explore the students' gender consciousness, the process of gender awareness, and the condition and influence of the implemented program. The results were as follows:

- 1. Students were used to interpreting the texts in relation to their life experiences and the dominant patriarchal socio-cultural context.
- 2. The teaching strategies of empathy, anti-cognitive cases, and role models improved students' gender stereotype deconstruction. Furthermore, students reconsidered their concepts of gender characteristics, family roles of housework, and career choice.
- 3. The strategy of "affirmative discrimination" (such as praising, presenting female perspectives in the discussion, limiting the times each student speaks in class, or having a roll call) can facilitate female students in sharing their gender experiences and their thoughts.
- 4. The students affirmed that the program helped them greatly in interacting with different genders.
- 5. The concept of gender equality can be formed in repeated drills in daily life so as to resist the old thinking and our physical inertia.

Keywords: Gender Equality Education, Gender Stereotypes, Visual Art Education

在本研究中教師即為研究者,以自編的「性別刻板印象 A-R-T 課程方案」為工具,帶領國小 四年級一個班的學生(男 13,女 13)進行為期 6 週的性別藝術課程,透過檢視、反思、批判在 我們日常生活的視覺文化產物所隱含的性別刻板印象,並以藝術創作做為學生增權賦能的工具來 表達和修正性別概念。目的在藉由課程所取得的質性資料,進行內容分析以探討學生的性別意識 、性別意識覺醒的歷程及課程方案的實施狀況及影響。研究發現如下:

- 一、學童以傳統父權體制所主導的社會文化脈絡和生活經驗來解讀視覺文本。
- 二、同理心、反認知案例、典範人物的教學策略運用有助於解構學生的性別刻板印象,促成性別特質 、家庭角色與分工、職業選擇的概念的再建構。
- 三、透過「積極性差別待遇」(讚美、討論時呈現女性觀點、限制每人發言次數、點名)可鼓勵女學 生分享自己的經驗和想法。
  - 四、學生正面的肯定課程有助於良好的性別互動。
  - 五、性別平等概念有賴於生活中的反覆演練以對抗舊思維的思考和身體慣性。

關鍵詞:性別平等教育、性別刻板印象、視覺藝術教育

### Introduction

Inspecting the interpretation of gender in patriarchal society has been a trend ever since the women's liberation movement began in the 1960s. Students' behaviors usually reflect the images of the greater societal experience, no matter how biased society is. That is why, as teachers, we need to clarify the misleading biases and guide students to reinforce their cognition of gender equality. In Taiwan, gender equality education has been integrated into the seven learning domains in primary school since the Gender Equality Education Act was enacted in 2004. However, few gender equality practices were implemented in Mathematics, Science and Technology, Language Arts, and Arts and Humanities (Ministry of Education [ME], 2012). Fortunately, there is neither a compulsory curriculum nor time pressure for visual art in Arts and Humanities, which makes it possible to arrange thematic courses to broaden students' horizons and put gender equality education into practice. Just as bell hooks said:

To transgress I must move past boundaries, I must push against to go forward. Nothing changes in the world if no one is willing to make this movement...To transgress, we must return to the body (as quoted in Springgay, 2004, p. 60).

For this reason, the researcher intends to lead his students and himself to cross the gender boundary by teaching them how to reflect and criticize gender stereotypes so as to enhance their cognitive and behavioral changes. The purposes of this research are as follows:

- 1. Develop and integrate "gender equality" into the curriculum of visual art.
- 2. Explore the process of students' gender consciousness and gender awareness.
- 3. Explore the condition and influence of the implemented program.

### **Review of Literature**

#### Gender is Not Inherent, and It Can Be Changed by Learning

Gender performance has no entity; it is the temporary aggregation of sociocultural relations, and it changes with different situations (Chen & Lee, 2012). Human behaviors can be shaped through socialization, social rewards, and individual backgrounds to meet social expectations, common values, and beliefs (Chiu & Hong, 2009). Therefore, gender is not inborn. The original gender or identity of the individual can be redefined, reinterpreted, and changed by relearning (Liu, 1997).

## Individual Awareness and Group Criticism Should Be Included in the Practice of Gender Equality Education

The knowledge, language, social relations, and values that schools select and pass down have great influence on students (Lee, 2011). Therefore, it is important to examine the inadequate or stereotypical gender concepts in implementing gender equality education. However, the active nature of the human agent may interpret or "carry out" gender in its own way during the learning process, consciously or unconsciously, in order to meet the policy-maker's expectation (Lee, 2011). It is necessary to set a specific teaching goal before introducing gender equality concepts to students. First of all, teachers need to examine their own gender consciousness and identity. Gender equality education cannot be carried out unless teachers really understand the meaning of it (Hsieh & Lee, 2008). The effectiveness of the teaching relies on the teacher's attitude toward gender issues, their sensitivity to genders, and their teaching ability. The Gender Equality

Education Act advocates that through the process of education, no one shall be discriminated against or restricted by their physical, psychological, social, or cultural gender factors, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Everyone can develop their potential on equal footing to create the multicultural society of gender equality.

"Individual awareness" and "group criticism" should be included in educational practice. Teaching is regarded as a social action to inspire students' self-awareness, to prompt individuals to obtain higher self-acceptance and self-confidence, and to have a better understanding of their career development instead of simply conforming to societal expectations. Additionally, students can pool their wisdom through mutual discussion to reflect and criticize gender restriction and discrimination dominated by the societal group consciousness.

## Eliminating Gender Stereotypes Should Be the Key Point of Gender Equality Education for Children of School Age

The process of human development is closely related to education, curriculum, and teaching, especially in childhood. Plato and J. Mill believe children are "embryonic adults" and education efforts are the preparation to become adults in society (Wang, 2000). The role and the identity of gender are not yet concrete in elementary school students. Between the ages of 7 and 11, children are influenced by stereotypes in the development of gender roles, especially regarding their characteristics and achievement orientations. In addition to perceiving the explicit characters of "strong man" and "charming woman," different levels of stereotypes related to interpersonal relationships, career choices, house chores, and social status are also developed (Yan & Huang, 2002). The stage of school children plays an important role in cultivating adults with knowledge of gender equality. Gender stereotypes classify and stipulate males' or females' behaviors or attitudes. Male stereotypes consist of three main components: high status, strong mind, and antifemininity. Yet, female stereotypes include housewives, playmates, and independent and confident professional women (Liu, 2009). Gender bias means holding negative attitudes toward others, while gender discrimination involves doing improper, negative, and harmful things to others (Chiu & Hong, 2009). A lot of discrimination and prejudice originate from gender stereotypes which are closely related with language, games, school environments, religious messages, and media descriptions. Eliminating gender stereotypes is the only way to eradicate discrimination. Effective practice is small but complete in concept reformation or behavior transformation. The best way to facilitate the awakening and enlightenment of gender consciousness is to connect students' socio-cultural backgrounds, feelings, and experiences with group criticism and analysis in class (You, 2005).

## Through Curriculum Transformation, Gender Equality Education Shows Women's Points of View to Achieve Social Justice

Most gender equality education in Grade 1-9 Curricula are integrated into the existing curriculum framework but add some instructional materials. However, students do not hear other genders' voices if the teaching is still ongoing in the patriarchal consciousness. Moreover, the lack of evaluation mechanisms among curricula, teaching, and textbooks caused gender equality education to become a mere formality with limited success (ME, 2012; Pan, 2001). To solve the dilemma, we shall transform the structure of the curriculum into a complete thematic curriculum that displays the interwoven issues of gender, class, and race, and re-examines the male-dominated cultural hegemony to have a better understanding of the universal human and individual gender experiences. There are four modes in implementing educational equality:

assimilation, defect, pluralism, and social justice. Social justice is the best practical mode among them; it has advantages that the other three lack, and it escapes the others' shortcomings. To reach social justice, education initiatives should provide students with the same resources. However, when disadvantaged individuals encounter difficulties due to social structures, education shall play an active role and provide more resources to help them through the so-called "positive discrimination" (Pan, 2003, p. 90). For example, in this study, the researcher noticed that boys are often more active in making comments than girls in the class. As for gender interaction, the researcher found that stratums do exist in collaborative work; females are often chosen as recorders while males are reporters. Thus, teachers should encourage the silent women in small groups, praise their participation, and call on them to comment (Lin, Y. C., 2000). Moreover, gender equality education courses indeed facilitated students to develop the positive concept of gender equality according to the research. However, in the awakening of gender consciousness, attitude, and awareness, girls tend to be more open and obvious than boys do (Chen, 2004; Hong, 2014; Huang, 2004; Lin, Y. S., 2008; Wang, S. L., 2011). To shorten the gap, teachers should take women's needs into consideration by presenting women's points of view and arousing their consciousness and reflection. Additionally, teachers should consider whether it is appropriate to impose expectations and discipline on men under the patriarchy (Pan, 1998). Revealing different paths in daily lives and providing authentic counterexamples can also weaken the mainstream patriarchy (Cheng et al., 1997/2008).

#### **Use Visual Text to Discuss Gender Equality Issues**

Images that flow in front of the audience frequently and influence them imperceptibly are regarded as the carriers of social value and can shape ideology in contemporary social culture (Chao, 2005a). In view of this, art education often centers "Visual Culture" as its curriculum. Visual Culture primarily relates to vision and links to other sensory experiences such as movies, television programs, magazines, and artworks. In addition to teaching traditional aesthetics, creative forms, and technique, educators also need to address and deal with the inappropriate aspects of patriarchal society including discrimination, stereotypes, and bias. In other words, teachers should guide students to perceive visual images hidden in the issues of gender, race, and the environment, and critically examine the ideology, social rights, and knowledge forms that shape our world (Keifer-Boyd, Amburgy & Knight, 2007; Parsons, 2002).

Looking at the visual images in Taiwan, traditional gender identity and interpretation are constantly reproduced and transmitted by various audio and video. TV commercials and cartoons, which most school children are familiar with, often show a large number of patriarchal ideologies and myths of female beauty. The gender hierarchy suggests that man is superior to woman. On TV, women with higher status are often vilified, which can intimidate other women. In the myth of gender interaction, men tend to treat the deviant behavior of sexual harassment as amusement and normalize their impolite behaviors to women. Though viewers may actively resist and criticize the text, the situation is not optimistic.

The levels of difference in perceiving gender bias are influenced by an individual's personal gender stereotypes, life experiences, gender awareness, preference, and plot structure (Lin, S. F., 2000; Tsai, 2008; Wu, 1999). Therefore, teachers can use issues around gender stereotypes as the topic of gender curricula in elementary school. The different gender concepts can be identified, and the inappropriate assumptions and prejudices can be clarified and modified promptly through teacher-student dialogue and group discussion in class.

Flat and still images, a beneficial tool to expose the hidden gender consciousness, can prompt viewers to link their sociocultural context to evoke their life experiences and feelings by gazing upon those images continuously and repeatedly. The masterpieces of art history were often created by white male elites. Female images, interwoven with values of various gender, class, and racial identities, were objects created in order to meet the needs of men. The works of the so-called masters should be examined and questioned since they have far-reaching influence through exhibition, publication, and cultural creative capital. Linda Nochlin, a female American artist, asked: "Why have there been no great women artists?" It is the initiation of western women artists introspecting their status and values as they reexamine the narrative view of traditional elite art history and how gender differences are ranked in the explicit power structure of the art world (Chao, 2005b; You, 1989/1995). These gender-related discussions set a rule of criticism and self-contemplation about our own visual culture.

#### Use Art as a Tool of Empowerment

As mentioned above, the practice of gender equality education contains two facets: individual awareness and group criticism. Articulation is the tool to achieve this goal. Give someone power to break the hegemony under certain circumstances so that he can speak for himself and believe in himself (Liang, 2003). Articulation can be in writing, speaking, and art making. Art making is the process of concretization and visualization of personal emotion and cognition. It is challenging; it can speak freely with no care of others; it can be content in texts, symbols, or images. Creators can give new meaning to those familiar symbols and images in the visual culture of the mainstream hegemony through the strategies of empty space, reposition, juxtaposition, unexpected or out-of-context items, changing labels, and metaphors to expose, criticize, and correct improper concepts to achieve true empowerment.

In short, gender equality education in elementary school aims to eliminate gender stereotypes. It is our goal to express or modify gender concepts and values through the transformation of visual art curricula.

### **Research Design**

#### **Research Method**

The method of this study is action research. The participants are the fourth-grade students in the researcher's class – 13 boys and 13 girls. The researcher used the self-designed "Gender Stereotypes A-R-T Curriculum Program" as a tool for the teaching activity over six weeks in 2012 (12 lessons total). There were 2 lessons in a week and 40 minutes in a lesson. Coding of qualitative data in this study consists of three parts: data form, linked teaching unit, and student number. For example, OR1s1 represents the oral report from student 1 on unit 1 (see Table 1).

symbol: information form teaching unit		student number
OR oral report WS working sheet FS feedback sheet	1 ~ 4 Each number represents a teaching unit.	s1~ s26 Lowercase "s" presents "student," and the number represents the student.

Table 1. Original Data Codes

#### **Research Tool**

"Gender Stereotypes A-R-T Curriculum Program" employs the teacher as the dynamic actor of interpreting gender curriculum. The core issue is gender stereotypes. A-R-T represents a process, strategy, and field through which gender concept innovation happens. The students "Accumulate" the knowledge of gender issues by reading to "Reflect" on their own gender consciousness and decide how to "Treat" biases with teaching materials. Each small unit in the "teaching" and "learning" process starts by viewing a work of art that exposes the unit topic. Most importantly, the choice of work has to meet the teaching goal. For example, the work of feminist artists and male masterpieces of western art history are criticized using a feminist perspective. Next, teachers guide students to reflect through asking questions, and the work's values are clarified through dialogue between the teacher and students. Finally, students express their ideas through the artistic creation of text or images to demonstrate the transformation of gender concepts. Teaching units and assessments of the curriculum program are as follows.

#### **Teaching Unit**

The curriculum program has four units (see Appendix 1). At first, the gender norms of traditional social culture are introduced, and then the limitations and breakthroughs of gender stereotypes in gender characteristics, family roles of housework, and career choice are discussed separately. Finally, students declare the meaning of gender equality; the teacher asks students to break through the limitations in life and treat others and themselves in an equitable way.

#### Unit 1: "The female voice under patriarchy!"

Using the painting *All things in their being are good for something* (1998) (see Figure 1), the teacher exposes that the tyrannical patriarchy brings pain to women, guides the class to examine the limitations and constraints of different genders in life, and encourages students to share personal experiences and feelings.

#### Unit 2: "Gender diversity"

The two paintings *Oath of the Horatii* (1784) and *And They Are Like Wild Beasts* (1863) (see Figures 2 and 3) are the media to reveal and examine gender stereotypes. Through the "change the label" activity of latter works, narrating the gender role pluralism of different tribes in New Guinea Island, and reading a news report of Jason Wu<sup>1</sup> the teacher leads students to eliminate the inappropriate concepts of gender roles.

#### Unit 3: "You are tired, mom!"

Through playing the song "My Wife" by Taiwanese singer Jody Chiang (2001), students examine traditional family gender roles and divisions of labor. Next, they recall one day's housework and understand the difficulty of different roles. This way, pupils can put themselves into their mother's shoes and know her great pressure and responsibility. Finally, through art making, students imagine women in different life situations to get rid of gender stereotypes and build a new image of gender roles. For example, take the family story of the famous director Ang Lee as a model to provide the husband and wife's interactive mode as an interpretation of gender equality.

#### Unit 4: "Happy male and restricted female at work"

Through the painting, *Nameless and Friendless* (1857) (see Figure 4), the teacher explains the discrimination and unequal treatment that female artists encounter in formative education, the

art trading market, and social circles that men dominate. In addition, students discuss the gender stereotypes hidden in workplace cultures and career choices.



*Figure 1. Shieh, J. (1998).* All Things In Their Being Are Good For Something [*Acrylic on paper*]. *Personal Collection, Hsinchu, Taiwan.* 



*Figure 3. y Lucientes, F. G. (1863).* The Disasters of War: And They Are Like Wild Beasts *[Etching]. The Norton Simon Foundation, Pasadena, CA.* 



*Figure 2. David, J.-L. (1784).* Oath of the Horatii [*Oil on canvas*]. *Louvre, Paris, France.* 



*Figure 4. Osborn, E. M. (1857).* Nameless and Friendless [*Oil on canvas*]. *Tate Collection, London, UK.* 

#### Assessments of the Curriculum

The assessments mentioned here refer to curriculum programs, teachers, and students. According to Stufflebeam's CIPP Evaluation Model, the researcher takes context, input, process, and product as the assessment process (Guo,1991). Firstly, the researcher evaluates students' characteristics (i.e., learning styles, personality traits, and family backgrounds), available resources, and teaching time ("context") to set goals, and uses Beattie's (1977) "bias checklist" (see Appendix 2) to determine how the possible curriculum will meet its goals ("input"). Secondly, the implemented curriculum uses classroom observation, question and answer, learning sheets, group activity sheets, art making, feedback sheets, and the teacher reflection note to obtain the required information ("process" and "product"). Finally, the researcher analyzes the collected information. During analysis, the researcher discusses results and interpretations with two coworkers and doctoral classmates to modify and assist the researcher in proposing objective results.

### **Results and Analysis**

Through the implementation of the gender equality curriculum, the researcher analyzed qualitative data related to fourth graders' gender consciousness and the transformation process of gender cognition. The researcher's teaching reflection and recommendation for further study are also included below.

#### **Gender Consciousness**

The results of this research indicate that the fourth graders' gender consciousness is rooted in patriarchal hegemony which has existed in their daily lives and has been passed down for generations in social culture.

#### "Strong men and charming women" is the enduring discipline

Students described the social education they received from their parents. Results show that girls are told to be elegant, clean and tidy, and obedient. There are even some instructions about sitting and eating postures. Boys seldom have similar expectations. Instead, they are taught to be strong and anti-feminine; things that are perceived to derogate their masculinity, such as crying and playing with dolls, are discouraged. Through the discussion, students found that females have far more rules and expectations than males do in a patriarchal society. Females, just like males, have the same ability in innovation. But they have to suppress their basic instincts and devalue their potential in mental development to try to achieve their goals under heavy restrictions (Wu, 2013).

#### Teasing men who express traditional femininity

A girl shared her personal experience when the teacher was teaching the unit: "the female voice under patriarchy." Her brother used to play with dolls in his childhood, but her father burned his hand with cigarette butts as punishment. He was teased and bullied because of his tender voice and traditionally feminine characteristics. Once she finished talking, the whole class burst into laughter; they thought it was absurd for boys to play with dolls. In the case above, we can tell that the father and most children regard anti-feminization as a male stereotype. Thus, the related extended curriculum to eliminate the ensuing gender discrimination is essential.

#### "Male breadwinner and female homemaker" is the mainstream discourse of family roles

Traditionally, it is assumed that women do housework, cook, raise and educate children, and look after their husbands and in-laws. Men have to carry the family on, get married, and work for money to support their families; otherwise, they would be teased for their weakness and for relying on women. However, some students mentioned their mothers go out to work, or their fathers cook meals and their cooking skills are better than their mothers'. "Male breadwinner and female homemaker" is not the absolute family pattern and is slowly loosening as society becomes more open-minded. As Butler said, "Gender is the modeling of reiteration" (as cited in Liu & You, 2012, p.113). It is unquestionable that the majority's restatement and imitation of social conventions will cause divergence within established norms. The majority not only accepts but also resists the call (Liu & You, 2012).

#### Career choice is influenced by gender characteristics

According to the discussion in class, students believe career choice is influenced by gender characteristics. Students think women are careful, so they are suitable for service jobs such as

bride secretary, waitress, teacher, and translator. On the contrary, men are brave and bold and have leadership skills and better physical fitness, so they are suitable for jobs like chairman, doctor, architect, policeman, fireman, and computer engineer. After the comparison, students found men's jobs have higher social status and salary. However, there are still some exceptions that contradict tradition.

#### Homosexuality is a mental disorder

In the teaching process, most students' reaction to homosexuality is of disgust. Although the gender equality policy declares that people with different genders and sexual orientations should be respected and accepted, adults that have great influence on children and mass media still interpret gender equality with a heterosexual perspective and limit gender equality to the binary interaction of men and women. Gay and transgender people do not really get equal treatment or the freedom and the right of love, so there is a gap in the implementation of policies and practices.

Teacher: Does homosexuality bother you? Student: Yes, I feel he / she is stupid. (OR4s2).

In brief, the patriarchal society is the culture that combines gender symbols such as words, signs, and postures with dominant notions that place men above women in the social hierarchy. However, it is fluid with the change of power structures. For example, parents' modeling, in a few students' cases, overturned the tradition in gender interaction, family role division, and career choices. The study shows that the patriarchal society may shape and be shaped, and we can feel free to break the rules to construct a new life (Cheng, Wang, You, Wu, & Chiu, 2008).

### The Cognitive Transformation Process of Gender Consciousness

Cognitive innovation can promote change. In the gender equality curriculum program, teachers guide students with empathy to let them feel the pain of gender stereotypes so they change their notions; we emphasize that gender is not absolute with "anti-cognitive cases;" furthermore, we break and reconstruct gender concepts to encourage students to emulate "role models." The following is the analysis of students' cognitive change after the gender equality curriculum implementation.

#### Gender Characteristics and Roles are Not Fixed or Static Cultural Norms

The teacher explained the diversified development of gender roles in different tribes of New Guinea Island. Students learned that the gender characteristics and roles of "strong men and charming women" and "male breadwinner and female homemaker" are not fixed ideas. The social culture in different times has had different appearances, which shows that gender roles are not a static cultural norm. For example, a girl of the Amis tribe mentioned that traditional Amis culture is matriarchal; everything is decided by the hostess. The strong women and the compliant men are commendable. Nowadays, it is common that men use make-up and dress nicely to look appealing. Mothers going out to work and fathers cooking at home is not big news. Through the interaction in the class, students agree that everyone needs to have many qualities to face various situations in life. Thus, there is no such thing as absolute female or male characteristics. Everyone can play his or her role well as long as he or she seriously gets involved.

## Boys Can Develop Interests, Learn to Take Care of Babies, and Release Emotions by Playing with Dolls

After the introduction of Jason Wu and a reading activity about him, only one of the 26 students still thinks it is absurd for boys to play with dolls and that it should be forbidden. Through class discussion, students believe playing with dolls can develop interests, teach boys to take care of babies, and release emotions. Playing with dolls shouldn't be restricted by gender stereotypes. Jason Wu's mother breaks through the limitation of gender stereotypes and bravely let him be himself and develop his potential with a respectful and tolerant attitude.

I think Jason Wu's mother is terrific. She is very open. She must go through a lot of ridicule, but she still supports her child to be himself bravely. I think we shouldn't be restricted by the tradition. We should learn the spirit of Jason Wu and his mother to encourage children to be themselves bravely (girl). (WS2s18)

#### Students Agree that Housework is Everyone's Job

In unit 3, "You are tired, mom," students recall a day of a mother's work and discuss moms' sacrifices. Students realize the conversion of roles of women: mothers, wives, and working women. Housework and taking care of children already consume moms' physical strength, so there is little time to develop their own interests or make friends; sometimes they could even be denied job promotions. Consequently, through the reflection of putting themselves in the same situation, students all agree that if they were mothers, they would wish to share the housework with each family member. Housework is everyone's job; if anyone has the time to do it, then he or she shall do it.

#### Gender Equality Creates the Maximum Win-Win

In unit 3, "You are tired, mom," students are divided into groups to examine the lyrics of "My Wife," a Taiwanese song, and discuss the traditional family role of women. Girls in four of the five groups take the comfortable ego<sup>2</sup> of women into consideration. They don't agree with the woman who works hard without complaining and gives everything for love; she works too hard and has no freedom and happiness. They think the family should work together to alleviate the heavy burden and distribute the housework according to their abilities and skills. Only one group takes the sacrifice of the superego<sup>3</sup> as the entry point. They praise that women are responsible for the family. However, gender roles are built on the basis of her being "willing to do anything" (see Table 2).

Through the story of Jane Lin and Ang Lee, we compared the division of traditional family roles. Students think the interaction between this couple is based on tolerance and consideration in supportive ways. They are not limited by the traditional gender roles. To create the greatest happiness, anyone can do the housework and support the other person to realize his or her dream. In short, the key to gender interaction is to guarantee the self-realization of the ego while at the same time look after the common interests of the superego. A harmonious and constructive relationship is not built on arguing over trivial things. To paraphrase Simon de Beauvoir, everyone should have freedom for himself, live his own life, and continue to surpass and promote his own ideas. Women's liberation needs men's awareness. Man and woman can establish the true "friendship" through approval, acceptance, and supporting each other to establish coexistence amid cooperative solidarity and friendship (Chiu, 1949/2013).

Group Question One: What kind of woman is in the lyrics of "My Wife?"

- (1) The woman who loves her husband.
- (2) The woman who is destined to be used.
- ( 3 ) The woman who doesn't dare to speak up and complain about anything.
- (4) The woman who always obeys her husband and doesn't fuss about anything.
- ( 5 ) The woman who is willing to do anything and never complains when she works.

Group Question Two: Do you agree with her role at home? Why?

- (1) Fifty percent. This is because she has fulfilled women's obligation, and men can also do it.
- (2) I do not agree. because men and women are equal, and housework should be shared by every member in the family.
- (3) I do not agree because she works too hard. She does everything for her man and doesn't dare to tell her man her voice and pain within.
- (4) I do not agree because she has to follow her husband and has no freedom and happiness.
- (5) I do not agree because she is too hard.

Group Question Three: From the perspective of gender equality, what do you think this identity should do?

- $\Box$  1  $\Box$  She is willing to do everything for the family her husband.
- $\Box$  2 $\Box$  Everyone's housework is divided according to his specialty.
- □ 3□ Two people work together and support mutually. It is fair to divide everyone's housework according to his specialty. It is wrong to add all works to the only one person.
- $\Box$  4  $\Box$  She should be very free and happy.
- 5 The whole family should work together, and doesn't make women work so hard. Besides, because of gender equality, each member of this family should share chores equally, or how is gender equality meaningful?

Table 2. Grouped Record Table of working sheet "My Wife"

#### Women can Positively Take the Initiative to Face Life's Experience

In teaching activity 3, "You are tired, mom," students imitate Sally's painting (see Figure 5); they recreate the female image and use collage, position change, and juxtaposition to make their own creation. Students need to imagine the possible situations that make women want to scream and come up with a line to give the woman a new image and get rid of gender stereotypes. Most students' works, obviously influenced by mass media or their peers, reproduce the plot of robbery, kidnapping, and domestic violence. Students regard men as perpetrators who use force against unarmed women with guns, knives, and the advantages of their physical agility; they even represent familiar cartoon characters as the protagonists (see Figures 6, 7, 9, 11, and 12). However, few students present their personal life experience or observations.



Figure 5. Mrs. Munch Bemoans, The Sauce Stains on the Wall (Swain, 1998).





Figure 6. boy s01

Figure 7. girl s23

Students spend most of their time at home and school. They can closely observe women around them. That is why they often chose home or their female relatives' workplaces as the background to their artwork in Teaching Activity 3. "The overload of housework," "the fear of intruding cockroaches and mice," and "the threat of criminal invasion" are three popular themes in students' artwork (see Table 3). In Figures 8, 9, and 10, women in the paintings can only scream for help and complain negatively when they encounter such situations. The woman in Figure 8 is in the left center of the picture. She utters a helpless sigh when facing a heavy load of housework, but she seems to cope with the aftermath obediently. The women in Figures 9 and 10 are in the corners of the pictures. They turn their backs to the situation, which reveals the atmosphere of escape and fear. "Ah" in Figure 9 expresses the fear in that moment. The title "Somebody, help?" in Figure 10 means she is waiting helplessly for others' assistance. All three works show women that lack the courage to face the problems positively and constructively. All students' paintings demonstrate gender stereotypes clearly, which totally contradicts the teaching goals. To address the issues, the teacher put students' paintings into the discussion. In Figures 8, 9, and 10, students agree that better titles could be "Clean up time, Everybody" or "Son, come and clean up," "Fire! Fire! Help!" or "Hide and take the opportunity to call 911," or "Where is the broom? I'll fight with you," respectively. Through class discussion, we finally shape the new image of women working independently and positively.



Figure 8. boys10 Why housework never ends?



Figure 9. Boys04 Ah!



Figure 10. Girls18 Somebody help!?

Торіс	Number of people
Heavy housework	5
Pests (rats and cockroaches) invasion	6
Break the vase	1
The knife cuts the hand	1
The kitchen catches fire	1
Encounter the exhibitionist	1
Domestic violence	1
Criminal's intrusions	6
Kidnap	2
There are ghosts at home	1
The reflection of the married woman who takes husband's last name	1

Table 3. The Theme List of Students' Pastiches

In this unit, only two paintings show the new image of an independent and thoughtful female. The painting of s19 shows a calm and cool woman facing sexual harassment (Figure 12). The student describes her own experience in running into a sneaky high school boy who tried to take photos with a hidden camera in the toilet of a fast-food restaurant. She told her mother and caught this high school boy with the help of the manager. She takes the similar theme to convey her voice within: "Girls are not weak and cannot be bullied easily." Her experience gives others a valuable gender lesson.

The work of s16 suggests that a woman's original family name will be forgotten eventually once she is married. She adds her husband's family name to hers, which becomes the reflection of her own identity (Figure 13). The woman in the center of the painting declares the intention of her right to speak. The researcher was surprised by the mature thinking of a fourth-grade girl. When asked privately, the researcher found that the interaction of her parents does not align with the common stereotypes. Although her parents work in the same company, her mother often works overtime, and her father often does the housework and takes care of children. That is why she always has different and sharp reactions to the questions this curriculum program presents.

In short, gender is a kind of imitation and learning. The important adults in family, school, society, and mass media all have a subtle influence on children's gender concepts. Through the creation of paintings and texts, girls learn the solutions to different problems, and boys get the picture that "obedience" and "fate" are not women's only options.



Figure 11. boy s02 Don't hit me.



Figure 12. girl s19 Don't think girls are weak.



Figure 13. girls16 Who am I?

## Choose a Career Based on Interest and Ability to Get Rid of the Influence of Gender Stereotypes

In unit 4, "Happy Male and Restricted Female at Work," through the introduction and discussion of the painting *Nameless and Friendless*, students realize that gender stereotypes restrain our job selection, salary, and success. Through the anti-cognitive case, such as Yan Ji Zheng who is a well-known chef, Cher Wang who is the CEO of HTC, and Jason Wu of fashion, students agree that professional success has nothing to do with gender. One's interest and ability should be the priority in choosing careers; one can enjoy working by working hard.

Why girls can't but boys can? Boys can't do the things that girls can do. Why are we restricted by gender stereotypes? Boys and girls should not be restricted; they should feel free to develop themselves. Develop the potential according to their expertise. Choose a different road to complete their dream (boy). (WS2s1)

The curriculum is a platform for the dialogue between the teacher and students to reveal the operation of gender stereotypes inlaid in visual culture. Gender concepts are questioned and subverted through language, text, and visual art activities.

### The Findings of Curriculum Implementation

We can assess the virtues and weaknesses and derive inspiration from the curriculum after it has been implemented. Details of each point are as follows.

#### Gender Consciousness Decides the Different Perspectives Between Boys and Girls

Most boys don't think they encounter inappropriate treatment because of their gender. The reason is obvious; beneficiaries will be unlikely to question what they get. Those whose rights are decreased and deprived will express the injustice. That is why girls are more able to cite their own personal experiences to illustrate their suffering from unequal treatment due to gender stereotypes.

## Boys Tend to Violate the Classroom Rules More than Girls Due to Adults' Discipline of Different Genders

In unit 2, "gender diversity," the teacher mentions the difference between gender bias and gender discrimination. A boy immediately mentions that boys suffer from gender discrimination because girls get better treatment from the teacher. Yet, a girl fights back at once. She says that boys get more punishment because they are naughty. The teacher explains the influence of gender stereotypes after that. Parents teach girls to be gentle and obedient; they think boys are born to be naughty and active and allow them to be that way, which is why boys break the rules in class more often than girls do.

A student: Teacher, I think boys suffer from gender discrimination. Teacher: Why do you think so? A student: Because teacher treats girls better than boys. We boys are often get punished. B student: That is because boys don't follow the rules. (OR2s16)

## Students Eliminate Gender Stereotypes in the Syntax of Question, Comparison, and Female Self-Identity

In unit 2, "gender diversity," students compare the difference of a woman's image in two similar paintings, *Oath of the Horatii* and *And They Are Like Wild Beasts*. Are gender stereotypes hidden in these two paintings? In the former, students can easily tell that the woman is portrayed as weak, helpless, hopeless, and sad, and she can do nothing but pray for men who go to war. Students can't see any gender stereotypes in the latter painting. The teacher suggests that the problem might be the name of the painting. The students get the picture immediately. The women defend their lives, property, and lovers. The image is different from the disciplined women who are weak and obedient. The title of the painting is comparing those women to beasts, which is some kind of stereotypes. Later on, students are told to rename the painting to eliminate the hidden gender stereotypes. Students use the sequence of question, comparison, and female self-identity to express their reflection (see Table 4). "Question" is the women's soft protest to the community. "Comparison" is used to prove women's value by comparing their roles with men's. Both regard man as the model and the benchmark. However, "female self-identity" approves that a woman is an independent person and is capable of protecting her homeland.

Table 4. The list of changing the label of the painting And They Are Like Wild Beasts

## The Concept of Gender Equality can be Formed in Repeated Drills in Life so as to Resist the Old Thinking and our Physical Inertia

In the process of the curriculum, group criticism prompts students to have a sharp observation of gender stereotypes. At the end of the curriculum, the new atmosphere disappears; students' actions return to the previous patterns. For example, one week after the program, a student writes in a Mandarin assignment, "I have a sudden whim to help my mother do housework." Students do not recognize the implicit gender stereotypes in this sentence until teacher reminds them. Therefore, the innovation of gender concepts needs constant drilling in daily life. Only when students internalize gender concepts as a habit can we implement gender equality.

# Encourage Female Students to Share their Experiences and Ideas Through "Affirmative Discrimination"

It is important to praise girls when they get involved in discussion and present their perspectives. Limit the times each student may speak and include a roll call to encourage female students to share their gender experiences and propose their critical views of traditional gender settings and interactions.

#### Set up the Rules in Advance to Prevent Stratification in Group Discussion and Reporting

According to the literature review, hierarchy does exist in school cooperative activities. It is very common that boys report and girls record. Thus, it is important to set up new rules. For example, the reporter or recorder can get bonus points, and the recorder does not have to be a girl with nice handwriting. Then, there will be boys who volunteer to be the recorder to strive for bonus points. Female students can dominate the discussion and reporting or be the recorder alternately. That way, there is no more hierarchy.

#### Students' Affirmation of the Curriculum Prompts their Change in Concepts and Actions

It shows on students' feedback sheets that they have a positive experience with the curriculum. Students state their changed perspectives on gender stereotypes in gender characteristics, family roles and division of labor, and career choices.

Boys are not necessarily stronger than girls, and girls can protect boys. Women can go to work, and men can do housework at home (FSs1).

Men and women can both be breadwinners; boys and girls can both play with dolls (FS4s15).

Boys and girls can choose work according to their own interests or preferences (FS4s8).

As for specific actions to break through gender stereotypes, they think they can do things they want and be themselves. Additionally, they can introduce the concept of gender equality to other people and help them achieve their dreams.

I can introduce gender equality to a friend who is a teacher (FS4s5).

I want to do things that only boys do. I will not laugh at my brother but comfort him when he cries (FSs16).

Now I've realized men and women are equal. As long as I recall, I will feel the great sense of justice. I can help to try to assist those who are excluded. I really appreciate the teacher preparing for this lesson. It makes me feel like a superwoman in my life (FSs19).

I want to encourage people to do what they want and develop their own expertise (FS4s25).

# The Curriculum Prompts Positive Gender Interaction; Both the Teacher and Students Benefit from Teaching and Learning

Students' active participation in class means they like the curriculum. It helps them change their interaction with the opposite sex. Moreover, they also learn how to appreciate artwork. On the feedback sheet, students suggest that the teacher provide better artwork and more relevant curricula. From students' constructive suggestions, both the teacher and the students learn a lot.

Thanks to this lesson, some boys will no longer laugh at us (FS4s16).

I will take a deep breath when a girl beats me, and I will be tender toward girls (FS4s12).

I suggest that we can have more lessons like this; everyone listens to you attentively. Besides, we accomplished your request and tried our best to do the painting. We also express our opinions positively. Teacher, could you give us more lessons? I realized that to appreciate a painting, we must read the text below, and then look at the painting above. In this way, we can realize the author's feeling. If I went to the art museum, I would explain to people, like a tour guide (FS4s19).

Teacher, this lesson is a good experience to me. Next time, I hope you can use some cooler, more dazzling paintings and good quality pictures (FS4s3).

Through the heart-to-heart dialogue between teacher and students, the participants' behaviors are changed. However, it will not root in their minds without constant practice.

#### **Reflection and Future Recommendations**

A curriculum will not be perfect without practice and revision; the teacher's introspection is part of it. The following are the reflections and personal experiences of the researcher who is also the instructor of this gender equality curriculum.

# Gender Equality Curriculum Should Teach Boys to Have Empathy for People with Different Genders and Sexual Orientations

The researcher works in the elementary school where female teachers are the majority. Through the close observation of the "other," as Beauvoir (1949/2013) named, the researcher thinks they choose what benefits them by swinging between male hegemony and gender equality. The researcher realizes their situation and their grievance, so he wants to change it. Furthermore, the researcher agrees with the scholar Wu's (2013) gender affinity and the notion that gender negotiation can establish the bridge of "feeling for others" and the platform of "putting oneself in others' positions" for both sexes. Gender equality should activate men who have the authority in education. Educators should take care of the girls' needs, deconstruct boys' inappropriate gender concepts to awaken their empathy for people with different genders and sexual orientations, and encourage them to interact with those people with a more appropriate attitude.

# Students Exercise the Gender Negotiation Skills by Imitating the Situation of Gender Interaction in Daily Life

Gender is evidenced in the interactions between people. The equal and harmonious correspondence depends on effective negotiation skills through learning. Therefore, we only focus on the criticism and correction of gender cognition and concepts in this program. It fails to transform their daily lives because there is only the enlightenment of "knowing" and not the exercise of "doing." One cannot drive if one just memorizes instructions and has no actual driving experiences. So, the ideal gender equality curriculum program has not only the criticism and reflection of values, but also the gender interaction situations of real life. Questions like "What choices and situations do career women have: family or work?"; "Whose last name should be given to the child?"; "How to plan and arrange the living space in a family?" can be talked about in group discussion. Students can practice and imitate the skills of gender negotiation through

dynamic activities like role-playing. A stronger curriculum should the body as the practice field to release the configuration engraved and shaped by society and culture. Through experience and external action, students can link their internal gender awareness to create new meaning and transform their lifestyles.

#### Adjust Assessment According to Individual Differences

The visual art curriculum can be converted easily to implement gender equality education, but individual differences affect the outcomes of the curriculum. To achieve the teaching goals, the teacher should revise and extend the content constantly which makes it difficult to finish the program as planned, especially in art creation. Students need more time to meditate, implement, and express themselves in art creation. That is why the teacher needs to adjust the assessment according to students' abilities. For example, construct a more flexible way to balance the time and content; role-playing, taking photos, written reports, and oral reports are some convenient forms to assess students. Additionally, "questions and answers" with interesting and challenging advertisements or films as the summative assessment can be an effective assessment tool.

## Conclusions

Gender stereotypes are reflected in visual culture products to reproduce the value and belief of patriarchy. We are involved in the patriarchy that shapes and influences our lives. However, at the same time, we also have the right and ability to change it and educate the future generations. The teachers, parents, and other important persons in children's growing processes should always make themselves a model and urge children to link their gender cognition with bodily experience to internalize it as a living habit. The body is the gender field of sociocultural inscription and formation. By liberating words and deeds, the patriarchal society could be broken. Gender is the social interaction which includes man and woman, the other and me, and the group and the individual in different fields and situations. The equal relation involves the communication and negotiation of labor, authority, and rights. The content of a gender equality curriculum should cover the reconstruction of static gender concepts to evoke everyone's empathy for any gender or sexual orientation. In this way, people treat others like themselves. At last, we expect each one to become the knower and collaborator of gender equality and put it into practice. In addition, the real situations related to gender issues should be discussed. Let students role-play to dynamically perform gender negotiation for creating a win-win situation.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Jason Wu, a Taiwanese-Canadian fashion designer, is best known for designing the dresses of Michelle Obama on several occasions.
- 2 Ego: your idea or opinion of yourself, especially your feeling of your own importance and ability ("Ego," 2021).
- 3 Superego: the part of your mind that knows what is right and what is wrong, and causes you to feel guilty when you do something wrong ("Superego," 2021).

Unit	Class	Teaching goal	Learning activity	Teaching resource	Assessment
The female voice under patriarchy	1	<ul> <li>Understand women's situation under the traditional gender discipline.</li> <li>Realize the meaning of gender stereotypes</li> <li>State the opinion and feeling of gender discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Examine and discuss the painting, All things in their being are good for something.</li> <li>Share the feeling and experience of gender stereotypes.</li> </ul>	PowerPoint	The observation and records of teacher
Gender diversity	2	<ul> <li>Detect gender characteristics and stereotypes hidden in artwork.</li> <li>Criticize gender stereotypes.</li> <li>Realize the diversity of gender roles.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Examine and discuss the painting, Oath of the Horatii.</li> <li>Compare the differences between And They Are Like Wild Beasts and Oath of the Horatii.</li> <li>Change the label of the painting And They Are Like Wild Beasts in pairs.</li> <li>Introduce examples of some atypical gender roles and read the news of Jason Wu.</li> </ul>	PowerPoint, note paper, working sheet of reading	The observation and records of teacher, note paper recorded in changing the label, working sheet of reading
You are tired, mom!	7	<ul> <li>Detect family structure stereotypes hidden in a pop song.</li> <li>Criticize traditional gender roles and division of labor in family.</li> <li>Reflect how gender equality is implemented in the family.</li> <li>Give the women in the family a new image of self- confidence and independence through art making.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Listen to Taiwanese song, "My Wife" and discuss the family gender roles and division of labor in the lyrics.</li> <li>Discuss the hardships of women's different roles in the family and workplace and reflect on a solution.</li> <li>Imitate Sally's work.</li> <li>Appreciate and discuss the students' works together.</li> <li>Listen to Ang Lee 's family story and discuss the different interpretation of his family role and division of labor.</li> </ul>	PowerPoint, working sheet of "My Wife," Sally's work copy	The observation and records of teacher, working sheet of "My Wife," students' works
Happy male and restricted female at work	2	<ul> <li>Detect the discrimination and unequal treatment in the workplace of women in artwork.</li> <li>Criticize gender stereotypes in career choice and workplace.</li> <li>Realize individuals should choose careers based on their interests and abilities.</li> <li>Reflect on the definition and implementation of gender equality in life.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Watch and discuss how the limit of gender stereotypes in career choice and workplace is eliminated.</li> <li>Discuss the definition and implementation of gender equality in life.</li> <li>Complete the curriculum feedback sheet.</li> </ul>	PowerPoint, feedback sheet	The observation and records of teacher, feedback sheet

# Appendix 1. Gender Stereotypes A-R-T Curriculum Framework Table

# Appendix 2. Checklist of Possible Bias Sources

	Did I Consider Comments
1.	The mean differences of particular groups (e.g., ethnicity, gender) in other assessment tasks similar to this one? Have all groups been given the same opportunities to perform this type of task?
	If some group has an average score much lower than the average score of other groups, then the assessment may have a <b>bias of mean differences</b> .
2.	The constructs (educational or psychological attributes, traits or mental processes) undergirding a task? Are all required skills and knowledge in the task relevant for intended assessment use and score interpretation?
a.	The internal task structure? Is a part of the task or task exercise unfair for some students? If constructs embedded in a task do not fit the intended use of the assessment and internal task structure or exercises are unfair for some students, then the assessment is said to have a <b>construct bias</b> .
3.	The content and format of the task? Are they appropriate for assessment use and interpretation of outcomes?
a.	sexist content? Are language and images relating to the task sexist in nature?
b.	racial content? Are language and images relating to the task racial in nature? Sexist and racist content create a <b>facial bias</b>
C.	<ul> <li>The differences in experience of students? Are some students' life experiences likely to cause them to perform poorly on the task?</li> <li>A content and experience bias occurs when some groups' life experiences differ vastly and not taken into consideration when creating the task and interpreting the results.</li> </ul>
4.	The administration of task? Are administration procedures equal (standardized) for all students? Are task directive equal for all groups?
a.	How facilitator and students will be prepared for administering the task ?
b.	How students will be monitored during the task
c.	How administration of task will affect the performance of students particular groups of students? An <b>administration bias</b> occurs when standardization procedures are not set or followed precisely. Student should know that they will be assessed, on what they will be assessment, reasons for the assessment, and how results will be used.
5.	If scoring of task is objective enough? Is it too subjective? A wrong or insufficient scoring method can create a scoring bias.
a.	If score interpretation might go beyond what task content actually supports? Interpretation of scores needs to be in line with what can be inferred from task content. If too much is inferred, or too little, then <b>a misinterpretation score bias</b> occurs.

# Section IV Shifting Practices in a Globalized World



This section is a collection of papers to investigate social and cultural challenges and issues on local art education practices under the influence of globalization. Authors explore the adaptation of non-native cultures and emerging aesthetical and cultural issues related to globalization. Engaging the readers with critical discussion of shifting art education practices, the authors will also discuss art educators' responses to traditional and hybrid forms of art and media practices in their art curriculum and community settings.



# Arts Belong in the Classroom: Empowering Teachers in Arts-Based Learning

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**Abstract:** Learning in and through the arts is central to fostering young learners' creativity. This article explores the perceived barriers to quality arts-based learning for children and potential strategies for overcoming them. It describes an action research collaboration with two Queensland based early years educators and explores how this collaboration facilitated changes to their arts based pedagogical approaches. We argue that with sufficient support, educators can act as change agents by leading arts-based learning in a manner that promotes creativity.

Keywords: Action research, art-based learning, arts, Australian Curriculum, early years, primary education, Queensland, teaching

#### Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that modern students need to develop skills associated with critical and creative thinking if they are to thrive in the contemporary world (Henriksen, Mishra, & Fisser, 2016; Tan, 2015). Indeed, creativity is so important a catalyst for breakthroughs in technology and science (Tan, 2015) that *The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, which underpins the Australian curriculum, recognized its importance as comparable to communication and collaboration skills (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2008).

Beyond its importance in technology and science, creativity has a historic and enduring relationship to the arts. The *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* acknowledges that "The Arts have the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich all students, exciting the imagination and encouraging them to reach their creative and expressive potential" (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2014, para. 1). Despite this curriculum recognition, classroom practice may not reflect this vision of the arts as an outlet and catalyst for creativity (Russell-Bowie, 2011). The practices and processes of symbolic creativity and the very idea of "the arts" have discursive effects on people's actions and positions (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013). In other words, educators' perceptions of the arts influence how they enact the arts within their classrooms and the possibilities they see for arts-based learning.

This article explores perceptions of the constraints and barriers to quality arts learnings for children in the Preparatory year (also known as Prep), the first year of formal schooling in Queensland. It also offers an example for how teachers might be empowered to implement artsbased learning. The article begins by defining arts-based learning and identifying the extant issues in the literature about creativity and arts-based education in Australia. This then informs an exploration of the first author's action research collaboration with two Queensland educators and its role in facilitating positive arts-focused changes in their pedagogical approaches. This article argues that with sufficient support, educators can act as change agents by leading arts-based learning in a manner that promotes creativity.

#### **Contextualizing arts-based learning**

The term "arts-based learning" encompasses learning that occurs both in the arts and through the arts. We offer this necessarily broad definition because *The Arts* is conceptualized as a rich and dynamic learning area in the *Australian Curriculum*. It brings together five subjects – dance, drama, media arts, music, and visual arts – which are each "unique, with [their] own discrete knowledge, symbols, language, processes and skills" (ACARA, 2011, p. 5). At the same time, there is connectivity or "interplay" between various art forms (p. 26) as well as "connections to other learning areas within the curriculum" (p. 19). In particular, *The Arts* has a direct relationship with English, Geography, History, Mathematics, and Science, and it can "provide a range of pedagogies for use across learning areas in the curriculum" (ACARA, 2013, p. 26). Thus, arts-based learning is synonymous with arts integration across the curriculum, but it does not exclude the learning of art for art's sake.

While the necessity and value of arts education appears in the educational policies of many countries, this is not always reflected in the opportunities that are provided for implementation in classrooms (Bamford, 2006). There is evidence that this is an international trend (e.g., Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010; Lohmander & Samuelsson, 2015; Phillips, Gorton, Pinciotti, & Sachdev, 2010; Rasmussen, 2017), to which Australia is not immune. As Russell-Bowie (2011) points out, arts education policies in Australian states do not always reflect actual classroom practices despite research, recommendations, and the very comprehensive curricular guidelines. These inconsistencies are exacerbated by the organization of the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* which divides this learning area into five separate but related subjects or strands (ACARA, 2014). While inclusion of the arts as a learning area is a significant step forward (Dinham, 2013), there is some concern that the grouping of the five strands into one learning area has unintentionally contributed to the downgrading of the individual disciplines of the arts, leading to inconsistencies in terms of equity for each discipline (Roy, Baker, & Hamilton, 2015).

Proponents of the arts such as Jeanneret (2006, 2011), Eisner (1998, 2002, 2004) and Robinson (2011) argue that arts learning from a very young age develops creative, innovative, and imaginative thinkers. Creative arts-based learning experiences are particularly effective in the early years when children are exploring and making sense of the world (Ewing, 2011; Garvis, 2012; Wright, 2002). They can encourage life-long creativity and support cognitive development (Ganis & Paterson, 2011; Gelineau, 2012). The many benefits of the arts in education include the improvement of intercultural understanding (Magsamen & Battro, 2011), raising awareness of the natural environment and sustainability (Ward, 2013), and improved student attendance, engagement, and academic achievement (Vaughan, Harris, & Caldwell, 2011). Quality arts programs can also enhance children's literacy and numeracy capabilities and the key competencies of language, symbols, and text (Barrett, Everett, & Smigiel, 2012; Hallam, 2010; Hunter, 2005; Roy et al., 2015). When children are introduced to literacy and the variety of ways available to express and communicate meaning, educators can support their understandings with the knowledge, skills, and symbols of the different languages of the art forms (Ewing, 2011; Gelineau, 2012; Huber, Dinham, & Chalk, 2015).

However, in order to deliver arts-based learning, educators need to have a well-defined philosophy or vision of the arts as essential to children's well-being and growth. Classroom arts practices often relate to the individual teacher's values and their own educational experiences and exposure to the arts (Alter, Hays, & O'Hara, 2009). An inadequate knowledge base or weakly articulated theoretical foundation in the arts can result in a lack of confidence and a subsequent limited focus on arts-based learning (Garvis, 2012; Klopper & Power, 2010; Ryan & Goffin, 2008). Teacher education programs in Australia, both pre-service and professional in-service, may not sufficiently support the development of pedagogical arts education, knowledge, skills, and attitudes due to a lack of allocated quality time for learning and resources (Barton, Baguley, & MacDonald, 2013; Russell-Bowie, 2011). There is also concern that the conceptualization of arts-based learning for the early years needs more clarity "derived from research and embedded in practice" (Nutbrown, 2013, p. 259).

Practical considerations for the delivery of quality arts-based learning also need to be considered. As a result of the "crowded curriculum," a term that refers to the much larger volume of teaching devoted to prioritized learning areas such as literacy, numeracy, and science, teachers often cite lack of sufficient time as a barrier to effective arts exploration (Ewing, 2012; Garvis & Pendergast,

2012; Klopper & Power, 2010; Wiggins & Wiggins, 2008). For example, a survey of early childhood novice teachers in Queensland schools undertaken by Garvis (2013) confirmed the negative profile and lack of time devoted to arts education. Another survey by Garvis (2012) found that while children in kindergartens were exposed to an arts-rich environment on a daily basis, children in preparatory classrooms only accessed a weekly music lesson and some visual arts activities. This reinforced the perception that formal schooling, with its emphasis on performance, mandated curriculum content, and required assessment outcomes, is eroding quality arts education and other pedagogical approaches such as play-based learning (Chapman, 2015; Fleer, 2011; Garvis & Pendergast, 2011; Thomas, Warren, & deVries, 2011). Some studies have reported the positive effects of supporting pre-service and in-service teachers with integrating arts into their pedagogical approach, such as Ward (2014), who presented a successful collaboration between a researcher and preschool educators to generate arts-based experiences for researching the natural environment. Further research in this area would prove valuable.

The literature consistently establishes that arts are essential to fostering creativity in learners, and a quality arts program can develop skills and understandings in other learning areas of the curriculum. The arts are entrenched as a learning area in the Australian Curriculum, but as Klopper and Power (2010) noted, there is limited research into how the curriculum transfers to arts education practices in classrooms. Moreover, the literature has acknowledged that teacher dispositions, content knowledge, and implementation of the arts strands could be improved with additional professional development and support, but examples for what this might look like in the contemporary Australian classroom are limited. This article seeks to respond to the dearth of research in this area.

## The Process of Change

In late 2015, a 12-week cycle of action research was initiated by the first author. Action research, according to Mac Naughton and Hughes (2008), is a practice-oriented method of research that aims to transform and improve participant practices through four key phases: choosing to change, planning for change, creating change, and sharing the lessons of change. Action research can improve practice and introduce change through the creation of new knowledge and understandings. It can also change educators' thought processes as they question and investigate what they know and do (Mac Naughton & Hughes, 2008; Wiersma & Jurs, 2005). A course of action research is to resolve a problem, and thereby develop and improve practices involving collaboration (Mac Naughton & Hughes, 2008). The first author (hereafter, "the researcher") approached two Preparatory (Prep) teachers who wanted to develop and share arts-based practices in their respective classrooms. Both teachers were experienced early childhood teachers with one (Susan) based in a Brisbane metropolitan state school and the other (Brooke) based in a state school in a regional center of Queensland. Both teachers' schools employed full-time music specialists. At Susan's school, a dance teacher was employed to implement a dance program from Years 1 to 6 with the Prep Year not included. Brooke's school employed no other specialists. (Note: Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of the participants.)

The action research proceeded in several phases. The initial step in the "choosing to change" phase (two weeks) was framed by a questionnaire which prompted the educators to interrogate their daily practices in the arts strands, how the arts supported other key learning areas, and the possibilities of making changes to their programs that would support the aims of the Australian

Curriculum through the development of creativity, arts knowledge, skills, and practices. In follow-up phone conversations, participants discussed and expanded on questionnaire responses.

In the "planning for change" phase (one week), the researcher provided the teachers with accessible professional literature to help them develop their knowledge about integrating creative arts activities into key learning areas. The literature was conceptually accessible, contemporary, and locally relevant, and presented practical applications of the arts strands with suggestions about the implementation of creative arts activities for drama (Carthew, 2010), music and literacy integration (Niland, 2007), and visual/media arts (Terreni, 2010).

In the "creating change" phase (two weeks), the teachers shared with the researcher the set assessment tasks for literacy, numeracy, and science; then together, they collaborated on ways in which arts activities could be integrated into children's learning for those assessments. They created a plan with sets of activities linking dance with science, music and drama with English, and visual and media arts with mathematics in a manner informed by the researcher's belief in the importance of maintaining the integrity of each of the individual arts strands. The co-constructed units of work included activities that offered a variety of inter-connected challenges through which the children could apply arts concepts and learnings to other subjects (Dinham, 2013). The activities were designed for repeated implementation during seven weeks of the term, and they could be adjusted to suit the needs of the children. In the "sharing the lessons of change" phase, the teachers reflected on their experiences with this cycle of action research through semi-structured phone interviews with the researcher.

## Arts-Based Learning: What is being done? What can be done?

#### Gaps in Professional Knowledge

From the collected data, it was evident that there were gaps in the teachers' professional knowledge about the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts*. For example, neither of the teachers was aware of the link between the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* and the *Early Years Learning Framework* in the Prep year, despite the curriculum stating that:

In Foundation to Year 2, learning in The Arts builds on the Early Years Learning Framework. Students are engaged through purposeful and creative play in structured activities, fostering a strong sense of wellbeing and developing their connection with and contribution to the world. (ACARA, 2015)

In addition, in terms of the media arts, neither teacher knew that it was a strand of *The Arts* learning area, with both expressing uncertainty about what exactly "media arts" was. Susan related it to the use of computers in the classroom, and Brooke similarly noted, "My class goes to the school's computer lab for an hour every week, and after completing a basic task, the children can sometimes use programs that incorporate painting and drawing." To encourage a stronger understanding of the role of media arts, the researcher included Terrini (2010) in the collection of professional articles for the next phase of the research. This article offered recommendations for the use of interactive whiteboards (which both teachers had in their classrooms) for art-making processes in visual media and computer-generated imagery.

#### Lack of Time

Curricular and other constraints featured heavily in the teachers' responses. For example, when asked whether the structure, framework, and learning experiences for children in their own Prep classrooms provided opportunities for "engagement, enrichment and inspiration" as suggested in the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* rationale, teacher responses were consistent:

*Susan:* As a trained early childhood teacher I am aware that I am not doing nearly enough to support the children with arts activities. I find that just getting through the day with 28 children (six of whom have English as their second language and are fairly new arrivals to Australia, another five who have specific learning and behavior difficulties and one visually impaired child) is problematic!

*Brooke:* There's little time available to provide arts experiences and opportunities due to the constant demands of our literacy and numeracy programs and the need to accomplish assessment tasks.

When they estimated the typical amount of time spent on arts-related activities in a week, both teachers indicated that they allotted more time for music and visual arts activities than for drama and dance. Media arts, interpreted narrowly by the teachers, were taught less than half a day per week for Brooke, while Susan did not teach media arts at all.

Still, the teachers attempted to implement the arts strands in a number of ways. Both teachers reported that they used songs and music to effect transition changes in classroom routines, for example, greeting in the morning and changeovers between literacy and numeracy tasks. Visual art activities such as painting, drawing, and coloring were also often incorporated with literacy activities such as coloring in templates of alphabet letters and drawing pictures to match initial letters. Dance was encouraged in the form of circle songs or action songs, while drama and role-plays were sometimes used for storytelling. However, both teachers indicated that the limited class space was prohibitive to creating spaces for creativity and for storing costumes, props, and the like.

#### Lack of Support and Professional Development Opportunities

Both teachers expressed strong concerns that other curriculum areas had precedence over arts learning, as well as concerns about negative perceptions towards arts-based learning, as described in this incident:

*Susan:* I was trying to do a drama activity one day using fairy tale characters and a member of the administration team stopped at the doorway commenting, "So, we're playing today, are we? Hope you've got all your work done!" I felt so frustrated!

Despite the perceived lack of institutional support, both teachers seemed enthusiastic when asked about their attitudes toward planning a unit of work based on arts-learning. Susan said, "I would love to do that, and I know the children would enjoy it also, *but* we would have to plan it around the assessment tasks required for reporting at the end of Term 4." This same concern was raised by Brooke: "Planning would have to support the assessment tasks though as there is no time to add anything else that is different to the day."

Both teachers saw professional development opportunities and support as a means of ensuring that arts learning in the Prep year was authentic. Susan stated that the institutional demands requiring the "differentiating [of] programs for every child, collecting data of children's progress on a regular basis, [and] homework tasks for every child" consumed considerable time and effort. She said, "If only we had an Arts coach the way schools have literacy and numeracy coaches – it would be so much easier for planning and implementation." In the follow-up telephone conversation, she raised the issue of a specialist coach again:

*Susan:* How good would that be! My teacher training at [university] in early childhood covered a lot of arts and play-based activities, and I still think that was the most help I have ever received apart from a music teacher once who did try to integrate her program to support what I was doing in the classroom. To have someone to go to for help with planning the units around the arts would be great. I feel I could implement the strands if someone was around to assist. There is no time really for me to sit down with the five arts strands and work out a program of different arts activities for the class. I don't really know how to implement dance or drama activities either, so help in those areas would be useful. I need more information about media arts. It's not mentioned in our school at all.

*Brooke:* It'd be wonderful to have an arts coach as well as a literacy and numeracy coach. Maybe schools could share a person? Just to get support in how to integrate the different arts subjects with what I have to do in literacy and numeracy would be helpful ... Planning activities for music and art, dance and drama, would be so time consuming and there just isn't time because of the demands of the department and admin.

Both teachers indicated that they did not collaboratively plan with the specialist teachers at their schools. Instead, Brooke relied on her teacher aide, who played guitar and led singing in the mornings.

The professional literature shared with the teachers by the researcher improved their efficacy with regard to the creation of arts-rich learning activities integrated with English, Mathematics, and Science. One successful outcome of this collaboration was the integration of dance, where children would explore movement through space, with a science unit which investigated the way in which different objects and living things move. Another example was the combination of visual and media arts with mathematics to consolidate number names, numerals, and quantities.

#### **Challenges with Evaluating Success**

After implementing the planned units, the teachers' reflections reported varying degrees of success. For example, Susan reflected:

The music, drama, and English integration has probably worked the best for me. The children with English as a second language have really enjoyed these activities. I guess they don't feel as threatened because they can't do something. Dance has been problematic because of the number of children and their behaviors. We went to the hall one day, but the boys were very silly, and it was difficult without someone else there to support me. We've tried different body movements in the room though – just

sitting at desks and they seemed to like doing that and thinking about the way body parts can move. It definitely supports the science assessment task.

Brooke reported more success, which reflected her perception that implementing the unit was easier than she had anticipated. She attributed this success to the fact that the activities were quite specific in terms of what the children were required to do. She stated, "The ideas for numbers and visual and media arts are working well. I hope it shows up in the results of the assessments, but it's certainly made a change and given me some extra ideas." Brooke had passed the other Prep teachers at her school copies of the co-constructed plans at their request, but she did not seem optimistic that integrating arts-based learning would continue because "it's so hard to fit in the extra planning that it involves." To the teachers, therefore, it was difficult to evaluate the success of the collaborative adjustments toward arts-based learning

## **Exploring the Way Forward**

Our research confirms findings from previous studies (Garvis & Pendergast, 2011; Ryan & Goffin, 2008) particularly with regard to the gaps in educators' understanding of the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* content, the perceived constraints that impact the delivery of arts-based learning, and the need for professional support for educators. In particular, the data revealed that even in the current educational climate where systemic demands and expectations can feel oppressive, teachers still possess a degree of agency that can be mobilized for the effective delivery of arts-based learning activities.

Despite being very experienced, the two Prep teachers in the study were unfamiliar with the both the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* and the meaning and relevance of media arts. The inadequate subject content knowledge of teachers was also reported by Garvis and Pendergast (2011) and Ryan and Goffin (2008). The gaps in educator knowledge may explain why they perceived their activities to be diverse fragments of learning experiences rather than making meaningful connections for students through and about the arts (Bain, Newton, Kuster, & Milbrandt, 2010). Both of the teachers in this study were generalist Prep teachers and not specialist art teachers, so not only did they lack an overview of *The Arts* learning area, but it can be further inferred that they lacked an overview of how *The Arts* could be taught across the curriculum. This is a concern because it connects to how Arts is positioned and prioritized (or not) within the curriculum, particularly for early years learners.

Existing pressures already impinge on the quality and quantity of arts-based learning. For instance, both teachers raised concerns about curriculum and time constraints, concerns which are not new (e.g., Garvis & Pendergast, 2012). Our results are consistent with Garvis and Pendergast (2011), who also identified teacher perceptions that arts education received less priority in the curriculum than the learning areas of literacy, mathematics, and science. The lack of time was also cited by Garvis (2012) and Klopper and Power (2010). However, there is a degree of passivity evident in our teacher responses that suggested that they had resigned themselves to having limited agency in their classrooms and felt too disempowered to act otherwise. These limitations, coupled with an uneven understanding about the five arts strands, meant that both teachers allocated more time to teaching the strands they were familiar with (music and visual arts), less time with strands that were more demanding of time or space (drama and dance), and a negligible amount of time teaching the more unfamiliar strand (media arts). The unequal

allocation of time reveals a clear connection between deeper content knowledge and familiarity with specific strands to the provision of arts-based opportunities for learners. The overall sense, initially, was that the teachers had given in to the identified constraints, and this attitude warrants further interrogation.

Discourses around systemic compliance and the crowded and narrowed curriculum also featured heavily in the teachers' responses. For example, Brooke mentioned literacy, numeracy, and assessment at the outset of the research, and she mentioned assessment again in her final reflection. The contemporary reality is that arts-related learning operates in the shadows of other, more prioritized learning areas. Yet as McArdle (2012) observes, "Learning through art is not antithetical to literacy and numeracy" (p. 19). The teachers' openness to adapting their pedagogical approaches signaled that even with rigid or skewed curriculum expectations, arts integration at the classroom level is possible. This points to the potential for teachers to act as change agents to increase opportunities for creativity within their classrooms, and in turn, their schools and their communities (Harris & de Bruin, 2017).

One way that teachers can be helped to fulfill their potential as change agents is through the provision of professional support. While this has been previously identified by others (e.g., Garvis & Pendergast, 2011; Russell-Bowie, 2011), in this study, the researcher was able to temporarily fill a specialist teacher role and work in collaboration with the classroom teachers. The co-constructed units of work demonstrated to the teachers that arts integration with the more "mainstream" subjects was both possible and valuable. Once the units were planned, the teachers had arts-based activities at hand that were consistent with the learning objectives of the original unit while also meeting curriculum expectations.

In contrast with previous studies, the teachers in this study did not have negative self-efficacy beliefs towards arts-based learning (Garvis & Pendergast, 2011). For Susan, this was perhaps because of her affirmative pre-service experiences with play- and arts-based learning, which highlights the positive and enduring impact that pre-service professional development can have (Barton et al., 2013). Both teachers appeared keen to adapt their pedagogical approach to incorporate more arts-based learning, and this was fruitful ground for action research where teachers could utilize their knowledge and agency to challenge some of the identified constraints to arts-teaching. Access to carefully selected professional literature that included practical examples appeared to promote teacher self-efficacy in areas they were unsure about, for example, media arts. A holistic approach to professional support, encompassing quality pre-service experiences, access to research literature, and regular access to specialists are likely to have a positive influence on teacher capacity to deliver arts-based learning.

In addition, the data suggests that arts-based learning might well be valuable for groups of diverse learners. When taught as intended, the five strands of the arts provide ample opportunity for children to pursue their creative needs and interests. In the co-constructed unit, the activities were underpinned by a recognition that children have multiple intelligences and distinct ways of learning (Gardner, 2011), and this proved useful for Susan, who had a class with a variety of learning needs (English language learners, learning and behavioral difficulties, and visual impairment). The increased confidence she observed in her students indicates that the arts can potentially provide an alternative and more creative route for learners to access the curriculum. This supports the findings of Vaughan, Harris, and Caldwell (2011), who found that participation

in performing arts programs were effective for improving the educational and social outcomes for students in disadvantaged and high-need communities.

In adapting their current practice, the two teachers in this study demonstrated how the ability to provide learning opportunities for creativity could be increased. Klopper and Power (2010) proposed that "the heart of curriculum transfer and transformation is in the classroom" (p. 9), but while those authors asked ,"What are teachers in our classrooms actually *doing* in relation to teaching arts education?" this study has also explored the question "What *can* teachers actually *do* in relation to teaching arts education?" The study suggests that for teachers who already have positive predispositions towards arts-based learning, and who desire professional development and support, there is the potential for incremental but impactful changes to pedagogy.

Our findings are offered in light of two key limitations. Firstly, this was a small-scale study limited to educators from one region in one Australian state. Action research with more participants might offer different findings. Secondly, due to time limitations, only one cycle of action research could be carried out with the teachers. Action research is ideally an iterative process, so further cycles of research with these teachers could have provided deeper insights into the effects of the pedagogical changes.

## Conclusion

This study makes a renewed call for the prioritization of *The Arts* as an integral part of the *Australian Curriculum*, connected to and supportive of the other learning areas. Based on our research, which confirms the findings of other projects, it is clear that more in-service professional development opportunities are needed to up-skill teachers in the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* and arts-based learning to enhance pedagogy across the curriculum. This study further reiterates the value of having a specialist or advisory teacher that educators can access (Russell-Bowie, 2011), and the necessity for materials and resources to assist teachers in making connections between the arts and literacy, numeracy, and science. These could take the form of sample unit plans, online videos of practice, or regular practitioner newsletters with summaries of arts activities and recently published professional literature. In terms of research, more studies are needed that share positive examples of successful arts practices in education and ideas for empowering teachers in practical ways.

For students to be afforded learning opportunities for creativity, their teachers must be given time and support for integrating the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* into other learning areas. Teachers need opportunities to discover, imagine, and explore arts-based pedagogical approaches to literacy, numeracy, and science. If provided with such opportunities, we anticipate that teachers will gain confidence and fresh understandings about how arts-rich experiences can enhance cross-curricula learnings and provide the fuel for life-long creativity.

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# After *What Matters?* A Reflection on the Value of Arts and Culture and Four "lies" of Data

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To recast our public conversation seems to me the only realistic way to bring about change. If we do not talk differently, we shall not think differently. (Tony Judt, *III Fares the Land*)

**Abstract:** In this article, we consider some of the issues arising from the recent publication of our book *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture,* co-authored with Robert Phiddian (Meyrick, Barnett, & Phiddian, 2018a). We briefly describe the book's main arguments, especially the critical stance taken towards the use of metrics and numerical proxies in the evaluation of arts and culture. We reflect on its media reception, and its attempted intervening in an on-going debate about the role and meaning of cultural activities in Australian life today. We then identify four 'lies' of data—four disingenuous applications of quantitative methods that substitute for the search for a more effective understanding of the problem of value as it appears in the cultural domain and related fields. The article concludes with consideration of an alternative approach to the evaluation of arts and culture that resuscitates the notion of their 'public good', following political historian Tony Judt's (2010) call for "a language of ends not means."

Keywords: Arts, Australian culture, culture, data, Laboratory Adelaide, measurement, metrics, reporting, value



# WHAT MATTERS? MATTERS? TALKING VALUE IN AUSTRALIAN CULTURE

"When did culture become a number? When did the books, paintings, poems, plays, songs, films, games, art installations, clothes, and the objects that fill our daily lives become a matter of statistical measurement? When did experience become data?"

"This book intervenes in an important debate about the public value of culture that has become stranded between the hard heads (where the arts are just another industry) and the soft hearts (for whom they are too precious to bear dispassionate analysis)."

# Introduction

What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture (Meyrick et al., 2018a) is a book framing the contentious problem of the public value of arts and culture in Australia. It argues for the return of the problem to the humanities disciplines, subsequent to a need to avoid collapsing evaluation into measurement, outcomes into outputs. Culture's qualitative dimensions are underemphasized in current assessment processes, which often fail to articulate the experiential dimensions of artistic and cultural activities (Belfiore, 2018).

The problem impacts across a range of areas. It is a problem for policymakers who must decide on the allocation of scarce resources (O'Brien, 2013). It is a problem for creative artists and cultural workers competing for public assistance (Radbourne, Glow & Johanson, 2010; Walmsley, 2012). And it is a problem for academic researchers seeking to inform debate around cultural activities and how these accrue value (Throsby, 2010). This extension throws up issues to do with the definition, measurement, and reporting of culture that operationalize differently. How culture is defined is a matter separate from how it is measured, which in turn is different from which indices are reported on (Meyrick, 2016). The relationship between the three issues – definition, measurement, and reporting, that are in effect three aspects of the problem of value – is neither neutral nor straightforward. It is a political relationship and has to be understood in political, not methodological, terms (Meyrick & Barnett, 2017). What Matters? draws on examples from South Australia, where the three authors are based, and which is the locale for the research project Laboratory Adelaide: The Value of Culture (Meyrick et al., 2018b). The cultural ecology of Adelaide—the diverse and robust set of interlocking organizations and events the city embodies— is both unique and representative. The long history of some flagship cultural organizations, virtually coterminous with the beginnings of South Australia, and the prominence given to cultural events in Australia's "Festival State" provide rich empirical material for in-depth examination of the accrual of culture's value *in situ*. Adelaide provides an ideal petri dish for researchers trying to identify the best of current assessment processes while addressing the dimensions they ignore. Through a case study approach, we consider the ways abstract evaluation methods capture— whether well or badly—the actual experience of arts and culture.

A number of important analytical points emerge in the book. A main one concerns the crucial role of context in the reporting of cultural data. Both definitions of culture and the measurement of select indices (proxies of value) draw their meaning from specific social locales and accompanying "background understanding" (Searle, 1958). In reporting, this is best communicated through narrative. The role of narrative in making a locale visible in assessment processes is vital not only for basic coherence, because "stories" provide an empathetic means of understanding for distant readers, but also because narrative acts as a ground for the meaningful interpretation of quantitative data, ensuring this does not dissolve in a "transcontextual commensurability of reference" (Pusey, 1991, p. 11). The measurement of culture is thus dependent on our *sense* of culture. In the reporting domain, the two can be brought together in meaningful assessment, but only if culture's contextual features are incorporated.

The latter chapters of the book discuss Sustainability Reporting (GRI) and Integrated Reporting (<IR>), two alternative reporting frameworks used in the corporate sector to capture a broader sense of value (Eccles & Krzus, 2010). These frameworks enable firms to include costs and benefits not reflected directly in monetary streams, but which are clearly significant. This is true, for example, of environmental "externalities." If environmentally-friendly behavior can find a place on company balance sheets in positive ways, then it can support actions that accrue this intangible value. <IR> uses a "six capitals" schema to broaden the notion of value beyond the traditional ones of financial and manufacturing, and we ask whether culture can be situated within this as a "seventh capital." <IR> is less a paradigm than a set of informing principles for the best-practice reporting of value, so we provide a set of hypothetical reporting principles for arts and culture by way of illustration.

The core argument of *What Matters?* is that governments, the cultural sector, and researchers need more talk of meaning and purpose in discussions about the public value of culture to balance the contemporary obsession with benchmarking, rankings, and metrics (see also Phiddian et al., 2017a; Phiddian et al., 2017b). This is not to discount the importance of accountability and transparency in public funding, but rather to argue that numerical data alone is often obfuscating and encourages hyper-focus only on those dimensions that can be easily quantified. What matters cannot always be scaled or captured in the categorical language of policymaking. Yet measurement and abstraction – the search for the perfect algorithm and the perfect buzzword – dominate the way arts and culture are discussed, and in ways that belie and betray our human experience of them. If we cannot register the reality of culture because we cannot enumerate it,

then public debate is impoverished and error prone. We do not need another evaluative methodology, however ingenious. We need an entirely different way of approaching the problem of value. It is the humanities disciplines that have the outlook and critical tools to generate the needed insights into the complex, layered and ever-changing lifeworld of arts and culture.

## Authors' Reflection: The Response to the Book

In the weeks after the launch of *What Matters?* we gave a number of interviews, on radio and television and wrote a number of summary articles to discuss the book's message.<sup>1</sup> It was, in many ways, a frustrating experience. We found ourselves wondering, after yet another dispiriting failure to speedily articulate the problem of value in the media realm, *how do we argue for a change of heart?* It is not a question of this or that KPI, this or that index, metric, model, paradigm, or tracking tool. The core of the problem does not involve numbers at all – although in the book we do spend time criticizing what might be called "false quantification." Numbers always tell us something, even if it's only how untrustworthy the people using them are. It is what they don't tell us that is the problem.

In *The Great Crash,* the economist J.K. Galbraith (2009) examines the history of the 1929 stock market crash. It is an interesting case study from a quantitative data point of view, because in the months before that catastrophic September, the numbers were all positive. Stocks kept going up and up and up. Looking at the figures alone, one might not have conclude—and no-one did conclude— that the worst depression in economic history was about to occur.

Between human beings there is a type of intercourse which proceeds not from knowledge, or even lack of knowledge, but from failure to know what isn't known. This was true of much discourse on the market [in 1929] ... Wisdom...is often an abstraction associated not with fact or reality but with the man who asserts it and the manner of its assertion. (Galbraith, 2009, pp. 99-100)

Galbraith's point is that it is what we don't know that confounds us and makes us realize later that our assumptions are just that, assumptions, even when we hide them behind banks of statistics arranged like the serried trenches of World War I. An exhibition of paintings that attracts over 1 million people in 6 weeks sounds like a "good" number. It is the visitor count for the hugely successful Degenerate Art Exhibition the German Nazi party organized in Munich in 1937 (Levi, 1998). So perhaps with context, that is not so good. Or consider the most popular book written, as judged by print run: *The Quotations of Chairman Mao* (Cook, 2014). Maybe that number, some 6 billion, reflects something more – or less – than an expression of free consumer choice.

What about the value of an individual cultural experience? Here's a narrative, or a "parable of value" as we say in the book. One of our authors grew up in London. One Monday, he was waiting for a friend in the Tate Gallery. At this time, UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was forcing collections institutions to charge for entry, so he was standing in the lobby, unwilling to pay £5 to go in. His friend was late, and there was just one painting to look at, *RA* 2 by Bridget Riley. He thought it a very uninspiring work; basically, it was just a glorified color chart. He leaned against the wall looking at the painting for twenty minutes. Then the lines of color appeared to move. They oscillated in an almost musical way. It changed his opinion about Riley. We might say, he valued her paintings more as the result of this personally transformative

experience. But the implications were broader, because at the same moment, he realized that if he had been wrong in his assessment of Riley, then he might be wrong about other painters as well. The moment at the Tate was "world-disclosing" in the Heideggerian sense (Heidegger, 2010). *RA* 2 was more than an addition to his existing information about contemporary painting practice, more than an acquisition of consumption skills. It was a fundamental change in his understanding of the relationship between life and art. His experience was meaningful and because of that meaningfulness, and only because of it, was Riley's painting valuable. Otherwise, being told "*RA* 2 is worth \$200,000" would not have prompted a viable response. There are many things priced at \$200,000 that we might not value, and would regard anyone paying that kind of money for as foolish or worse.

We could go on with example after example, showing how current standardized measures, particularly monetary measures, at best foreshorten and misrepresent, and at worst betray, the value of culture, both when we love what we get and when we hate it.

Evaluating cultural experiences is challenging. That is because we know what we want now (present needs) and can remember, just, what we wanted in the past (past preferences), but we have little idea of what we will want in the future (potential wants). What music will we listen to in five years' time? If we knew for certain, we might take steps to ensure that the composers, orchestras, singers, and bands who can meet our demands stand a chance of making a living from what they do. If they don't, they will "exit the market," as economists say. The market will have made its choice before we get to make our choice, and there will be little that is "free" about it. It will reflect a short-term equilibrium because that is all markets ever reflect: supply and demand, and marginal rates of production and substitution.

Evaluating arts and culture is similar to evaluating other intangible goods and services. These are a significant part of our lives now, as we increasingly realize that the natural world around us is not a replaceable asset on a balance sheet, but has a value outside any conception of monetary exchange whatsoever (Gleeson-White, 2014). Many of the ideas in *What Matters?* were inspired by or took courage from similar ideas in the environmental movement, and the passion that infuses activists in that all-important domain is the same that motivates us, as Laboratory Adelaide researchers, in our relationship to culture. To value, say, a beautiful poem, or a perfectly made ceramic, or an episode of Sophie Hyde's brilliant TV drama *Fucking Adelaide*, disporting oneself like a third-rate scientist with a digital thermometer is a waste of time. We have to find a connection of feeling with the cultural artefact or event and a love of what it offers, or could offer (Meyrick, 2015). With this relationship, it is possible to make a judgement both meaningful and effective. Without it, every scrap of so-called "evidence" is just a rationalization of congealed prejudice and blithe presumption.

To be clear, the target of censure in *What Matters?* is not evaluation *per se*, or even our obsession with evaluation, which is eating us alive as a society (Beer, 2016; Muller, 2018). That's a problem, but it's not Laboratory Adelaide's problem. Our problem is that the evaluation of arts and culture in Australian policymaking today is reductive, decontextualized, blankly skeptical, and focused on short-term goals. What we *should* be doing is building up a bank of expertise and assessment proficiencies to support and add to the initiatives and institutions bequeathed to us by the regimes of the past. Instead, successive federal governments have used the Australia Council for the Arts as a political football, interfered with the mission of the ABC every chance they had, and

engaged in an aggressive pursuit of budget savings that has disproportionately affected a bottomline that, in the words of the ex-Director of Arts Queensland Leigh Tabrett, was little more than a rounding error to begin with (Tabrett, 2013). For the last six years, the federal Liberal government has not had a national cultural policy. Prior to 2013, the then Labor government delayed the launch of *Creative Australia* so long it only had one for its last six months in office. The cultural infrastructure laboriously built-up under Whitlam, Fraser, Hawke, and Keating – not only the bricks and mortar, but also the human capital, the skill sets, the programs, projects, and priorities – has been dribbled away by their successors, while the cultural sector squabbles amongst itself, unwilling to admit, or perhaps comprehend, the chronic under-investment in the area that has been compounding for twenty years. Thus, current evaluation techniques – often no more than faintly-disguised measures of commercial success – are not only invidious; they undermine the agency of cultural practitioners, turning outcomes into outputs, a world of creative things done into columns of KPIs and fatuous management blather. It is not new methods that we need now, but a circuit-breaker, a stepping off the evaluation treadmill, and a reconsideration, collectively, of what we are really doing and why we are really doing it.

Imagine this hypothetical situation: no artist or cultural organization submits a formal request for three years. Not one report is filed. If an artist wants a grant, they call up an arts agency and talk to someone. Then they come in and have an assessment meeting. They get the grant or they don't. If they get it, they do the work, call up the agency again, and tell them what they have done. At the end of three years, would the cultural sector have gone to hell in a handbasket? Would chaos reign? Would artists go berserk and use the money to take rides at taxpayers' expense to holiday destinations? Last time we looked, the only people doing this were politicians (Bagshaw et al., 2017).

And if the reply to the above scenario is "that is not a realistic proposal," then imagine only the reporting that is strictly necessary, only the crucial evaluation. And suppose these processes have to attract two-thirds majority support from the cultural sector itself as appropriate, feasible, and meaningful. What kind of assessment would take place then? It is doubtful that decisions about the distribution of scarce public resources would be any easier. But we would certainly be talking about support for art and culture in a completely different way.

If *What Matters*? has one key point to make, it is this: neither the results nor the methods of evaluation are politically neutral, and this is not a disaster, but a reality. What we might call the rhetoric of data ignores or at least under-emphasizes this fact, and the rest of this article briefly reflects on four presumptions – which in a rhetorical flourish of our own, we will call "lies" – that distort the way we gather, process, and disseminate information in the cultural domain today.

# Four Lie(s) of Data

Lie No.1: The lie of the neutrality of data, and alongside this, the lie that all we need as individuals and a society is more data to make better decisions.

In saying this, we are not arguing for ignorance, or for ceasing to collect information on matters for which it is useful for information to be collected. But that is not an infinite list. And even for those things on the list, it is possible to pursue data collection beyond the point of reason and engage the law of diminishing returns. The sheer volume of information collected collapses in on itself, creating the epistemological equivalent of thermal inversion, where effective decision making is crushed because we fail to recognize—either through lack of insight or lack of courage—that what we need is something other than data. For example, we may need a different moral and political outlook, greater collective honesty, or the capacity to look beyond the data—which only ever reflects what's there—and imagine what is yet to be, to imagine what comes next. The best example of this is Anthropocene climate change. There is a great deal of data on this phenomenon, and more coming in every day. And yet, the social response that arises from it is weak, sporadic, and sharply resisted (Beer 2016; de Andrade Júnior, 2018; Giddens 2009). We know informationally that if we do not act to halt global warming, we jeopardize the future of the planet and ourselves as a species. Yet we do little about it. Perhaps we need to change our idea of what "knowledge" means and admit that data is a necessary but not sufficient basis for genuine understanding of the wicked problems we face as a society today.

# Lie No.2: The lie of comprehensiveness of data, and alongside this, the unfounded belief that important issues will prompt someone—who?—to seek data about them that will become public at some stage.

Data is only ever selectively sought and even more selectively shared. Some people and organizations are on a hamster-wheel of generating more and more information about themselves, to rest from doing things only to endlessly account for the things they do. Others are not. In arts and culture, we have had some egregious examples of this: in George Brandis's ill-fated attempt to establish a National Programme for Excellence in the Arts with money taken willy-nilly from the Australia Council (Eltham 2016), an arm's length statutory authority, and more recently, in the decision by NSW Minister for the Arts, Don Harwin, to peremptorily give two thirds of the state's Arts and Development budget to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (Boland & Timms, 2018). A similar lack of data collection and disclosure can be seen in the \$440m awarded to the Great Barrier Reef Fund, which was handed over by Malcolm Turnbull in the course of an afternoon via a network of personal connections (Cox, 2018). These are just the cases we know about, the decisions that have come to light *ex post facto*. There are many areas which we do not investigate until the consequences become so dire they can no longer be kept out of the public eye. This has happened in turn to sport, banking, and care of the elderly. Before media exposure, the data on cheating, bank fraud, and elder abuse either wasn't kept or wasn't revealed.

# Lie No.3: The lie of the benevolence of data, and alongside this, the view that having more information in the public domain will, in and of itself, lead to a more open, efficient, and fairer society.

Of all the assumptions made about data, this is the one destined to fade first. The recent scandals around Facebook data misuse and breaches (Bogost, 2018; Madrigal 2018) and the regular hacking raids made on all kinds of medical and financial databases (Patterson, 2018) point up the value of our privacy, of *not* gathering data about certain things, or at least gathering it under strict conditions. More broadly, they bring into focus the dangers of a data-fied society if data falls into the wrong hands – not just criminal hands, but political ones. We are once again in an era of so-called democracy deficit and the rise of authoritarian governments. Greed, insensitivity, lack of inclusiveness, and the addictive allure of extreme opinions are undermining the operation of open societies with the result that we see a tack back toward repressive or populist regimes. Into the hands of these dubious polities, we are placing instruments of great power and control when

we hand over our data. For it is as Plato observed: once a thing is known, it cannot be unknown. The fate of our data is then subject to whatever these darkening forces make of it. Unlike real estate and physical possessions, we cannot take our information back.

# Lie No.4: The lie of the consistency of data, and the belief that the data points gathered are an adequate representation of the reality for which they stand proxy.

It is astonishing, given historians' sophisticated awareness of the contested status of "matters of fact," that no such awareness seems to apply to the numbers that are data's idealized form. The complex relationship between historical evidence and the act of historical interpretation has exercised scholarly minds for over a century. Yet the proselytizers of data occupy a naïve empiricism that allows little room for the insights of these debates and ignores the caveats they carry. Here is a hypothetical example of what we mean. Take the statement, "It's got three stars" made by three individuals: an astronomer, an electrician, and a film reviewer. It is the changed professional context that lexically supplies the same statement with different meanings. For the astronomer, talking about a quadrant of the night sky, "it's got three stars" is an arithmetical conclusion, a description of observable quantity. Qualitative assessment comes into the statement only minimally, if at all. For the electrician, talking about the energy rating of a whitegood, the context is more fluid. There are benchmarks, industry standards, and public expectations, but these may not align, or may leave room for some discretion. We might imagine a range of outcomes that conform to the statement "it's got three stars," each defensible up to a point. Finally, the film reviewer responding to the latest Hollywood blockbuster or new Australian film offers a personal insight, a quantified expression of what is, and can only ever be, qualitative judgement. This might be knowledgeable and discerning to the point of genius, but it cannot be a literal truth. The statement "it's got three stars" is a metaphor, and a parasitic one at that, drawing on the rhetorical reality that judgements today seem more authoritative when they are glossed pseudo-scientifically, which usually means metrically. The danger is obvious. In moving from the literal to the defensible to the metaphorical, we ignore the differences in relation between quantitative and qualitative phenomena, and occupy instead a whirligig of inconsistent numbers, each with a different origin and professional context behind them, and therefore different styles and degrees of meaningful application.

## **Conclusion: The Opposite of Data is Experience**

When we were writing *What Matters?* we agreed, as authors, that we wanted to start a conversation, not finish one. The problem of value in arts and culture, as we see it, is one that has gotten stuck in methodological fetishism, losing sight of the broader issues that append human experience in the cultural realm. These issues are necessarily open-ended and cannot be captured by distanced, quantitative indicators alone. When putting our view, we often hear the protest "but we still have to evaluate," as if we weren't saying exactly that. We *do* need to evaluate the culture that comes our way, now more than ever. The difficulty is that our sense of value is inextricably bound up with social assumptions that hide behind the data rather than being highlighted by them, and lend credence to some positions rather than others: "spreadsheets of power," as economist Richard Denniss (2014) memorably calls them. This is well understood not only by cultural practitioners, but also by university researchers, given that the higher education sector is subject to the same deracinating forces. Many people have expressed support for the arguments in our book, but not everyone, and some criticisms have been sharp. There is a lot at

stake. If we begin to doubt the efficacy of current methods of valuing our culture, that skepticism could infect other policy realms, and before long, a general questioning of political assumptions might ensue, and who knows what changes this could prompt? The abstract concept of value is not separable from the lived reality of our values. To investigate the first is to address the second, and it is important to say that we did not go looking for this bigger battle; it was there beyond the frozenness of the measurement debate, an emergent grappling of confused, confusing, and conflicted beliefs and opinions. The problem of the value of arts and culture is an Alice-through-the-Looking-Glass passage into an angry argument about where we should be headed as a nation, and as a world. Our short book – a book we feared would be shrugged off as soon as published – appears at a moment when that argument is getting louder, daily.

To the gathering storm, What Matters? has many positive things to contribute. The tone of the book is resolutely cheerful. The constant danger of methodological fetishism is that evaluation becomes an end in itself, that targets and tracking replace real-world goals and purpose, and there is a coarsening of civic dialogue and expectations as a result. It cannot be said often enough: if we cannot measure what we value, we will come to value what we measure. Quantitative indicators will pop their groove of useful application, and public trust will disappear as stakeholders learn to game the metrics in lieu of a more honest and meaningful discussion about the value of what they do. In Judith White's (2018) brilliant book, The Culture Heist, about the travails of the State Gallery of New South Wales-travails self-inflicted by the blankness and blindness of its own senior managers-she argues that Australian Treasury departments believe that cultural institutions should either be commercially successful or not exist. The hyper-marketized view of society, one in which every interaction is reduced to monetary exchange, has a raft of pernicious effects, not least of which is political reaction. Australia is not immune to this. It may be the lucky country, but luck, like the environment, is not an infinite resource. How can we find a way forward, then, not only for the evaluation of culture, but for the problem of value itself? How can we resuscitate a richer, realer, more efficacious idea of value in the face of the current dysphoria?

In the last series of lectures given before he died, *Ill Fares the Land*, the political historian Tony Judt (2010) offered an alternative perspective to the market thinking that abstracts, distorts, and pollutes so many spheres of social action today. It is one built around a renovated concept of "public value." We do not explore this in detail in *What Matters*? It would be hard to know where to start – with policy, economics, social theory, legal theory, ethics? Each of these disciplines has its own definition of the term and what it entails by way of rights and obligations. For Judt (2010),

It is the gap between the inherently ethical nature of public decision-making and the utilitarian quality of contemporary political debate that accounts for the lack of trust felt towards politics and politicians...Even if we concede that there is no higher purpose to life, we need to ascribe meaning to our actions in a way that transcends them. Merely asserting that something is or is not in our material interest will not satisfy most of us most of the time. To convince *others* that something is right or wrong we need a language of ends, not means. We don't have to know that our objectives are poised to succeed. We do need to be able to believe in them. (p. 180)

To the signal quest for a language of ends, not means, arts and culture are more than cupbearers, more than simply the recipient of ideas hammered out in other realms. Cultural practices and their natural correlates, the humanities disciplines, are nothing if not concerned with higher

purpose and how human beings allot significance to what they say and do. The meaning is the use, quipped Wittgenstein, in discussing how language works. We might say, sometimes the use is the meaning – in the fact of something *being* meaningful in the first place. Judt (2010) argues that it is not possible to bring back the grand religious and political narratives of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and that we must seek "incremental improvements upon unsatisfactory circumstances." This is too pessimistic to our minds, especially where culture is concerned. Arts and culture are, above all, joyous. The articulation of the public value they represent is not a transliteration into a dour and data-fied vocabulary of social and economic gain. It is a celebration of our fun, wonder, and growth when we encounter something that speaks directly to us as a singular cultural experience.

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## Endnotes

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# Europe is in Everyday Things: School Children's Visualizations of Europe through the Integration of Art and Citizenship Education

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**Abstract:** This paper presents a study of pupils' visualizations of Europe in their artworks and the visual means and roles of art used. The data on pupils' artworks comes from group blogs that were a part of the Creative Connections project, which aimed to develop approaches to contemporary art that encourage young people to explore European identities. The project, which ran from 2012–2014, was an action research initiative funded by the European Union's Comenius Grant. It brought together teams of researchers and coordinators from six universities with pupils and teachers from 25 schools from the primary through upper secondary levels across Europe. Participating countries were Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and the UK. Based on data obtained from the project, this paper sheds light on the possibilities of art education for addressing the topic of European citizenship.

Keywords: Art education, contemporary art, European citizenship, European identity, group blog, pupils' artworks

Abstrakti: Tekstissä esittelen tutkimustani, jossa tarkastelen oppilaiden eri tapoja visualisoida Eurooppa taideteoksissaan. Erityisesti tuon esiin niitä kuvallisia keinoja ja taiteen rooleja, joita lapset ja nuoret käyttivät töissään. Aineisto koostuu oppilaiden teoksista, joita he julkaisivat ryhmäblogeissa osana Creative Connections -hanketta, joka toteutettiin vuosina 2012–2014 -rahoituksella. Kansainvälisessä taidekasvatuksen Euroopan Unionin Comenius toimintatutkimuksessa kehitettiin nykytaiteen lähestymistapoja eurooppalaisen identiteetin tarkasteluun. Hanke yhdisti koordinaattoreita ja tutkijoita kuudesta yliopistosta ja oppilaita sekä opettajia 25 peruskoulusta ja lukiosta ympäri Eurooppaa. Osallistujamaat olivat Espanja, Irlanti, Iso-Britannia, Portugali, Suomi ja Tšekki. Toimintatutkimukseen ja aineistoon perustuen tuon esiin taidekasvatuksen mahdollisuuksia käsitellä Euroopan kansalaisuutta kouluissa. Tuloksissa esittelen myös oppilaiden töistä erottuvat erilaiset identifioitumiset osaksi tai ulkopuolelle Eurooppaa.

Avainsanat: Taidekasvatus, nykytaide, Euroopan kansalaisuus, eurooppalainen identiteetti, ryhmäblogit, oppilastyöt

### Background

*How would you visualize Europe? Do you see yourself as European?* In Spring 2013, hundreds of children and young people in Finland, Portugal, the UK, Czech Republic, Spain, and Ireland were asked these questions. The questions were posed by art teachers, classroom teachers, civic education teachers, and by researchers overseeing the Creative Connections project. Pupils were not asked to write, but rather to make a drawing, take a photo, make a video or installation – any art project using contemporary art approaches – to present their views. In addition, they were asked to share their works with three other classes from different countries in a shared group blog to connect with their European peers. To help start the discussion and spark ideas for different artistic approaches, participants were given an online gallery of contemporary artworks addressing the questions of identity, citizenship, and Europe and presenting contemporary approaches to making visual art.

Creative Connections (CC), an art education action research project operating from 2012–2014, was carried out in cooperation with six partner universities: Roehampton University, London (UK), the coordinator; Universitat de Barcelona (Spain); Charles University, Prague (Czech Republic); the National College of Art and Design, Dublin (Ireland); the University of Lapland, Rovaniemi (Finland); and Instituto Polytecnico de Viana do Castelo (Portugal). It aimed to develop and promote an active inter-country dialogue, specifically among children, to enhance the understanding of different perspectives on European citizenship through contemporary art. The research involved 25 schools, ranging from the primary to upper secondary levels, with a selection of pupils and teachers who collaborated with national teams of researchers and coordinators from the above-named universities (see Richardson, 2014). The core of the project was the group blogs, which offered spaces for pupils' voices and dialogues alongside a web gallery, the *Connected Gallery* (see Creative Connections, 2014), of contemporary European artworks selected and categorized to approach the project's theme and art-producing methods.

This paper focuses on pupils' orientations to Europe, as represented in their artworks. By using the concept of 'orientation,' I refer to European citizenship as a territorial and cultural identity (Mäkinen, 2012). Thus, the notion is considered through visual representations that construct and reflect cultural identities (Hall, 1999). How did the children and young people place themselves in relation to Europe in their artworks? This study aims to reflect on how art education materials and activities contribute to exploring the phenomenon of European citizenship and, ultimately, to help develop new teaching practices. The main data source are pupils' blog posts – the images and accompanying texts and comments they created and shared during the spring 2013 semester. The works were subjected to polarization as a means of visual analysis before a comparison was made between the notions of Europe drawn from the artworks and the comments on Europe made during pupils' interviews.

Several case studies, papers, PhD studies, and master's theses have resulted from the CC project. The present paper adds another layer of reflection with a view focused on pupils' artworks. It pays special attention to discussing its results in comparison to a study by Mason, Richardson, and Collins (2012) about pupils' visualizations of Europe in 2008, which were a part of the Images and Identities project (2008–2009), the predecessor to the CC project.

As CC was an art-based project, visual art featured in many roles in the process, such as looking at and understanding artwork examples and others' works. Above all, the pupils' art-making process and artworks comprised the largest part of data and were at the center of all dialogues. The CC aimed to combine research, pedagogy, and methods of contemporary art in development work, which is the goal of art-based action research according to Jokela, Hiltunen, and Härkönen (2015). Art-based research is often useful in studies involving identity, as it can evoke meanings and explore differences, diversities, prejudices, and stereotypes (Leavy, 2017). Van Leeuwen (2001) emphasized the social modality of art from an anthropological perspective, defining the images as data to be analyzed as representations of how their authors reconstruct reality. The present study adopted this view of visual anthropology for approaching pupils' artworks as expressions of how they see Europe and used the results to develop a new pedagogy for the visual arts.

### **European Citizenship and Cultural Identity**

European citizenship was established as a legal status in the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht, when the European Union was founded. At that time, citizens of all member states acquired supra-national citizenship in the EU (Council of the European Communities, 1992). Before that, the promotion of European consciousness and the introduction of symbols for the EU were central to the European Community (Jacobs & Maier, 1998). The sense of European identity was seen as the basis for active citizenship, cooperation, and solidarity (European Commission [EC], 1998). As the EU funded the CC project alongside the Comenius Program, the underlying agenda was to work with the topic of citizens' identities. Throughout the project, all kinds of perspectives on Europe were allowed and discussed. The project's aim was to give a voice to young people to share their views and explore their ideas of 'Europe' with no expectations of a clear European identity, given that none existed even among the adult population. For example, in the Eurobarometer, a biannual EU study to measure public opinion in all member countries, results showed an average of 62% of participants identifying as 'citizens of Europe' in the Spring of 2013 (EC, 2013).

Keulman and Katalin Koóls' (2014) work indicated that most people make no distinction between their European citizenship and European identity. Through an interview analysis, they found that European identity can be seen as an emotional aspect of European citizenship. Mäkinen (2012) found that identity is also emphasized in the construction of citizenship in EU documents and is closely connected to culture and territory. In this paper, European citizenship is investigated as a question of cultural and territorial identity, alongside visual symbols, signs, and narratives representing this identification. In the CC project, the aim was to connect European-level citizenship education and art education. This approach shifted the perspective from the legal side of European citizenship to pupils' experiences of and identifications with Europe. According to Huddleston and Kerr (2006), the younger children are, the more they collectively identify with the dominant groups in their environments. Thus, the conversations began with personal, regional, and national identities before moving toward European identity and different ways and means of connecting to Europe. This approach was chosen because "European citizens are first and foremost nationals, and the link they might establish with the EU is largely mediated through national institutions, attachment and culture" (Duchesne, 2012, p. 54).

Social psychology defines identity structures, and sociology and anthropology see European identity as a socio-territorial identity. To date, European identity has mostly been researched in political science (Keulman & Katalin Koós, 2014). In the context of the present study, Hall's (1999) definition of identity is relevant. He defined identity as multidimensional, non-permanent, and continuously changing. He also emphasized that cultural identities are affected by representations in art, culture, history, and language, which leads to the linking of visual expression, contemporary art, and identities. Mäkinen (2012) noted that in EU documents, citizenship is produced in connection to European culture, which promotes belonging with other Union citizens.

## **Contemporary Art, Education, and Citizenship**

Why use contemporary art and art education to approach European citizenship? The notion of the supranational European dimension is one of the most difficult topics covered in citizenship education (Kerr, Sturman, Schulz, & Burge, 2009). Since European identity is promoted through visual imagery (Mason et al., 2012), it is relevant to explore the visual representations that construct perceptions of 'Europeanness' in people's minds. Contemporary art offers visual representations that are not produced for political or commercial purposes; thus, it provides alternative representations and perspectives on identity and Europe.

Efland (2002) sees the contribution of art in education through its capacity to transmit cultural knowledge, "to construct cultural meanings and permit social communication" (p. 7). He also explains that the arts present narrative, metaphorical modes of reasoning that differ from logical-scientific thinking. In this case, European citizenship was seen as an abstract and distant concept. The artistic examples and pupils' own visual productions offered ways to create more personal connections to what it means and feels to be "European." The arts-integrated experiences brought affective connections to learning, while the emotional impact optimized the learning experience (Thorndike Greenspan & Greenspan, 2016).

In the CC project, contemporary art served as a pedagogical tool by demonstrating the different roles of art when approaching a given topic. This was presented through the categorization of the online gallery of artworks and introduced to teachers via trainings provided as part of the project. The aim was to help participants learn and use different strategies for art making and the roles assumed by contemporary artists. The five categories presented below were used in the CC project based on Lacy's (1995) roles of art and developed by art education professor Mirja Hiltunen (2009):

- A. Art as cultural self-expression
- B. Art as cultural interpretation
- C. Art as cultural report
- D. Art as cultural guide
- E. Art as cultural activism

The chosen artworks by contemporary artists from the participating countries presented vastly different aspects of identity and views on citizenship and Europe in general. As a result, they could introduce the theme, generate discussions, inspire visual responses, and demonstrate to students how they could use art to express concepts (Manninen, 2015).

One of the main aims of the project was to promote dialogues among the pupils inspired by the images online. These efforts were supported by defining the notion of contemporary art itself emerging from dialogues, encounters, and relationships (Bourriaud, 2002). According to pupils' feedback, the impact of looking at others' works and presenting their own were the most essential factors for forming new views about Europe (Manninen, 2018). In this same vein, Kester (2004) defines dialogical art as centered around conversational exchanges and interactions.

Kester (2011) sees collective action and civic engagement as increasing features of contemporary art practices that emphasize the collaborative approaches and participatory and process-based forms of art. Similarly, Mullin (2016) points out that the works of contemporary artists approach active citizenship by creating real interactions between the audience and the artist in public spaces via the connection of participation, relativity, and community. Elliot, Silverman, and Bowman (2016) make further connections between contemporary art practices and active citizenship by defining "artistic citizenship." They emphasize that making art has always been connected to the community. Thus, art should be observed, studied, and made as a form of ethically guided citizenship.

## **Data and Methods**

Data for the visual analysis was extracted from one of the six group blogs, one by pupils with an average age of 14–16 and which had an average number of posts (n=144). This blog connected four classes from Finland, Ireland, Spain, and the UK. The European theme was processed distinctly in the art assignments in each participating school. Pupils' artworks were mainly collages, photos, drawings, or paintings. There were also some sculptures, installations, videos, and plans for environmental or community art. To test the validity of the visual analysis of the chosen group blog's images, a comparative analysis of two other group blogs featuring participants of the same ages was conducted to find commonalities. In addition to the visual data that were analyzed, all citations that referred to Europe in the pupils' interviews were noted. This data was extracted from the interview transcripts with the Finnish participants and a condensed summary of pupils' comments compiled from the other countries' researchers.

When interpreting pupils' works, the short accompanying texts in the blogs and comments were important, as the author of this study, a Finnish and European citizen, is an art educator and artist who also served as a researcher in the project. When analyzing works from other countries, all judgments and evaluations were made by relying on information given in reports by other researchers and on personal knowledge of those countries, school systems, and cases. This paper is part of a larger study that includes a previous analysis of case study reports and pupils' and teachers' interviews from the project. All of this was kept in mind when analyzing the artworks. The school context also limited and led pupils' expressions by exposing them to social pressures, institutional expectations, and unwritten classroom rules.

The analysis was completed using the visual polarization method introduced by Räsänen (2008); it is based on analyzing the methods used in visual media imagery from 1970s-era Swedish art education (Räsänen, Romilson, Nordström, & Aspelin, 1990). Even though the method was developed for educational use, it has also been used in close connection to Collier's (2001) visual anthropology methods; thus, it is valid for use in qualitative research. The analysis models of visual anthropology and polarization both search for patterns and meanings through a

consideration of contextual information while emphasizing the importance of the juxtaposition of images as part of the analysis (Collier, 2001; Räsänen, 2008). In particular, the polarization method aims to find opposites in visual materials, which can be found in colors, composition, or content.

## **Analysis and Results**

The analysis began by categorizing the visual motifs in the pupils' representations of Europe. In a majority of them, Europe was depicted as a geographical area (Figure 4, Orientations 1 to 3). The EU was also depicted as a peace alliance, economic union, common currency and marketing area, and as an area in conflict and beset by economic crises (Figure 4, Orientations 4 and 5). The categorization of the pupils' visualizations of Europe could be grouped into three themes:

- A. Symbols and Facts: 1. Flags and maps, 2. Monuments, 3. Symbols, 4. Languages
- B. Union /Alliance: 5. Money/Euro/Economics, 6. Market area/Products, 7. Conflicts/ Crisis/Peace
- C. **Everyday Cultural Practices:** 8. Sports, 9. Travel/Tourism, 10. Foods/Dishes, 11. Animals, 12. Seasons, 13. Music groups/Bands

Two opposite pairs from each category were chosen to represent extremes inside the topic. These pairs were then analyzed more closely using Panofsky's (1993) iconological model. The polarization inside the themes formed the dimension axes to map the variations and key factors for expressing participants' orientations to Europe (Figure 1).

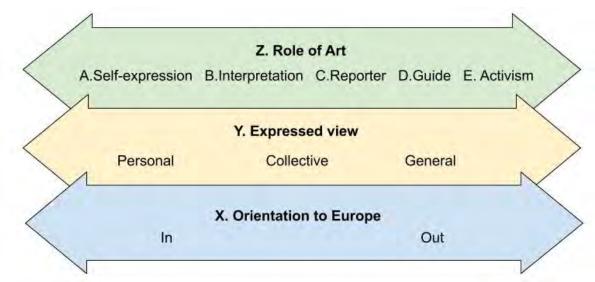


Figure 1. The dimension axes mapping the polarization of expressions in pupils' artworks within the themes (A–C). X, Y and Z refer to geometrical axes in three-dimensional space, so that the position in one axis does not limit the position in the others.

The process was concluded with the selection of the most essential images. The method was expanded to yield four artworks depicting one pair of opposite images (Figure 2) that bring out the three dimensions of the data (Figure 1).

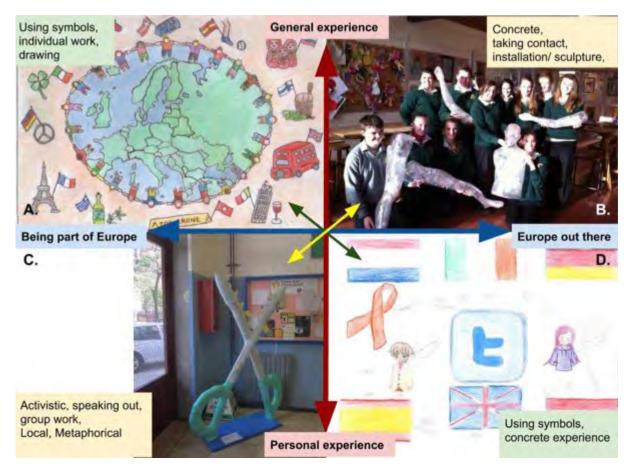


Figure 2. Concluding images and dimensions of the polarizing analysis.

The polarization method included producing a new visual product as a visual synthesis (Räsänen, 2008). A new drawing (Figure 3) was made by reproducing parts and elements of pupils' works. This began with the repeated monuments and symbols, then moved toward personal experiences and metaphors. The main two works identified as "essential" were a sculpture of serrated-edge scissors depicting the ruthless cuts to public funding and *Bob the European Cultural Tourist*, a cellophane man that was to be sent to visit the participating schools (see Figure 2, Images B & C). Both of these works were group projects connecting participatory and community aspects of contemporary art. They were also concrete and connected to pupils' everyday lives. By contrast, a majority of the pupils' works were drawings and collages. These two works summarized their connections to Europe as a common economic union where common products, market areas, and downturns are connected, and to travelling, where Bob was the embodiment of their experienced, dreamed, and imagined trips.

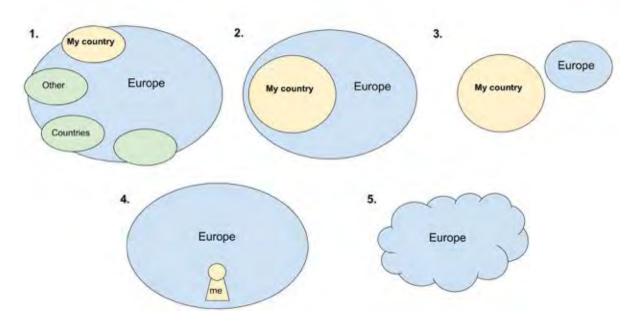


*Figure 3. Visual synthesis as final products after analyzing pupils' representations of Europe.* 

## Being or Not Being a Part of Europe – National Variations

The main dimensional axis that organized the pupils' works was the subtle interpretation of whether the work depicted being a part of or outside Europe (Figure 1). This was the main question in looking at pupils' orientations to Europe. Five relationships to Europe were revealed in the images (see Figure 4).

- 1. The home country as a European country (Figure 2, Artwork A)
- 2. The home country and Europe as two entities, side by side, with the home country as a part of Europe (Figure 6)
- 3. Europe is somewhere "out there," often actually central or southern Europe, where the student travels for holidays (Figure 8)
- 4. A metaphor or visualization of Europe that includes the artist's position (Figure 5)
- 5. A metaphorical representation of Europe (Figure 10)



*Figure 4. Orientations to Europe in pupils' artworks (1–3: geographical orientations; 4–5: metaphorical visualizations of Europe).* 

These different orientations in relation to Europe brought out national differences. The histories of Finland, Spain, Ireland, and the UK in relation to Europe are different, as are the countries' lengths of membership in the EU (see European Union, 2019). Thus, national background has an impact on pupils' European identity. Finnish pupils listed Finland among the European countries without highlighting their homeland (Figure 4, Orientation 1). This indicates the stability of the idea of Finland being a part of Europe. Finnish pupils also mostly presented drawings and collages listing the European countries, thus representing general facts (Figure 2, Artwork A). With a few exceptions, older students (aged 16–18) often created their own visual metaphors (see Figure 4, Orientation 4; Figure 5).

Irish pupils pictured their homeland and Europe as two entities (see Figure 6), but the accompanying texts explained that Ireland is a part of Europe. They also used a lot of Irish symbols in addition to European ones. These visualizations correspond with Duchesne's (2012) suggestion that European integration should be analyzed as a component of and dependent upon national identification. This feature of using references to home and approaching Europe from the perspective of the homeland and the country's relation to it was also distinctive for Irish students in the previous study (Mason et al., 2012). In CC, the aspect of communicating with others via the blog also inspired Portuguese, Finnish, and Czech pupils to present their country and region in their artworks.

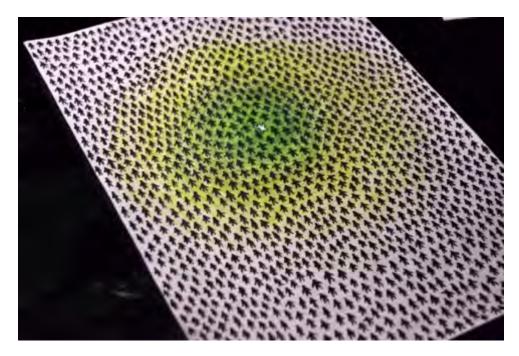


Figure 5. "Here is how I see my relationship to Europe. Obviously the middle one is me..." (Me and Europe, pupil age 17, Finland).



*Figure 6. Drawing presenting Europe and the home country of Ireland side by side (My Idea of Europe, pupil age 15, Ireland) as Orientation 2.* 

Spanish pupils were connected to Europe through the economic crisis, which affected their everyday lives. Their art also addressed different aspects of identity, from appearance and religion to music and sports. By contrast, for some British pupils, Europe was a place for vacationing, somewhere to travel to in central or southern Europe (Figure 8). They often depicted

Europe as being elsewhere and themselves as not being a part of it. British pupils' works were the only ones in which some had no references to their homeland. However, some British pupils approached Europe with the personal orientation of everyday life: products, sports, food, and languages that they could relate to the concept of "Europe."

The present analysis of the children's orientations drew no conclusions about the positive or negative connotations of their feelings of being in or outside of Europe. In each country, one can find a culture and environment with a perspective of the EU based on the majority's opinion and national media narratives. In the pupils' artworks, there were no clear divisions between positive or negative orientations. Some positioned themselves as Europeans and presented the downsides of this status (economic crises and conflicts, see Figure 10). Others presented themselves outside of Europe but presented the idea of Europe positively (Figure 8) or vice versa. Richardson (2016), another CC researcher, conducted a close analysis of participants' concerns, such as the senses of precarity and alienation from Europe found in some pupils' artworks (including those shown in Figure 10).

## **Recurring Symbols and Interpretative Themes**

Famous monuments were common motifs for representing countries, telling about the participants' trips to Europe or their dreams of traveling (e.g., Figure 2, Artwork A). The Eiffel Tower was the most-often depicted monument, followed by the Leaning Tower of Pisa and Big Ben; other works included the Roman Colosseum, Brandenburg Gate, and the Acropolis. Travel, tourism, and vacations in Europe were common themes. More general imagery featured national flags, EU stars, maps, monuments, brands, and logos. These images and the levels of expression were also blended throughout the works. In depicting personal connections to Europe, some used common symbols and emblems; for example, one British pupil presented her European connection with a drawing that included herself and her Italian grandfather with Big Ben and the Leaning Tower of Pisa in the background (Figure 7). While her connection to Europe was manifest in personal family relations, the two countries were indicated by their totemic monuments.

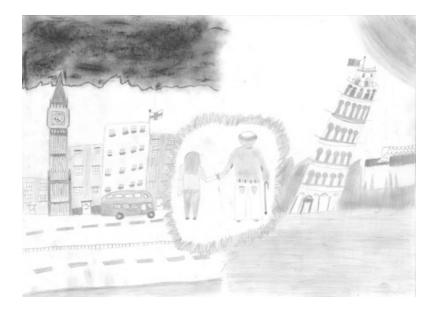


Figure 7. "This piece was created because I have an Italian grandfather" (Italian Connection, pupil age 15, UK).

Maps of Europe, totemic EU symbols, and landmarks were also recurring motifs in pupils' images of Europe in 2008 (Mason et al., 2012). These landmarks were used not only by participants of a certain age or nation, but rather were the symbols that connected all participating countries. The use of maps and landmarks indicates a physical, territorial, and cultural orientation to Europe, where European culture is the connecting element of the Union's citizens (Mäkinen, 2012). EU symbols, national flags, and landmarks are easy to recognize, and thus are a safe and simple way to communicate a general, accepted view and set of known facts about Europe.



Figure 8. "What Europe means to me is family together in the sun" (Europe Collage, pupil age 14, UK).

The popularity of using landmarks in visual representations of Europe also points to the meaning of tourism and media in pupils' lives and cultures (Figure 8). European culture and mass tourism are connected to iconic or sacralized places created with narratives by locals and tourists alike, so that people's identities are attached to them (Gaggio, 2012). According to Gaggio (2012), "the most powerful of these narratives has to do with European civilization itself" (p. 164). The landmarks represent European culture, heritage, and history, something that characterizes Europe in the pupils' works. Gaggio (2012) argues that Europe, as an everyday experience, is also born of the experiences of millions of tourists and reproductions of transnational myths.

## Personal Connections to and General Views of Europe

Polarization is one of the dimension axes (see Figure 1) in the expression of personal experiences and participants' own views of Europe, in contrast to picturing general facts and views. In some images, pupils listed many European countries, while others ended up with visually similar outcomes by starting from some concrete experience or connection they had, such as listing the European countries they had visited, where their favorite bands come from, the football clubs they know, or the nationalities of people with whom they had communicated online (Figure 2, Artwork D). These can be defined as the cultural practices of everyday life which include, for example, popular or mass culture, fashion, tourism, music, and media (Bennett, 2005). These cultural practices are also connected to the construction of one's social identity, as consumption

patterns are important sources of identity (Gaggio, 2012). Holiday travel and football, in particular, connected UK youth to Europe, a finding consistent with the previous study (Mason et al., 2012).



Figure 9. "My artwork is showing how the EU is connected and often controlled by money (i.e., holidays, the euro, taxes, benefits etc.)" (Influence of Money, pupil age 16, Ireland).

In comparison to personal orientations toward Europe born from products and experiences, participants' political orientation could be distinguished in only a few works. Those emphasized Europe as a monetary union or common market area and highlighted the general alliance level of trade (Figure 9). The financial dimension of the EU was also present, especially in those works addressing the economic crisis. In addition to economic union, in one work, there was a historical orientation to the EU as a basis for safety and peace among the states, accompanied by the text, "To me, Europe means different countries uniting after fighting" (*European Collage*, UK, age 14). Another pupil provided an opposite view by referring to conflicts (see Figure 10).



Figure 10. "The idea behind the work was to describe my thoughts about Europe: Children and young people are the future of the world and I think the children describe the joy and equality" (My Europe, pupil age 14, Finland).

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Europe was present in the pupils' representations as a learned and taught area of facts and symbols, a union of markets and peace, or as something to connect with through everyday cultural practices. Many participants indicated personal connections and experiences, as aimed for with the approach rooted in art making (see Räsänen, 2008; Thorndike Greenspan & Greenspan 2016). The artworks showed several orientations toward Europe (see Figure 4), featuring both territorial inclusion and exclusion. Orientations also included metaphorical visualizations of Europe, both with and without the inclusion of the self in the community. Identification as being a part of or outside Europe emerged as a subtle but meaningful difference among the participants; the artistic approach made it possible for them to express both general and personal views, European and non-European identities, and to move from self-expression to speaking out and taking action (Figure 1). The artworks further demonstrated the communicative opportunities of art and visual culture for sharing narratives (Delacruz, 2009; Meskimmon, 2010). In their interviews, the pupils also brought out facts they had learned about Europe and other countries. They made observations based on each other's artworks, compared their environments and everyday lives, and found similarities.

In the interviews, 40% of the comments linked to Europe referred to the economic crisis, which was a prominent and oft-discussed topic in 2013. At the same time, the artworks showed many other personal and varying connections to Europe apart from the economy. This indicates that the visual approach evoked deeper and more multifaceted explorations of participants' connections to Europe. Some created their own metaphors, indicating they had processed the idea of Europe both metaphorically and narratively (see Figures 5 and 10), which Efland (2002) noted is a means for building meaning through art.

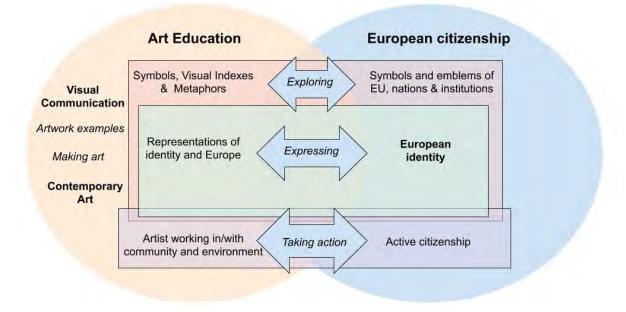


Figure 11. An art education approach to European citizenship as a synthesis of the study.

Following an analysis of the pupils' artworks, it is clear that the art education program made it possible for them to explore, express, and take actions of citizenship through the CC project (Figure 11). The artwork examples made it possible for participants to start by exploring Europe and the European identity and the ways of expressing it through art. The pupils used a vast variety of symbols, emblems, metaphors, and everyday cultural phenomena to connect visually to Europe. This is an area that could be addressed in terms of visual communication and explored further. The key finding from an art education point of view is the appearance of the roles of art presented in the artwork example gallery. Most pupils expressed their own experiences or common views about Europe according to the roles of art as cultural self-expression and interpretation (roles of art A and B, referenced above). At least in Finland, and perhaps in other countries as well, teaching pupils to express their opinions visually and to interpret the political motives in images has been a part of art lessons since the 1970s. Contemporary art also offers pupils approaches to art making that take them outside the classroom to create dialogues. Elliot and colleagues (2016) called for an ethical dimension to art education, one that would enlarge it further by teaching pupils how to recognize and understand the fundamental issues in their community and address them with artistic actions. In the CC, some of the pupils' art projects used cultural reporting, guiding, and even the activist role by exploring issues in their own community and environment and speaking out by creating artworks outside the school area in the city with the aim of being seen, heard, and participated in. In those works, the pupils moved from exploring and expressing their European identity to taking action as active citizens to express their opinions and effect change.

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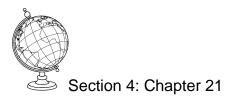
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# Virtues and Contradictions of Educational and Cultural Policies in Mexico: Source of Arts Teachers' Vulnerability

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**Abstract:** Over the years, public policies in Mexico have been consistent with international treaties on education and culture. However, their observance and compliance have been deficient, particularly in the provision of arts education in basic education since it is considered a peripheral area and not a priority within the school curriculum. This adverse context generates high levels of vulnerability, uncertainty, and risk for arts teachers. This article presents a brief analysis of public policies and their virtues, but also their contradictions, and how our educational context continues to perpetuate the vulnerability of arts teachers. When priorities and decisions of educational authorities contradict those policies and weaken teachers' job stability, it is to the detriment of a comprehensive quality education.

Keywords: teacher vulnerability; arts education; educational policy; music education.

**Resumo:** A lo largo de los años, las políticas públicas en México han sido consistentes con los tratados internacionales en materia de educación y cultura. Sin embargo, su observancia y cumplimiento ha resultado deficiente, particularmente en la provisión de la educación artística en educación básica, ya que se considera una área periférica y no prioritaria dentro del currículo escolar. Este contexto adverso genera altos niveles de vulnerabilidad, incertidumbre y riesgo para los docentes en artes. En este artículo se presenta un breve análisis de las políticas públicas, sus virtudes, pero también sus contradicciones, y cómo nuestro contexto educativo sigue perpetuando la vulnerabilidad de los docentes de artes, cuando las prioridades y decisiones de las autoridades educativas ponen en jaque dichas políticas y al magisterio, en detrimento de una educación integral de calidad.

#### Introduction

It is commonly known that teachers face adverse educational contexts in their daily practice; this generates feelings of high vulnerability, uncertainty, helplessness, frustration, disappointment, anger, and fear (Kelchtermans, 1996). According to Palmer (1998), teaching is a "daily exercise in vulnerability" (p. 17) and is seen as one of the professions in which one suffers a higher level of stress (Kyriacou, 2000; Travers & Cooper, 1996). Arts educators are no exception, particularly when their working conditions within the educational system may be more unfavorable than for classroom teachers or specialists in other disciplinary areas. As several authors argue, the arts are commonly seen as peripheral to the central aspects of education, particularly influenced by the neoliberal mainstream that has characterized the last decades (Dimitriadis et al., 2009; Rosas-Mantecón, 2008). The vulnerability they face as arts teachers deeply affects their job satisfaction, as well as the quality of their professional performance (Dimitriadis et al., 2009; Kelchtermans, 1996). This chapter presents a brief analysis of educational and cultural policies in Mexico in relation to arts and music education, with particular emphasis on how our educational context continues to perpetuate the vulnerability suffered by art teachers in their daily practice. It also addresses how public policies are supposed to favor quality education, but priorities and decisions of educational authorities put these policies and arts teachers at risk, who, as direct actors, have the responsibility of carrying them out in the classroom.

## **Cultural Policies in Mexico**

There is worldwide recognition that culture and the arts play a very important role in the life of any country that seeks to develop. Their importance is such that they are considered an expression of progress and human development (Oliva-Abarca, 2018; UNESCO, 2007). UNESCO, through the Fribourg Declaration on Cultural Rights (2007), established that "cultural rights are, like other human rights, the expression and demand of human dignity" (p. 3), and that "everyone has the right to freely take part in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to participate in scientific progress and the benefits that result from it" (p. 8). Along with this premise of culture and the arts as human rights, there are also those visions where culture is considered a common good that can be linked to economic and political spheres (Oliva-Abarca, 2018; Rodríguez-Barba, 2008), and as a source of job creation (Chamber of Deputies, 2015) and booster of local economies (United Nations Development Program, PNUD, 2014).

Public policies in Mexico are consistent with international treaties on education and culture. The Sectorial Program of Education (PSE), in the last presidential terms, has established the goal of promoting and disseminating art and culture to promote comprehensive education (SEP, 2013, 2019). To achieve such a goal, some of the described lines of action include the promotion of artistic and cultural activities in schools, expanding the options of arts education in basic education and upper secondary schools, granting scholarships and incentives in support of arts and culture education, innovating pedagogical approaches (SEP, 2013, 2019), and even a more specific action in the current PSE such as fostering musical learning through the creation of symphony orchestras, choirs and other types of music ensembles (SEP, 2019).

In the previous presidential term (2012-2018), the need to link the educational and cultural sector was also recognized; therefore, the Special Program for Culture and Arts (PECA) 2014-2018 (SEP, 2014) was created, through which the newly formed Secretariat of Culture (formerly the National

Council for Culture and the Arts, see Villaseñor-Anaya, 2016) and the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) would work closely. This document established the need to promote education, artistic and cultural research, and the development of artistic and cultural content that would meet the needs of educational materials for basic and upper secondary levels through the coordinated work of both educational and cultural instances.

In relation to arts and music in basic education specifically, the curriculum is established by SEP and is consistent with the international political discourse about their importance within general education. Being compulsory in character, the national curriculum includes arts within the areas of personal and social development, from preschool to upper secondary level (SEP, 2017a). From kindergarten to middle school, the arts curriculum includes music, visual arts, theater, and dance, whereas at the upper secondary level it includes the subjects of Aesthetics and Literature. Although arts education has been present in the curriculum for decades, it has always been relegated and has not met the minimum quality standards, since this curricular model has not clearly established the how and who is responsible for its provision, whether specialists or generalists (see CIDE, 2016). In addition, the time allotted per week—only one or two hours depending on the educational level which represents between 2.5% - 4.4% of the school day— is well below the time allotted for subjects such as Spanish and Mathematics (SEP, 2017a).

Although Mexico is a participant and signatory of international treaties (UN, UNESCO, OECD, OEI, etc.), and culture and arts are considered an integral part of quality education within public policies (Gobierno de la República, 2013, 2017; Presidencia de la República, 2019), the observance and compliance with these treaties has been deficient; cultural rights, like many other needs in Mexico, have been postponed and often violated. Investment in culture is not a government priority (Oliva-Abarca, 2018; Zamudio-Santillán, 2018), and this is evident in the budget cuts of recent years (see Table 1) as well as in the deficiencies faced by teachers and students to exercise those rights, since the resources provided by the state are insufficient (Zamudio-Santillán, 2018). Aguilar (2015) argues that budget cuts are caused or attributable to corruption and rampant impunity, affecting education, culture, public services, and quality of life in general.

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Budget in millions of pesos	29,074	22,414	18,672	19,557
Cut percentage compared to	the			
previous year	n / a	-22.91%	-16.69%	8.65%

Table 1. Federal public spending for culture, sports, and religious affairs (Cámara de Diputados, 2015, 2016, 2017,2018)

Although it is evident that guaranteeing the right of access to culture, as well as ensuring greater coverage, inclusion, and educational equity, are aspirations of the Mexican government (National Development Plan, PND, Presidencia de la República, 2019), several problems prevail in the implemented actions and indicators used to measure their success. For instance, the programs carried out by cultural and educational institutions are usually reported by simply including the number of people who attend fully or partially funded events, but the social impact or cultural progress of the country is not measured (see Gobierno de la República, 2017; Presidencia de la República, 2019; Special Program of Culture and Art, PECA, 2014-2018; Villaseñor-Anaya, 2016).

Additionally, cultural activities, and particularly those related to arts education, are often considered leisure activities by the government and private sectors, and, therefore are the first to be cut within the budget (Rosas-Mantecón, 2008).

To exemplify these inconsistencies between the aspirations of public policies, and the reality in educational and cultural matters, it is necessary to understand the particular contexts in which arts education occurs in the country. A recent example shows the inconsistencies and contradictions between public policies and the educational reality that arts teachers face repeatedly – those teachers who have in their hands the possibility of fulfilling the aspirations of a quality education that includes the arts, but who constantly struggle to achieve a position within educational centers or recognition of their work.

# A Music Program at Risk

On October 15, 2018, the state government in Chihuahua, Mexico announced the end of the orchestral program called "Music in my school" due to alleged budget adjustments and austerity strategies. In words of Rito Olivas Carreón, founder and coordinator of the program, "there were no explanations... and even the person who notified [them] expressed that it was a very sad news" (El Heraldo de Chihuahua, 2018). This program started in 1999 and served around 4,000 students per school year, from basic to upper secondary level. The teachers in charge of this program managed to initiate four symphonic orchestras, one in the city of Chihuahua and three more in the municipalities of Saucillo, Juárez, and Parral. The program included 44 professors, who, without prior notice, were summoned on October 11 to resign. This news was widely disseminated by social media as well as local and national mass media (El Heraldo de Chihuahua, 2018; Estrada, 2018; Fuentes-Sáenz, 2018).

The citizens' response was one of deep anger and frustration when observing how a program with a great tradition in the State of Chihuahua was canceled, thus affecting a large number of children and young people. For the community of music educators, it once again evidenced the vulnerability to which art is constantly exposed in various educational contexts, and in this case, in public education at the basic level, where art education teachers do not enjoy the benefits or privileges that classroom teachers have (SEP, 2017b).

Due to the wide social mobilization that it aroused in social networks and media, the state government sought to provide a prompt solution to the debate in order to avoid further damage to its political image. On October 20, the State Secretary of Education, Dr. Carlos González Herrera (2018), issued a statement in which he retracted that decision (attributing it to a "communication error"), ensuring that the program would be renewed to fit the new educational model and would be supported through the Center for Musical Studies to achieve a greater coverage at the state level.

Fortunately, these claims and the supposed budget cut to the "Music in my School" program did not have a greater negative impact since its support was reconsidered, but it did have an immediate and irreversible effect for more than half of the teachers involved in the program. Twenty-four of the 44 teachers lost their positions, including the coordinator and founder, Maestro Rito Olivas. This shows the vulnerability and uncertainty that arts and music educators live in their daily practice, being at the mercy of political actors who, due to ignorance or shielded in austerity strategies, affect art programs.

#### **Contradictions between Public Policies and Educational Reality**

Contrary to political discourse, the example of "Music in my school" shows how educational authorities make decisions that violate the rights of students and teachers in the participation and dissemination of culture and arts. Despite individual and collegiate efforts of music teachers, in this particular program, as well as in many other arts education contexts, they do not receive support or recognition for their work. Access and coverage in arts education become dystopian when teachers' rights and job stability are infringed. In contrast to educational and cultural policies of the PSE and PECA, which, as previously described, aim to expand participation in the arts by offering a greater number of arts and cultural programs, educational authorities disregard those guidelines. It is precisely arts education in general, and arts teachers in particular, that are firstly affected by those administrative decisions and budget cuts (Oliva-Abarca, 2018; Zamudio-Santillán, 2018).

Despite the weight given to the number of programs and the number of people benefited as indicators to measure the success of educational and cultural policies (PND, PECA), "Music in my School" is a clear example of how educational authorities ignore or underestimate the impact that these kinds of programs have on the community. Nor is it recognized how a relatively small number of music teachers, such as the 44 teachers working in this program, were able to serve thousands of students year after year. Even when it was argued that there would not be any further changes to the program, more than half of the teachers were fired, reducing the program's coverage and its future impact. In the words of Maestro Olivas, politicians "do not see the peso symbol...they do not know that it is an investment...they arrive, they hurt, and they leave, instead of considering how to strengthen existing programs, hiring more teachers, including more schools, or offering teacher training" (R. Olivas, personal communication, November 28, 2018). Despite that the literature widely supports the role of music and arts on human development, the ex-coordinator argues that educational authorities "are unaware of the full potential of the arts to reduce the effect of negative distractions and enhance development of children and youth" (R. Olivas, personal communication, November 28, 2018).

The beliefs and value system assumed by authorities at the top of the educational systems are conceptualized based on the dominant political ideologies. The "Music in my School" program was established in the administration of then Governor Patricio Martínez García of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), and held for two more presidential terms in which the PRI remained in power. Similarly, the music education program called "Plan Villa," based on the National System of Orchestras and Youth and Children's Choirs of Venezuela, started in the previous state government (2010-2016). However, with the entry of the National Action Party in 2016, under the governorship of Javier Corral Jurado, this last program was formally closed after multiple accusations of embezzlement and corruption by the responsible authorities (Cano, 2017), and the "Music in my School" program has faced the greatest risk for its permanence and continuity. Without the intention of arguing that a party is for or against arts and music programs, political changes also imply changes in structures, ideologies, and priorities in the very diverse areas of public policies including education, culture, and arts.

As it can be seen, while public policies maintain their positive tone and emphasize the purposes and aspirations in educational and cultural matters, attitudes and decisions of politicians and educational authorities account for the incongruities in the educational reality. Arts teachers go through a process in which they try to interpret and make sense of policies and curricular guidelines that govern the education system in terms of arts education for their proper integration into the school environment. But in addition to that, teachers must respond to waves of susceptibility based on their weak position as art educators, in front of the educational authorities.

#### Sources of Vulnerability in the Context of Art Education

Although many aspects related to the educational context can be generators of feelings of susceptibility and vulnerability for art teachers in Mexico, as we saw it particularly exemplified in the case of "Music in my School" and that have the potential to profoundly affect programs of music and arts education, here we will focus on three of them specifically: (a) the job situation of arts teachers in basic education, (b) curricular expectations, and (c) visions of what arts education is or should be in our country.

#### The Job Situation of Arts and Music Teachers in Mexico

One of the sources of greater vulnerability for art teachers in Mexico is their particular job situation; as Bullough (2005) argues, differences in the context and employment circumstances reduce or increase the sense of vulnerability. In basic education, music teachers are at an obvious disadvantage compared to classroom teachers, who have greater job security and stability. Generalist teachers are granted full teaching positions serving in a single school, whereas arts teachers can only access positions at the level of "technical teacher," with appointments as an accompanying teacher in preschool and special education, or as a teacher of arts education serving in various primary schools. Only in secondary school is it expected that specialist teachers teachers teach one of the four artistic areas based on their own specialization (SEP, 2017b).

Dealing with vulnerability is to a large extent part of the life experience of all educators in basic education, particularly when facing threats of a punitive teacher evaluation (Gil-Antón, 2013) since the last Educational Reform and its Professional Teaching Service (which defines the mechanisms for the admission, promotion, recognition, and permanence of teachers, see SEP, 2016, 2017b). However, the conditions of risk and uncertainty are even greater for teachers of arts education. Historically, many arts teachers have worked under a semi-annual or annual contract, as was still the case of teachers who provided their services in the "Music in my School" program whose contracts were terminated, despite that "the salaries were almost symbolic" (El Heraldo de Chihuahua, 2018) and the cost of the program was extremely low (R. Olivas, personal communication, November 28, 2018). On limited occasions, the opportunity was given to specialist teachers to enter public education, since classroom teachers were given priority in assigning positions even when they did not have the specialization in the arts to teach art education. To these difficulties it must be added the corruption that characterized the educational system, where available positions were commonly granted to friends, political supporters, or relatives, although the political discourse has been focused on eradicating such practices through the evaluation of merit and teaching performance (SEP, 2017b). In recent years, a greater number of specialist teachers have been accepted into the public sector based on their teaching profiles and merits, although the demand for specialist teachers in schools is not covered. This also implies that in order to obtain a sufficient number of hours to achieve a living wage, many of the arts teachers go to more than one educational center to teach their classes.

Beyond the differences in appointments between classroom teachers and specialists, as suggested by Dimitriadis et al. (2009),

[art educators] live and operate within a culture of scarcity, having to justify their increasingly marginalized vocations while competing for continually shrinking resources. The result is an often deep-bodied sense of 'vulnerability', one which saturates the social field (both micro and macro) of arts education in ways that are often not publicly acknowledged. (p. 361)

As long as art teachers do not obtain job security through permanent positions, they will continue to be vulnerable to the decision-making power of educational authorities (Kelchtermans, 1996) who ultimately determine how and under what conditions they will carry out their teaching work.

#### **Curricular Expectations and Institutional Requirements**

The literature suggests that a higher degree of vulnerability is experienced by teachers in contexts where standardized tests are a priority (Dimitriadis et al., 2009). This aspect is directly related to the importance attributed to the various curricular contents, that is, which subjects should be considered a priority over the others, depending on what is examined and what is not. Such evaluation also determines decisions in the use of the materials and financial resources available to educational institutions, as well as the time allocated to teaching each school subject. For Dimitriadis et al. (2009), "that the arts are 'not concrete' are both their blessing and their curse" (p. 362). In Mexico, this is widely reflected in the attitudes taken by educational and school authorities, by giving higher priority to subjects considered "academic," such as Spanish (language), Mathematics, and Science, which are normally examined nationally and internationally (PLANEA, EXCALE, PISA tests), as well as the large differences in workload assigned to each subject (SEP, 2017a). Since arts are not tested, art educators must often sacrifice their class hours for classroom teachers to continue preparing students for standardized tests. This shows the discrepancy in the value system attributed to each of the school subjects, and in particular, the low level of importance given to the arts compared to those considered academic subjects (González-Moreno, 2010; McPherson & O'Neill, 2010). As suggested by Mtro. Olivas, the educational authorities do not necessarily understand what the arts contribute to the education of young people and adults or how music allows them to express themselves and experience the world around them. It becomes an unsuccessful effort that fails to position the arts as an essential subject within the curriculum, largely because its contents are not evaluated through standardized tests. While art teachers are aware of the importance of their discipline, in the school context there is a constant struggle between what is considered necessary and vital, and what for some educational actors may be considered superfluous and unnecessary. There is even a perception that the arts could be taken more seriously if there were more concrete ways to evaluate them or to measure their impact on student development (Dimitriadis et al., 2009).

#### Visions about what Art Education Is or Should Be

Teachers' visions of what arts education entails are usually opposed to expectations of educational authorities and the impositions of SEP through its compulsory national curriculum. While it emphasizes the inclusion of activities in four artistic areas – music, visual arts, theater, and dance – the preparation of teachers tends to be specialized in only one of these disciplines (see González-Moreno, 2015). Thus, expectations in relation to the provision of arts education

increase the pressure and vulnerability of teachers facing difficulties trying to comply with these profile demands and distancing from their interest in their own discipline. Additionally, teachers' views contrast with the curricular guidelines as to how much and at what level of depth their own disciplinary area could be addressed compared to the institutional and governmental requirements to teach four disciplines in a superficial way. Therefore, teachers face doubts and stress when considering whether the content they teach, as well as the pedagogical strategies used to facilitate artistic learning, are the most appropriate (Ramanaidu et al., 2014) considering their limited training oriented to mastering a single discipline.

The nature of individual views on what art education is or should be, as well as interpersonal relationships that occur in the school context, play a predominant role in how arts educators deal with risks and their sense of vulnerability. If the relationships between colleagues and educational authorities are favorable, the programs tend to be a success, whereas if the relations are tense, the programs tend to weaken (Dimitriadis et al, 2009). The important thing is to generate confidence in the potential results of arts programs, a confidence that is difficult to achieve when there are divergences in institutional expectations and the particular views of educational actors, which lead to the isolation of arts teachers. Therefore, the lack of a sense of relevance within the school culture also contributes to an increase in the level of vulnerability, leading to an unfavorable motivation and job performance not only of teachers who are starting teaching (Caires et al., 2012), but also in teachers with a wide professional career.

## Discussion

As suggested by both the literature and the case examined, arts teachers experience a high degree of vulnerability, instability, and uncertainty in the face of the challenges posed by the educational context, particularly under governmental, ideological, and curricular changes (Ball, 2003; Lasky, 2004). The sources of vulnerability that arts teachers face in the school context are not only administrative in nature, but also political (Kelchtermans, 1996). Policies at the macro level, such as policies on education and culture, as well as political conditions at the micro level, as exemplified in the arbitrary decisions of educational actors, can put arts programs and, consequently, teachers at risk. As Kelchtermans (1996) argues,

vulnerability implies the feeling that one's professional identity and moral integrity are questioned. Coping with it therefore implies political action in order to (re)gain the social recognition of one's professional self and restore the necessary workplace conditions for good job performance. (p. 307)

In these circumstances, it becomes a priority to recognize and understand the moral and political dimensions that affect the work experiences of arts teachers. While at the micro level, teachers experience limitations of their impact on students' learning, it is also necessary to strengthen their position in the educational context in front of directors, colleagues, and parents, and even beyond the school in front of educational authorities and policymakers.

Although various authors suggest that the state of vulnerability may be a motivating force behind human development or a determining factor of competition (Dewey, 1929), the burden of vulnerability and adverse educational contexts faced by arts and music teachers can be decisive in the abandonment of their teaching responsibilities (Hancock, 2008; Madsen & Hancock, 2002).

If educational authorities in Mexico seek to be consistent with the political discourse, they must consider to what extent culture, arts, and arts education are equally supported. Countries that set benchmarks of excellent academic achievements worldwide, such as Finland, show the importance of supporting these areas not only discursively but also financially, as an essential part of a comprehensive education and in compliance with the rights to access and participation in arts and culture. Comparatively, Finland has assigned a public expenditure per capita for the arts of approximately  $\pounds$ 59.2, which corresponds to 2.10% of total public expenditure, even well above other first world countries such as the United States which only allocates  $\pounds$ 3.8 per capita and 0.13% of total public expenditure (Canada Council for the Arts, 2005).

It is important to understand that arts education is directly related to participation in cultural and artistic activities (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). Participation is required to develop abilities for understanding and appreciating the ways of expression, symbologies, and cultural contexts in which the arts are developed. If this condition is not fulfilled, people who have not cultivated those skills find the artistic experiences less rewarding. It is important to recognize the work of teachers as educators of audiences who participate and enjoy the arts, as it is their right. Accordingly, educational authorities must revalue the role of arts teachers to promote these skills in their students. For this reason, the circumstances that generate high levels of vulnerability should be reduced, by virtue of the necessity to support teachers' roles in the formation of a cultured and participatory citizenship in the arts, as proposed by international treaties and our own public policies.

Despite the adverse circumstances that arts and music teachers face in their daily practice, motivation, purpose, and commitment for teaching is always present. It is important to highlight the impact that mass and social media have in generating awareness, resistance, and social mobilization to prevent budget cuts and revert political decisions from affecting arts programs. The support that citizens provide is of great value, as it can be the force that pushes educational authorities to reconsider those decisions that put arts education at risk.

Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen the support among educators themselves, looking for a consensus on voices that allow advocating for the inclusion of the arts in different educational contexts. In a collegiate way, raising one's voice in favor of music and the arts remains a priority. It is still necessary to reinforce the creation and development of associations that bring together arts educators at the local, regional, and national levels. Associations that represent artists and teachers in all their different functions (such as art educators, creators, researchers, cultural managers, etc.) and that work together to facilitate the realization of a national plan that advocates for a better position of the arts and arts education within the curriculum, as well as in cultural policies, truly reflect the voice of their main actors.

During the last federal government transition, there was a new hope that greater support for culture and arts would materialize (Vértiz de la Fuente, 2018) and that the punitive evaluation that characterized the educational reform of the previous federal government would be eradicated (Olmos, 2018). The appointed Secretary of Education, Esteban Moctezuma Barragan, had expressed that SEP would "reassess the importance of teachers who were victims of a campaign that denigrated them...[and promote] the arts, sports and citizenship as part of the curriculum" (Olmos, 2018, para. 2, 14). Unfortunately, at the time of this publication, it was clear it was another fake commitment. It evidenced a political discourse that concealed particular

interests, as was the case with the decision that SEP absorbed a music program that he previously promoted as president of Fundación Azteca (Orquestas Esperanza Azteca, from Grupo Salinas), to later dismantle it, firing a large number of music teachers in Mexico (Milla, 2020; Sosa, 2020) who were not even hired as music teachers within the public system nor fairly paid (González-Moreno, 2021).

It remains a pending task to recognize the contribution of arts and music teachers within the education system, so that they are provided with the job security and stability that all educators require for the exercise of their profession. If arts education depends exclusively on its provision by classroom teachers, then it will remain inconsistent with public policies or even non-existent in many educational contexts. In short, without strong and consistent policies on arts education, as well as educational authorities being consistent with political discourse, arts programs will remain on the fringes of educational priorities, which, at this historical and political point, should no longer be permissible.

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# Sem Título (ou Ainda Pensando um Título) [Without a Title (or Wondering About a Title)]<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** The history of art cannot be understood as a mere list of artists, works and styles or arts movements. Its main purpose is to unveil the humanistic narrative based on credible written and iconographic resources and simultaneously to open critical public debate on historical, social and cultural outlines bearing in mind the concept of contemporaneity.

It is urgent to rethink both theory and practice as well as teaching methodologies and adapt them to the new paradigm where globalization prevails.

**Resumo:** A História da Arte não é mais uma listagem simples de artistas, obras e estilos / movimentos artísticos. Valoriza uma narrativa humanística com investigação das fontes documentais, escritas e iconográficas, e, essencialmente, provoca o debate crítico sobre os contextos históricos, culturais e sociais da produção e fruição da arte, sempre numa perspectiva contemporânea.

Perante novos paradigmas da produção e fruição da arte, e num tempo que predomina a globalização / mundialização, é necessário repensar as práticas e metodologias de ensino dos programas curriculares.

Partimos de um exemplo da disciplina de História da Cultura e das Artes (Ensino Secundário) para problematizar questões sobre o processamento de informação curricular destinada a um aluno cada vez mais globalizado (ou já cidadão do mundo).

Como atender à dicotomia local/global e/ou global/local no mundo das aprendizagens?

Since the Renaissance, and especially with the work of Giorgio Vasari (Arezo, 1511-Florence, 1574) and Le Vite de'piú eccellenti pittori, scultori et architetti [The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects] published in 1550 in Florence by Lorenzo Torrentino (1499-1563), the History of Art has abandoned the simple listing of works and artists. Although still very biographical, it has entered a humanistic narrative experience with the investigation of sources, cataloguing of works, and critical and stylistic study. With the Morellian method, proposed by Giovanni Morelli (Verona, 1816 - Milan, 1891) and followed by other historians such as Roberto Longhi (Alba, 1890 - Florence, 1970), the study of works of art focused on the in-depth analysis of secondary details. Heinrich Wölfflin (Winterthur, 1864 - Zurich, 1945) advocated a more formalistic method conveyed in the work Principes fondamentaux de l'Histtoire de l'Art [Fundamentals of the History of Art] (1915), widely translated and edited to the present day, with its antithetical models (linear/pictorial, surface/depth, closed/open, compositional unit/unit uniform, absolute clarity/relative clarity). Although still in the formalist path, other historians have contributed to the clearing of poorly studied areas of plastic works, valuing the expressive identity (author), as one reads in Henri Focillon's (Dijon, 1881 - USA, 1943) Vie des formes [Life of Forms] (1934). In these proposals, the formal and descriptive study of works of art is emphasized, while the social-historical constraints were excluded. This will later be explored from a sociological and Marxist perspective, as well as the proposals of Frederick Antal (Budapest, 1887 - London, 1954) and Nicos Hadjinicolaou (Greece, 1938-).

It is worth emphasizing the change of paradigm in art history. There has been a gradual abandonment of the merely formal analysis of the work of art and a centralisation of the guiding principles of iconography and iconology as operative instruments of historical-artistic science, as proclaimed by Aby Warburg (Hamburg, 1866 - Hamburg, 1929), Fritz Saxl (Vienna, 1890 - London, 1948), Erwin Panofsky (Hanover, 1892 - USA, 1968), and E. H. Gombrich (Vienna, 1909 - London, 2001). They have introduced a method which will include, in a wider and more comprehensive concept, *the subject, the form and the meaning*, as Vitor Serrão explains (Toulouse, 1952-). Panofsky's (1939) works are indispensable, especially *Studies on Iconography* where he elucidates the three levels of significance of the work of art: 1 - pre-iconographic level (primary description of the work in formal and stylistic terms); 2 - iconographic level (analysis of the themes and concepts expressed in the work, relating them to events and literary sources); and 3 - iconological level (interpretation of the intrinsic meaning of the work of art and decoding symbologies, and integration into the cultural context).

It is important to note the works of Ernst Cassirer (Poland, 1874 - New York, 1945), Meyer Schapiro (Lithuania, 1904 - New York, 1996), George Kubler (Los Angeles, 1912 - USA, 1996), Daniel Arasse (Algeria, 1944 - Paris, 2003), Susan Sontag (New York, 1933 - New York, 2004), Arthur Danto (USA, 1924 - New York, 2013), Umberto Eco (Italy, 1932 - Milan, 2016), Hans Belting (Germany, 1935-), David Feedberg (South Africa, 1948-), George Didi-Huberman (France, 1953-), among others. These authors contributed to the construction of a "new iconology" by positioning the study of a work of art in its aesthetic program, contributing to an integral and global study. This analysis is based on images' polysemy, of understanding meanings, explaining the images' meanings, accepting the inexhaustibility and trans-contextuality of the works, and promoting reflection and debate instead of closing knowledge in strongboxes. We can also quote Marc Bayard (France, 1969 -) with *L'histoire de l'art et le comparatisme: Les horizons du détour* (2007) or the works and authors that give tone to this edition (including Delacruz, Meskimmon, and Said).

This introduction is based on a small reflection about the school curriculum of *History of Culture and Arts,* an optional subject taught in the Secondary level in Portugal, within scientific-humanistic courses in Visual Arts and Languages, Literatures, and also in the scientific component of the specialized courses in Visual Arts, Dance, Music, and Theatre. This curriculum was approved in 2004 and coordinated by António Filipe Pimentel, teacher at the Instituto de História da Arte da Universidade de Coimbra and former director of Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (Lisbon).

The History of Culture and Arts program, despite allowing and even fomenting the study of history, culture, and art comparing the present to the past, is soon constrained in practice by its extensive programme content and small academic load. Additionally, it is a subject for which there are national examinations, some of which determine access to higher levels of education. These factors influence the pedagogical practices that structure the objectives defined in the national curriculum, such as mobilizing cultural, scientific, and technological knowledge to understand and address everyday situations and problems. The subject's own program includes: "To adopt personalised working and learning methodologies adjusted to the aims set;" "To search, select and organise information to turn it into usable knowledge;" "To cooperate with others in common tasks and projects." It is true that the program mentioned addresses contemporaneity and the global world, especially through the study of breakthroughs and vanguards over time, and specifically through the modules Film Culture and Virtual Space Culture, which imply an approach to the "global world." However, it is also difficult to explore the most current problems of globalisation 4. 0, whether by setting out the importance of the so-called "fourth industrial revolution" or by exploring the political, social, economic, and cultural phenomena underlying globalization and deglobalization in the post-modern world where ideas of decentralisation, deconstruction, negation, anti-aesthetics, or even multiculturalism and feminism are propagated.

We are, of course, facing a new paradigm, but globalisation is not a recent phenomenon. Let us remember, for example, the role of the Portuguese in the discoveries and the role of the Madeira archipelago in Portuguese globalisation, especially at a time when we are celebrating 600 years from the discovery of the Archipelago of Madeira and Porto Santo. We will not question the "600 Years" program (or its absence, or even the designation chosen), nor will we analyze or problematize the *History of Culture and Arts* program, in the active part of its teaching for fourteen years, but we will continue with questions previously presented (Rodrigues, 2011, pp. 53-60). We insist that a work of art, in particular, is a factor of knowledge, as long as the fruition and delight in it are understood in its amplitude of conception-time-space-context, starting from its original moment (production) and classifying the work of art as a "living object" in its trans-contextuality and trans-memory, as Vitor Serrão (2007) has defended. On the other hand, the whole work of art should always be declared contemporary, regardless of its date, following the concepts proposed by Arthur Danto (1987) and recognizing the potentiality that every work of art has to excite and to provoke debate, as Umberto Eco (1992, 1993) recommends.

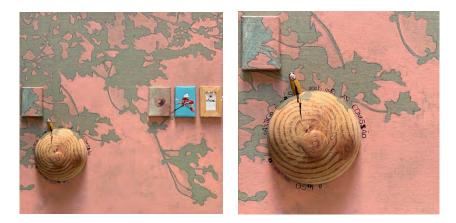
It is in this path that we propose to use the plastic works of two Madeiran artists, Carla Cabral (Funchal, 1971-) and Pedro Berenguer (Funchal, 1982-), as an introduction to several programmatic contents of the *History of Culture and Arts*. We argue that all curricular subjects of all teaching degrees should include a specific module for the study of local history (Rodrigues, 2011, p. 54), starting from contemporary experiences to the study of the past.

From Pedro Berenguer (2011) we selected O estranho caso do pião e da boneca russa [The strange case of the Russian top and doll] (see Figures 1 and 2) from a private collection, which was part of the exhibition Memórias de Criança [Children's Memories] in Casa da Cultura de Santana. It presents a mixed technique on canvas with acrylic painting, colored pencils, and object collage (part of a wooden top, four canvases, pins, and a matryoshka). It consists of a canvas (50 x 50 cm) as a base support, on which a simplified vegetal element has been painted, whose interpretation refers to the shadow of a tree. Four small canvases (5 x 7 cm) have been glued onto the larger canvas, one of which is positioned inside out, with a red dot in the upper visual field around which pins have been stuck and where the word "rAval" is read. Another canvas depicts part of the plant element through formal and compositional continuity, passing from the flat shade of branches and foliage to a polychromic floral element. On another canvas, a nipple was represented in a simplified way. A three-dimensional object that it is glued is part of a wooden spinning top, cut by the upper part of the spherical cap, around which the following sentence is read: "The game in which punishment is sweeter than confession." Each word is graphically composed simultaneously in upper case letters (initials or capital letters) and lower case (small letters). Additionally, a matryoshka, a smaller piece of a modular set typical of these Russian dolls, is placed exactly in the direction of a crack in the wood of the spinning top that gives continuity to the doll's dress, purposely painted for this composition. It should be noted that the selected part of the top alludes formally and symbolically to a female breast, while the matryoshka symbolizes motherhood and fertility, matters which we will return to later.

Using Berenguer's (2011) piece we can commonly approach concepts of works of art, artistic production, ways of representation, and techniques, and even question the importance of the titles in contemporary art. It is also interesting to explore and develop the concept of heritage, with emphasis on immaterial heritage (the game of the spinning top; Portuguese traditions), thus aiming to establish the general skills of the students as proposed in the curriculum and stipulating the preservation and enhancement of artistic and cultural heritage as an act of citizenship. On the other hand, the word Raval (i.e., "el raval barrio") in Barcelona makes it possible to locate a territory geographically (Iberian Peninsula / Spain) and to explain historical and artistic aspects of several European cities. These include the importance of medieval walls, the fortification of sites and cities, and the Black Plague, for example (Module: Cathedral Culture). Essentially, we aim to discuss aspects of multiculturalism driven by globalization, with reference to peoples of various races and creeds from ancient times to the present day. These concepts in themselves entail critical analysis of the problems inherent in human migration (emigration and immigration) and the resulting socio-economic asymmetries, as well as the reference to prominent figures in the arts who, in their movement throughout Europe and the United States of America, contributed to the first, second, and third artistic vanguards (Modules: Film Culture and Virtual Space Culture). References include the work of Robert and Sonia Delaunay (France, Ukraine, and Portugal), the artists of Dadaism (art non-sense or anti-art), as war refugees (Germany / Switzerland), or the teachers and founding artists of the Bauhaus (Russia / Germany / France / Switzerland / United States). It is thus possible to mobilize knowledge acquired in History of Culture and Arts to critically analyze contemporary reality and develop general skills, as proposed in the curriculum itself, taking the opportunity to address similar realities in the 21st century exemplified by national and foreign art works and artists as a consequence of emigration and immigration. Examples include Madeiran artists with works in Mudas Contemporary Art Museum like Silvestre Pestana (Funchal, 1949-), Rigo 23 (Funchal, 1966-) or Hugo Brasão (Funchal, 1989-).

Returning to Pedro Berenguer's (2011) work O estranho caso do pião e da boneca russa, it is also possible to benefit from the simplified shadow representation observed in this painting and introduce the study of Lourdes Castro's work here as an example of aesthetic influence. We can engage in a study of Portuguese artistic production (Portugal: ways of expression of contemporary Portuguese art - Module: Virtual Space Culture), with reference to the group KWY, composed of artists of various nationalities (Portugal, Bulgaria, and Germany). Among them are Lourdes Castro, René Bertholo, Costa Pinheiro, João Vieira, José Escada, Christo, and Jan Voss, and the publication of the magazine with the same name in Paris (1958; 1964). KWY Magazine's editorial project included the collaboration of António Areal, Jorge Martins, François Dufrêne, Raymond Hains, Bernard Heidsieck, Yves Klein, and the participation of other magazines, such as Daily-Bul and Sens Plastique, and artists of various nationalities (Portugal, France). It should be mentioned that KWY is not very explicit in the History of Culture and Arts curriculum, although there is a focus on the internationalization of Portuguese art that has been abandoning classification by artistic trends. Additional questions include: how is the current relationship between Portuguese art and international art? Is this separation relevant today, in the first decades of the 21st century? Which national artists are being featured beyond Portuguese borders? Which international artists work in Portugal? And how are the Madeiran artists mentioned?

Still *O estranho caso do pião e da boneca russa* makes it possible to approach the importance of the press through the characters of the written words (text) in the painting, which explores the typographic characters in upper and lower case. The letters, words, and texts are enunciators of communication, here poetic and polysemic, which point out the importance of the written press which in its early days articulated Humanism, and the press with the scientific revolution and the contribution made by Guttenberg (1400-1468) to the Renaissance and religious reforms (Counter-Reformation and Catholic Reform) (Module: *The Culture of the Palace*). Berenguer's (2011) work also relates the plastic arts to literature.



*Figures 1 & 2. Berenguer, B. (2011). O estranho caso do pião e da boneca russa [Mixed technique on canvas]. Private collection. Photo: Pedro Berenguer* 

We now take as examples two works by Carla Cabral: *Tudo o que me dói no egoísmo que trago* [All that hurts me in the selfishness I bring] and *Sempre lhe foi dito que devia passar despercebida* [You've always been told you should go unnoticed]. These could also serve as a reason to debate concepts

around works of art, artistic production, modes of representation, and techniques such as questioning the importance of titles in contemporary art, here as a substratum of the piece itself.

We start with Tudo o que me dói no egoísmo que trago (9 x 17 cm) from a private collection (see Figures 3 and 4). This is a drawing / collage that was exhibited at Estalagem da Ponta do Sol in 2015, in the artist's solo exhibition, 100 leaves | 100 folhas. A young woman with decorous breasts exhibits a fish on her lower abdomen, with elements represented on her body in a set of transparencies. Prioritizing the contour line, the figure is outlined in a simplified manner. It is worth emphasizing the symbolic and metaphorical character of the image, which brings us to an 18th century painting of Madeiran heritage, in the chapel of Espírito Santo or Esmeraldos (Ponta do Sol), although we know that this drawing was not used as a reference. We are referring to Imaculada, painting on canvas, from a regional workshop and dating from around 1760, which, although naive, projects the erudite orientation of the painter and/or the commissioner. It is an unusual iconography in Portuguese art where a female figure, in this case the Virgin Mary, with her arms and cloak slightly apart, allows the viewer to observe the figurine of a fetus (Jesus) in her womb, closer to her heart, painted on her red dress. Rare were the artists who "painted on the garments, and as if they could see the wombs of their mothers, the figures of their children" (Manique, 1947). In this painting, we can also see the Immaculate Conception on a large blue globe crushing the serpent, and in one hand holding a branch of lilies. It is supremely protected by God the Father in his configuration as an elderly man with a white beard and hair, and by the Dove of the Holy Spirit, from where a golden yellow light emanates forming a triangle. On its right side, an angel rising over an orange tree displays the acronym IHS. At the feet of the Virgin there are shepherds dressed humbly. In the background, on a plaque topped by forms of rolling and concoctions of rococo aesthetics, the phrase "Fecit mihi magna qui protens est e sanctum nomen ejus" was painted, in a clear allusion to the merciful moment of the Visitation (Rodrigues, 2009, pp. 23-47, 2012, p. 66). This correlation between Carla Cabral's drawing of 2015 and the painting of the 18th century by an unknown painter, apparently without connection, allows us to discuss the relevance of studying and valuing the workshops and the island artists from a perspective of local history and micro-history. We address how to explore and decode the meaning of iconographic elements - such as the breast, fish, snake, dove, lily, and IHS - evident in European and Portuguese religious art (Modules: Monastery Culture; Cathedral Culture; Stage *Culture*). But, essentially, we question the contemporary value of the work of art, respecting the analytical categories and indicators proposed in the History of Culture and Arts Program, such as Time, Space, Place, and Event.

It should be emphasized that the use of a painting with a religious theme does not question any devotion and/or creed of the students, given that it is used only as an artistic object that is, as an iconographic source, document or testimony of a historical and cultural time. This is similar to other examples taken from the program under consideration, even as an occasion to clarify concepts of religious art and sacred art.

Another work by Carla Cabral, which we take as our motto, is the one entitled *Sempre lhe foi dito que devia passar despercebida* [You've always been told you should go unnoticed] (52.5 x 72.5 cm, see Figures 5 and 6], mixed technique on 300 gram *Canson* paper, fine-tip white marker drawing, and acrylic painting as well as a collage of a three-dimensional female figure made of papier-mâché. From November 2018 to February 2019, the collage was integrated in the solo exhibition

*Salobros Afetos* at Casa das Mudas Gallery (Calheta), curated by Márcia Sousa, director of *Mudas: Museum of Contemporary Art*. This work and the whole core of the exhibition refer to

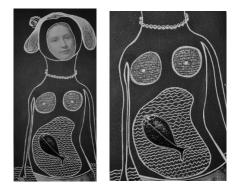
an architectural landscape with titles that direct the viewer's thought, forcing him to reread the titles and to re-look (and re-feel) the work. The titles map out familiar territories, evoking memories: "The weight of the love that inspires" or "I join them to understand what I feel" or "We always start by being an extremity when they touch us" or "You are also what others want" or "I won't always be able to accompany myself" or "The weight of the love that is inhaled" or "There are shoulders that are difficult to reach" or "You were always told that you should go unnoticed" or "We are strangers to others" or "Verbalization from me to me", or "There are beings much bigger than us"... or "Are you listening to me? Yes, say it:" let's read the other titles (and keep thinking about the other works). (Rodrigues, 2018)

Once again, we focus on the titles and their symbolism to interpret the work. *Sempre lhe foi dito que devia passar despercebida* [You were always told that you should go unnoticed] is also

A poetic journey into the world of childhood (only to the places of memory where innocence still lives) and into the disturbing (but dazzling) universe of adults (navigators without a compass who cannot find the point of return). The characters, human and animal, are constantly found, recreated and reinvented, and embrace, in synchronic communion, love, passion and life (escaping exogenous disturbances). In (pretended) dialogue, or in mirrored image (another memory), the characters fall asleep in profound monologues. (Rodrigues, 2018)

We can also analyze the Madeiran cultural experiences through the reference to the "barrete de viloa" (villager's traditional headpiece). This is an element subtly noted in the female figure, a relief glued and executed in papier-mâché.

In *Tudo o que me dói no egoísmo que trago* [Everything that hurts me in the selfishness I bring] and *Sempre lhe foi dito que devia passar despercebida* [You were always told that you should pass unnoticed], concepts that motivate the study of Expressionism and Poetic Surrealism can also be explored, such as those expressed in the works of Paul Klee and Chagal (Module: *Film Culture*).



*Figures 3 & 4. Cabral, C. (2015).* Tudo o que me dói no egoísmo que trago [*Drawing/collage*]. *Private collection (Rita Rodrigues). Photo: Rita Rodrigues* 



*Figures 5 & 6. Cabral, C. (2016).* Sempre lhe foi dito que devia passar despercebida [*Mixed technique on paper*]. *Private collection. Photo: Marco Gonçalves* 



Figure 7. Imaculada [Painting]. (18th century). Esmeraldos' Chapel, Ponta do Sol. Photo: Rita Rodrigues

Berenguer's (2011) O estranho caso do pião e da boneca russa and Cabral's (2015, 2016) Tudo o que me dói no egoísmo que trago and Sempre lhe foi dito que devia passar despercebida are viable didactic resources, always with the respective theoretical and practical basis, and going through the study of the work of art from today (present) to yesterday (past). These three works have in common the representation of the feminine bosom, with a strongly symbolic presence. They could be related to existing works in Madeira's heritage, such as Nossa Senhora do Leite e São Domingos e São Francisco and the Virgem do leite from Nossa Senhora da Candelária Chapel of (Tabua) and the São Roque Church (Funchal), respectively, in Funchal's Religious Art Museum. They could even relate to the Charity's figure represented in the *Três Virtudes Teologais* [Three Theological Virtues], in the belvedere of this museum. Nossa Senhora do Leite e São Domingos e São Francisco, an oil painting on wood from a Portuguese atelier, dates back to the 16th century. Today it is recomposed because it was cut in half, separating the upper part (Virgin) from the lower part (saints) (Rodrigues, 1997, 2012; Santa Clara, 2004). The Virgem do leite is an oil painting on canvas (69.5 x 53 cm) from the first quarter of the 17th century, and is attributed to a Portuguese atelier. The allegory to Charity is a figure from the composition *Três Virtudes Teologais* that is on the tile panel. This is from an 18th century Portuguese atelier, which is still engraved by Giovanni Battista Sintes (1680-1760) and on a drawing by Pietro Zerman (active 1700-1720) (Simões, 1963), as well as other prints such as those by Hans Sebald Beham (1500-1550) or Hendrik Goltzius (1558-1617). It is also represented in O martírio de Santa Úrsula e das onze mil virgens, an oil painting (275 x 231

cm) signed in 1653 by Martim Conrado (active 1646 -1653), a painter of the Portuguese protobaroque generation (Rodrigues, 2012) from the Colégio Church and also on display at the Funchal's Religious Art Museum. Or still, *A fuga para o Egipto* [The flight to Egypt] by a regional painter, possibly Manuel de Andrade (active 1662-1672), in the Angústias Chapel (Quinta Vigia) (Rodrigues, 2012). These five works (paintings and tiles) are well suited to the introduction of specific subjects (contents / narratives) of the reforms and spiritualties (Reform and Counter-Reformation), as well as the *Modern Devotion* and the causes and consequences of the Council of Trent. We emphasize the XXV session (3 and 4 December 1563), which promulgated the decree on the veneration of relics and the legitimate use of images, defending clarity, verisimilitude, legibility, decorum, and devotion. Those principles are also observed in the guidelines issued in the *Constituições Sinodais do Funchal* (1585 and 1601), concerning art and the production of images, avoiding the dangers of superstitions, such as false beliefs and false dogmas, and of Protestant iconoclasm, as well as the art of Renaissance, Mannerism, and Baroque (Modules: *Palace Culture* and *Stage Culture*).

The works mentioned above are an integral part of the regional mobile artistic heritage today. Through them, it is possible to study the issues inherent to techniques and formalisms (structuring concepts) according to the historical periods of artistic production, and also to understand the phenomenon behind the temporal and conceptual barriers (concepts, origins, and epistemologies) of artistic styles, as well as to identify and characterize the antecedents and influences (close and remote) and the aesthetic-formal characteristics, typologies, themes, etc. However, the represented themes, religious and mythological, which implied the representation of the naked womb of female figures, also points to the study of the decorum and metaphorical value of images. In this matter, besides mentioning the Council of Trent and its consequences (Modules: Palace Culture and Stage Culture), it is possible to mention the way the Tridentine directives were received and applied in Portugal and Madeira, especially in art. For example, in 1693, the then bishop of Funchal, D. José de Santa Maria, argued that the way of using the sacred images differentiated the representation and the evoked figures, reinforcing that the images were metaphorical (Rodrigues, 2012). Other examples, now taken up from international production, are works referred to in the modules of the History of Culture and Arts, such as The Virgin and Child with Angels or The Melun Diptych by Jean Fouquet (1420-1481), Gabrielle d'Estrées and her sister, Duchess of Villars by an anonymous painter from the so-called School of Fontainebleau (from 1531), or A Lady in Her bath, attributed to François Clouet (Tours, 1510 - Paris, 1572).

Throughout history, concepts of sensuality, pleasure, fertility, and life have been associated with the bosom, but the idea of sin also followed its representation. Through the reading of poems inserted in *Le Roman de la rose* (Renato, 1893), a medieval literary work written around 1230, the sense of sensuality connoted with sin or decency is well noted, especially through the female figure, or rather her body: "There is one that leaves visible / The breast to be seen / Flesh of whiteness remains / And another that does not dislike / Bringing aside the exposed flesh / Another the legs much discovers" or "To what the woman consents / Her bare breasts feel / The flesh all touch / To the excess it will not steal" (Bologne, 1990, p. 61). In the 15th century, a naked or bare breast was "a plague that poisons from afar when you lay your eyes on them" (Bologne, 1990, p. 77).

In the face of the audacity of so many plastic works, well documented in the *History of Art* since Antiquity, the iconic image of Ilona Staller, a porn artist known as Cicciolina, is almost

insignificant. Cicciolina was a member of parliament in Italy (1987-1992). She campaigned in the streets and showed her breatss in public demonstrations, and thus presented herself in several European parliaments including Portugal. This reference to Cicciolina is interesting because she was the model of the American artist Jeff Koons (USA, 1955 -), to whom she was married. Jeff Koons, who starts from a certain distortion of Pop Art channeling his production to today's massively consumable everyday world, explores the plastic-expressive languages of Postmodernism, as is the example of the series *Made in Heaven* (1989) which includes pieces like "Jeff and Ilona" and "Ilona on Top." He shamelessly exposes his intimate and sexual life with a great narcissistic tendency, and is applauded by many artists, gallery owners, curators, and critics reaching his works in the art market, but also censored by many others. Part of his work is well mentioned in Postmodernism, such as as *Puppy* (1992), *Split-Rocker* (2000) and the series *Balloon* (2004-2011) and *Gazing Ball* (2013-2016). How can we study Postmodernism (Module: *Virtual Space Culture*) without mentioning Jeff Koons? And how do we integrate Jeff Koons' work in Postmodernism without mentioning the series *Made in Heaven*?

Let's take up Fouquet's work. In the 20th century, Xavier Coutinho states that *Our Lady* was almost scandalously painted, in the 15th century, by Jean Fouquet who, exaggeratedly, exceeded all the possibilities of this theme...in his "The Virgin and Child with Angels"... [where] a Virgin of Milk was made, in which, undoubtedly, exaggerating some of it, she nevertheless achieved one of her best works. (Coutinho, 1959, p. 105)

The analogy "of sacred and profane models depends above all on bodily expression, of the physical type, of the body; it provides the characters, biblical or with aureoles, of human, sexual and significant characters" (Michel, 1973, p. 28). But the artist is only the "middleman between the flesh and the spirit, the act and the awareness, the real and the mystery, the consummation and the contemplation" (Michel, 1973, p. 133).

*The Virgin and Child with Angels* by Fouquet (1450), painted in temper on wood (93 x 85 cm, Antwerp Museum), represents the daring and audacious Agnès Sorel (Yzeures-sur-Creuse, 1422 - Le Mesnil-sous-Jumièges, 1450), the favorite of the French King Charles VII the Victorious (Paris, 1403 - Mehun-sur-Yèvre, 1461). It is said when he "discovered the shoulders and breasts up to the nipples," as described by the Flemish poet and chronicler Georges Chastellain (Ghent, c. 1405 or 1415 - Valenciennes, 1474), made the ladies of the court in Chinon, France jealous. According to current documentation, few ladies could brag about such perfect charms as the *Lady of Beauty*, a cognomen acquired by Agnès de Sorel from the landlord of Beauté-sur-Marne, who had been given to her by her protective king lover.

Some historians say that it was Agnès de Sorel who launched the "moda coxa" (scant fashion trend) of "one breast covered, the other standing out. It was a charming mischief that transformed these ladies into surprised maids in the middle of a meal, while the high straps gave her the air of being constantly pregnant" (Bologne, 1990, p. 64). This painting was used by an anonymous painter of the 16th century to reconstitute that "portrait" that was in the castle of Azay-le-Ferron.

The king's mistress therefore invented one of the fundamental rules of eroticism: to create the impression of movement, to show more the revelation of the bosom than the revealed bosom. It is understandable that such an aggressive costume has

attracted the wrath of the censors. From the 15th century onwards, indignation has really appeared in the name of decency. (Bologne, 1990, p. 64)

Everything suggests that *The Virgin and Child with Angels* was painted after the death of Agnès de Sorel (1450). We note characteristics that are still Gothic and Flemish, but it is certain that Fouquet imported from Italy "the reminiscences of travelling, the accessory elements" (M.M.J, 1962, p. 269). Fouquet was the most marked artistic personality of the Middle Ages that contributed to the entry of Renaissance aesthetics into France, both for his artistic conception of man (author) and for his synthetic, sensitive, and vivid portraits. Already psychologically inclined, he respectied the individual features of those portrayed while still following an analytical view of Flemish taste, and opposed, in part, to the idealized aesthetic of the Italian Renaissance portrait, valuing the "most meaningful and subtle human thrill" (Chicó, 1962, p. 270), an identifier of the French portrait. Fouquet may have known Flemish art, but he felt closer to Italian production, through which he learned the laws of perspective and extracted the luminous environment (Upjoln, 1965).

Although The Virgin and Child with Angels is a posthumous portrait of Agnès de Sorel, who died in 1450, we can equate this painting, as far as portrait realism is concerned, with the Portrait of Charles VII (1440, Louvre Museum), also by Fouquet, who accuses the painter of being "a portrait painter with an observation more sensitive to the veracity of expression than to detail" (Serullaz & Pouillon, 1998). Like the great Renaissance painters, Fouquet reveals knowledge of how to represent and interpret the human figure, although in Agnès de Sorel's representation, he is between the boundaries of the profane and the sacred: does Agnès de Sorel "lend" her (physical) body to the (representation) of the Virgin Mary or does the Virgin Mary "lend" her spirituality, gifts, and virtues to Agnès de Sorel? The Virgin and Child with Angels or The Melun Diptych questions this duality and/or dichotomy between profane/sacred and/or sacred/profane. All the accessories, such as the throne, the pearl crown, and the rich cloak, but also the neckline, so to the courtly style, identify and symbolize the material and worldly life of a Europe that is advocating the secularization and even the paganism of the sacred themes of Christianity (Plazaola, 1998). By the exercise of "drawing from natural " or from memory, Agnès de Sorel, represented as the Virgin Mary, allows us to travel the path of narrative and interpretation: "painting or saying the curve of a womb, the outline of a womb, the model of a thigh, is to evoke what is hidden behind this appearance, is to allow the imagination, the transposition" (Michel, 1973, pp. 50). And it was even "being built insensitive to the criticism of the Church, the image of an artificial woman, an Agnès Sorel with a pale complexion and waxed eyebrows, who dared to pose with her bare breasts as the Virgin with the Child" (Duby & Ariès, 1990, p. 591).

The Virgin of Milk, in her most diverse variations, was represented by several artists according to the historical, aesthetic, and religious contextualizations, but from a long list we only mention two: Jan Gossaert, Mabuse (c.1478-1532) and Joos van Clève (1485-1541), painters with work in Madeira Island. This is a pertinent moment to verify what kind of religious work they produced for the Madeiran clientele in a context dominated by the "white gold" (sugar) economy and at a time when Madeira was on the globalization route. On the other hand, we have an opportunity to question the survival of two paintings allusive to the Virgin of Milk in the collection of Madeira religious painting: the one already mentioned from the São Roque Church (now in Funchal's Religious Art Museum) and another one from a private collection but originating from a chapel, dated from the 17th century.

The works and topics mentioned above compel the explanation of the concepts of decorum and iconoclasm, bringing us to debate subjects as current as the prohibition of works in certain exhibitions. For example, we examine the recent controversy around the exhibition of the American photographer Robert Mapplethorpe (1946-1989) at the Serralves Museum (2018) containing nudes, flowers, and portraits, but also photographs of an erotic and sexual nature, commissioned by João Ribas and coordinated by Paula Fernandes. This forced the museographic review to limit access to some rooms to those over eighteen years old, and culminated in the resignation of the curator and artistic director. We also discuss the cancellation of Alexandre Sampaio's exhibition Desassossego [Uneasiness] at the Grão Vasco Museum in Viseu (2005), which dealt with questions about death, transcendence, and persecutions of homosexuals through the performance Assunção - Reflexões sobre a morte e a transcendência [Assumption - Reflections on death and transcendence ] and the installation São Sebastião - Discursos da intolerância [St. Sebastian - Discourses of intolerance], advocating a dialogue between ancient art, the museum's collection, and contemporary art. In the first case, and as recommended by the philosophy underlying the discipline of History of Culture and Arts, we debated the art works and the complex reality surrounding them, both in terms of construction and production and in terms of diffusion and fruition. In the second case, the works of the Grão Vasco Museum are the subject of study of the present curriculum when addressing Europe between the Renaissance and Mannerism (Module: Palace Culture) as well as the concepts of performance and installation in the contents and narrative of Art-Event (Module: Virtual Space Culture). We have an opportunity to problematize issues surrounding art and provocation, always contextualized, such as Dadaism and the works of Marcel Duchamp (1882-1968), for example, L.H.O.O.Q. (1919, Mona Lisa) (Module: Film Culture) and other phenomena related to the desacralization of art developed by Pop Art. We exemplify other dialogues between ancient and contemporary art that took place in Funchal's Religious Art Museum with exhibitions curated by Francisco Clode de Sousa, such as Cânticos dos Cânticos [Song of Songs] (1997) by Ilda David, Alguns Santos Mártires Revisitados [Some Holy Martyrs Revisited] (2003) by Rui Sanches, Copycat (2003) by Adriana Molder, and Remains (2007) by Graca Coutinho (Mendes, 2013).

Addressing news about current attitudes of censorship lets us show with the new wave that invades social networks and brings imminent dangers to the world of art, galleries, and museums. A London gallery, Whitechapel Art Gallery, decided to remove some works by the surrealist Hans Bellmer (Germany, 1902- Paris, 1975) two days before the inauguration in order not to shock the local Muslim community (2006). The Santander Cultural Museum in Porto Alegre, Brazil closed its doors and cancelled the exhibition Queermuseu (2017) due to attacks and fierce criticism on social media that oppose artists, the LGBT community, and religious and legal experts. Given that some works appealed to sexual diversity but involved men of various races, children, and animals, a law was invoked to ban them, although many of the works on display were internationally awarded prizes and were not banned in the United Kingdom or the United States. Circumstances lead to the discussion of the concept / theory of "queer" and gender issues in art, not only nowadays but also in the past. Another example comes from an online petition in 2017 demanding the removal of a painting by Balthus [Balthasar Klossowski] (1908-Switzerland, 2001), a French painter of Polish origin, from the exhibition of Thérése dreaming (1938), at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. It should be mentioned that both Balthus and his brother Pierre Klossowski (1905-Paris, 2001) influenced Paula Rego (Lisbon, 1935-), whose work is studied in the discipline of History of Culture and Arts. Others include the production of Francis Bacon (Dublin, 1909-Madrid, 1992) and Lucian Freud (Berlin, 1922-London, 2011), integrated in

the New Figuration (Module: *Virtual Space Culture*), that also raised decorum questions. We also discuss how museums must rethink their strategy of communication, dissemination, and promotion of their works and exhibitions because posters and ads are refused by urban transport companies; this happened with the London Underground, which rejected the promotional poster of Lucas Cranach the Elder's (1472-1553) *Venus*, a work signed in 1532, which announced an exhibition of this German Renaissance painter at the Royal Academy of Arts (2008). Other European cities such as London, Hamburg, and Cologne (2017) also rethought the dissemination of the exhibition that alluded to the centenary of Viennese Modernism when works by Austrian Egon Schiele (1890-1918) were chosen, such as the *Self Portrait Nude* and *Nude with Red Garters*. Because they were too bold, the phrase "SORRY, 100 years old but still too daring today" was put on the image. On these questions, it is time to discuss the thresholds of art, eroticism and pornography, but always contextualizing the artistic productions. Once again, we remember that the works mentioned above as censored are from artists and artistic movements studied in the discipline of *History of Culture and Arts* - Renaissance and Expressionism (Modules: *Cathedral Culture* and *Film Culture*).

In a provocative way, but essentially reflective, the National Museum of Ancient Art (Lisbon) held the exhibition *Explícita: arte proibida?* [Explicit: Forbidden Art?] (2018), curated by Paula Brito Medori and José Alberto Seabra, with seventy works from the museum's archives and with reference to others in the permanent exhibition. The exhibition's purpose was "stimulating criticism by encouraging debate on an unexpectedly contemporary question: can art be prohibited?" (Exhibition Journal). Note that some of the works on display correspond to Renaissance, Mannerist, and Baroque production as well as periods studied in this discipline, and are published in manuals, books, magazines, and catalogues easily accessible for online consultation. Today, it is not possible to escape from cyber culture. A new problem thus arises: do we identify and/or classify works/museum rooms by age groups as it happens in cinema and theatre? This problem is a global phenomenon in the field of art.

In 2009 in Braga, the Portuguese Public Security Police removed the book *Pornocracia* (2003) by Catherine Breillat (1948-) from book fair organized by the publisher *Inovação à Leitura* because on the cover there was a reproduction of *The Origin of the World* (1866). This is a painting by Gustave Courbet (France, 1819-Switzerland, 1877) who responded to a private order from the Ottoman-Egyptian diplomat Halil Serif Pascha (1831-1879), a work which also contains several stories of censorship but has been on public display at the D'Orsey Museum since 1995. More controversial was Deborah de Robertis' performance (1984-), entitled *The Mirror of Origin*, which took place in front of the mentioned painting and was not authorized by the museum, with an explicit exhibition of the artist's sex (2014). We are not going to analyze these works in particular, but it should be mentioned that they are available online in photographs and videos, if only to remember that Realism and "a new look on the real," where Gustave Courbet's works are included, are deeply referenced in the *History of Culture and Arts* program (Module: *Station Culture*), as well as the study of the great scientific, technological, social, and ideological transformations of the 19th century. And in this context, how can we avoid alluding to *The Origin of the World*?

In recalling the concept of iconoclasm, it is relevant to study the historical moments, sometimes commanded by the imagistic fervor that promulgated iconophilia (veneration of images), sometimes by iconoclastic behavior (destruction of images), or even by aniconism (rejection of

figurative representation) (Module: *Cathedral Culture*). We analyze consequences of religious quarrels and the vandalism of works of art during the Middle Ages and the 16th century with the Reformation; we discuss how to transpose these problems into the 20th century, as was the attitude of Nazi Germany through the Thousand-Year Reich and the struggle against "degenerate art" which did not propagate the ideals advocated by National Socialism. We address the persecution of its artists (modernists), especially Jews or followers of communist ideologies, promoters of Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, Surrealism, New Objectivity, and Bauhaus (Module: *Film Culture*), or conversely, the pursuit of intellectuals by the revolutionary committees assigned to Mao Zedong (1893-1976) during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, especially from 1966 onwards. Still in the 20th century, the approach to some of the problematics of the art as a process, as is evident in the indicators of the artistic areas moving to the contents / narratives in the study of Pop Art as an iconoclastic movement (Module: *Virtual Space Culture*). It is also relevant to discuss the depredation of art in general today, such as the vandalism of the statue of Lenin in Ukraine (2014) or the fanatical destruction of the self-proclaimed Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (2015) (Pérez-Prat, 2015, 2017; Serrão, 2017). As Vitor Serrão states,

There are many recorded cases of systematic destruction of monuments and works of art supposedly justified by ideological sectarianism or by doctrinal fidelity and religious persecution and which have occurred throughout history. . . . The History of Art needs to extend its methodological bases and conceptual structures to the study of the heritage that has disappeared or that has been in some way fragmented or mutilated by acts of violence. It is important to analyze, first, the plural reasons that have determined and determine these acts of brutalization of monuments and works of art. (Serrão, 2017, pp. 9 & 23)

How did we get here? By three, apparently innocent, but strongly symbolic works: O estranho caso do pião e da boneca russa by Pedro Berenguer and Tudo o que me dói no egoísmo que trago and Sempre *lhe foi dito que devia passar despercebida* by Carla Cabral. It is important to provoke a debate around artistic production and creation and to raise awareness of the current and global problems of art in general and of a work of art in particular, questioning and confronting contemporary reality with the past. Let us not forget that "each fruition is thus an interpretation and an execution, for in each fruition the work revives within an original perspective" (Eco, 1989, p. 40). Even in the execution of a curriculum, such as the History of Culture and Arts, the reading of a work of art should not be exclusively a "naive interpretation," but rather should seek the "critical interpretation," the first being a "surface interpretation" and the second an "in-depth interpretation" (Ricoeur, 1989, p. 158). As Umberto Eco explained, it is necessary to understand the "intentio operis" (the intention of the work, its nature, status, and identification), the "intentio auctoris" (intention of the author) and the "intentio lectoris" (intention of the reader), and thus it is necessary to define the level that we want our students to reach as readers: empirical reader, implicated, or model (Eco, 1995). The interpretation and decoding of a work of art plays a decisive role and the degree of openness of a work of art should not lead to danger for the work itself.

Heidegger states:

But what is a work of art and what does it look like? Whatever art is it must be learned from the work. Whatever it is, we can only experience it from the essence of art. Anyone can easily feel that we move in a circle. Common sense demands that we avoid this circle because it is a logical violation...Everyone knows works of art. One finds architectural and pictorial works in public squares, churches, and houses. In the collections and exhibitions, works of art from their pure reality, without being influenced by any prejudice, it becomes evident that the most diverse periods and peoples are accommodated. If we consider the works are present as naturally as the other things. The painting is hung on the wall, like a hunting gun, or a hat...All works have this character of a thing. (Heidegger, 2004, pp. 12-13)

It is significant that we interpret a work of art as revealing the discourses and/or cultural narratives of each period and society, both in the phenomena underlying its production and its fruition, as a process and/or artistic, aesthetic, philosophical, historical, sociological, and anthropological object. It is necessary to assimilate the work of art as an aesthetic object and to take from the messages its historical value, that is, its documental value. It is in this link, aesthetic object/historical object, that we can find the author's rapport with society and understand the context of his production. Without a title (or wondering about a title) is only a simple exercise of reading a curricular program, *History of Culture and Arts*, with, some reveries, more chimeras, and utopias than other things.

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## Endnotes

1 Translated by Margarida Quintal



# The Curriculum Design and Implementation of "Constructing a Green Building"

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**Abstract:** In order to awaken students' concerns for their environment, the author designs a curriculum project on the issue of "Constructing a Green Building," which employs the method of action research to cultivate students' concerns.

Action research induces and analyzes data based on teachers' observations, notes, reflections, and interviews as well as other forms of data. The results show that most of the students participated with great interest, had good understanding of the curriculum project, started to care about their environment, and put their ideas into practice.

#### Keywords: Action Research, Art Curriculum, Curriculum Design, Curriculum Implementation, Environmental Education

為喚醒學生對環境的關心,本研究採行動研究法,規劃「建造綠建築」主題課程,培養學生們對 環境的關懷。行動研究根據教師的觀察、札記、省思、訪談和其他形式的資料,來進 行歸納與分析。結果顯示大部分學生都興致勃勃地參與其中,對課程有很好的理解, 開始關心自己的環境,並透過實際的創作來表現想法。

關鍵詞:行動研究、藝術課程、課程設計、課程實施、環境教育

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of education is to prepare students for current or future challenges in life, so "environmental education" is an important part of general education. However, architectural and environmental education is often missing from art curriculum plans in secondary schools. On the other hand, the joy of finishing a work of art should not be the only focus of visual art curricula; concern for the environment and the appraisal and discussion of common values should also be included. As a result, the researcher has a curriculum planned by a pre-service art teacher at the Taipei National University of the Arts who is interested in curriculum design like this one. Moreover, the researcher has the curriculum plan implemented by Teacher B of Junior High School B. This curriculum is intended to increase students' awareness and knowledge about global warming and to provoke them into thinking about how to control it through their own actions. Furthermore, an introduction to the design of green buildings is included in the curriculum to help students come up with eco-friendly measures to save energy and reduce carbon emissions. Finally, the researcher offers other art teachers a frame of reference for future curriculum planning.

### 2. Literature Review

Action research is adopted in this particular project, and the main focus of this literature review is to understand the role of art in constructing the objectives, content, and methods of environmental education.

#### A. Objectives

Adams (1999) believes that in terms of environmental studies, art provides methods for students to observe, comprehend, and shape their ideas about the environment. These methods can also help us create our living space. In addition, they increase students' understanding of and sensitivity to their surroundings. The purpose of architectural and environmental education is to help students keep a critical eye on urban buildings and spaces and improve their knowledge about the influences of environmental design. The long-term goal is to urge students to take part in the shaping of their future environment and to criticize, design, and discuss the relationship between structures, spaces, and human beings from an artistic viewpoint.

#### **B.** Content

Environmental design within art education consists of art, architecture, design, history, ecology, and the philosophy of life. Through environmental design, art educators can represent a society's cultural significance, develop students' historical consciousness, and improve students' abilities to protect ecosystems. The focus of art can be placed on aesthetics and designing dimensions of a given environment or the importance of visual language and space comprehension. With art as a way of self-expression through visual and spatial means, an aesthetic judgment about material culture and problem solving can be made through a three-dimensional mode (Taylor, 1999).

#### C. Methods

Although we cannot decide our birthplaces, we can learn to accept, possess, feel, and observe our surroundings, and even improve them (Langdon, 1999). Therefore, as art educators, we can create curricula in which students are encouraged to observe and learn from the environment, to show awareness and take action, and to improve the environment responsibly. The relationship

between art and the environment connotes the aesthetic concept of art and nature, so we must be able to discuss these aesthetic experiences with students. First of all, we should teach students the skills of observation. In this way, they will become more observant persons, develop their sensitivity to eco-art, and discover aesthetic experiences of art and nature. Students are also expected to understand the world that surrounds them, know the environment and its problems, and express their viewpoints creatively. In the end, students will be able to make a judgment and provide positive and effective solutions to improve the environment (Anderson, 1999).

In sum, the artistic goal to construct environmental education must begin with knowing the environment. Then the curriculum can proceed to the establishment of appropriate values and development of students' skills to solve problems and improve the environment. The content of this curriculum will include information about environmental and artistic concepts. These concepts can be reflected upon in multiple ways and presented through aesthetics. Consequently, this curriculum will begin with an introduction to global warming and green buildings so as to establish values and beliefs, and further reflection on ways to reduce global warming and construct green buildings will be encouraged.

## 3. Research Method

This study adopts the approach of collaborative action research. The curriculum is co-planned by both the researcher and the participating teachers. Like action research conducted by teachers who do individual studies, collaborative action research is conducted by a research team composed of more than two members. In this study, the research team will follow the same cycle of planning, action, observation, and reflection.

## A. Research Process

The basic steps of curriculum action research include problem discovery, problem diagnosis and analysis, curriculum planning, plan implementation and adjustment, plan evaluation, and reporting (Oja & Smulyan, 1989). The research process of this study is based on the aforementioned pattern, but the elements are re-divided into the problem identification phase (problem discovery, diagnosis, and analysis), curriculum development phase (curriculum planning), curriculum implementation phase (plan implementation and adjustment), and curriculum evaluation phase (plan evaluation and reporting).

## **B.** Research Setting and Participants

Different settings and participants may result in different interpretations of the same research topic, so here the researcher will give further details about the research setting and the research participants.

## 1. Description of the Participating Class in this Curriculum Action Research Study

Class 701 that will take part in the first curriculum action research is composed of students of average intelligence. In this class, however, there are many fidgety and talkative students, so it is more difficult to maintain order in the classroom, and students' learning outcomes are expected to be affected.

### 2. Basic Personal Information about the Researchers

### (1) Researcher

The researcher has eighteen years of secondary- and primary-school teaching experience and nine years of counseling experience. In this action research study, the researcher acts as a collaborator, providing suggestions for plan adjustment and participating in classroom observation.

### (2) Pre-Service Art Teacher – Teacher A

The teacher of this curriculum action research study is a pre-service art teacher and is the researcher's education program student at the Taipei National University of the Arts. Teacher A has taken part in an education service camp and is experienced in guiding junior high school students.

### (3) In-Service Art Teacher – Teacher B

The observer of this curriculum action research study graduated from the Department of Fine Arts at the National Taiwan Normal University and has more than twenty years of teaching experience.

### C. Data Collection Methods

For data collection and analysis, the main method used in this collaborative action research study is qualitative research, which includes observations, interviews, and analysis of documents.

## 4. Research Results and Reflections

The following sections include individual analyses of the four phases – problem identification phase, curriculum development phase, curriculum implementation phase, and curriculum evaluation phase.

### A. Problem Identification Phase

Although industrialized society brings convenience to our lives, it also produces a large quantity of pollutants, affects the overall living quality of the planet, and triggers global warming. How to reduce the problem of global warming has become a pressing issue. In response to this, "green building" – a subject highly relevant to the living environment – is proposed as the theme of this curriculum. Ideally, this curriculum will establish and increase students' environmental awareness by turning ideas into action and by extending concern about one's living environment to personal life. The slowing of global warming can be achieved once students form the habit of energy conservation and carbon reduction.

### **B.** Curriculum Development Phase

Although the researcher provided a case scenario and relevant curriculum plans designed by former students for the pre-service art teacher's reference, in the beginning, she still did not know where to start. Therefore, the researcher taught the pre-service teacher how to use the Big Idea Theory (Walker, 2001). First, one has to write down the big idea, theme, key concept (presented with the use of eye-catching titles, slogans, or complete sentences), and discussion focus (learning focus). Next, one must write down the course objective. Last, one writes down related teaching activities and evaluations in response to the course objective. By using Big Idea Theory, the preservice art teacher found it easier to grasp the main points of curriculum planning. Later, the researcher discovered that the logical structure of the pre-service art teacher's overall curriculum

plan was unclear. Her research question and her theme did not correlate strongly with each other, her objective and activities did not match, and her course sequence and overall curriculum plan were not comprehensive. The researcher kept communicating and discussing the curriculum plan with her. The researcher even gave her a course outline to help her think logically and find the focus of the curriculum. In this way, the pre-service art teacher found it easier to establish a correlation between sessions and to pinpoint the problems for adjustment. In the end, she was able to complete a comprehensive curriculum plan. The development of the curriculum plan is as follows:

# 1. Choosing the Theme (Main Subject); Deciding on the Key Concept; Finding the Discussion Focus

In this curriculum plan, the key concept is pinned down before the discussion focus. The following diagram shows the entire process.

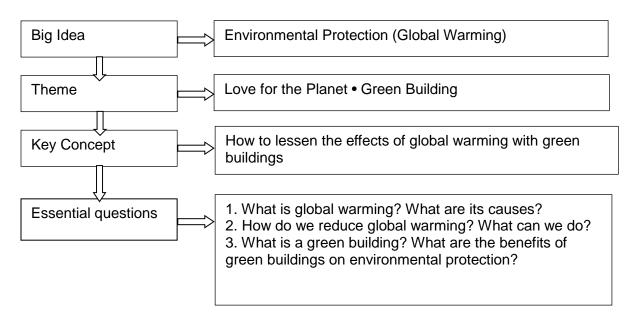


Figure 1. Diagram of the Theme and Concepts

## 2. Deciding on the Course Objective

"Love for the Planet • Green Building" is chosen as the theme of the course. After students are introduced to global warming, hopefully "green building" and eco-greening will be implemented by students, and concepts about humanity can be combined with artistic creations. Under guidance, students will develop related knowledge though appreciation of artistic works. They will then be encouraged to apply these concepts to their own creations. In the end, students must be able to share and reflect on their views. The structure of the course is as follows.

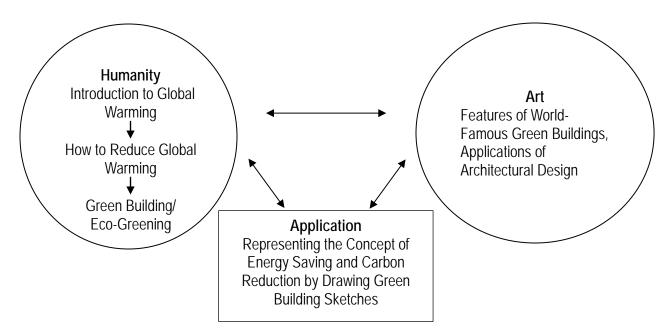


Figure 2. Schematic Diagram of the Course Objective "Green Building/Eco-Greening"

### 3. Finishing the Course Outline

The entire curriculum consists of eight sessions. Details are as follows:

Big Idea: Environmental Protection		Key Concept: How to lessen the effects of global warming with green buildings			
Theme		Love for the Planet • Green Buildings			
Course Objectives	Understand the outcomes of and reasons for global warming; think about how to avoid global warming, save energy, and reduce carbon	Know the indices of green buildings and successful green building examples at home and abroad	Express views on green buildings through creations	Appreciate ways in which different works deliver ideas; reflect on one's own work	
Time	Each period is 45 minutes. There are 6 periods for 270 minutes total.				
Unit	Unit One: Global warming: Is it that serious?	Unit Two: What is a green building?	Unit Three: Designing my own green secret base	Unit Four: Sharing and Reflecting	
Specific Teaching Goals	<ul> <li>1-1. Understand global warming, a result of the greenhouse effect, and discuss this issue with the help of examples</li> <li>1-2. Suggest ways to lessen the greenhouse effect in our daily lives</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>2-1. Know the nine major indices of green buildings</li> <li>2-2. Know successful green building examples in the world</li> <li>2-3. Know green buildings in Taiwan</li> <li>2-4. Discover benefits of green buildings to environmental protection and apply eco-greening to the greening of home environments</li> </ul>	3-1. Establish architectural concepts with the help of basic geometric blocks 3-2. Design one's own green secret base using eco-greening elements	4-1. Learn to appreciate one's own and others' works 4-2. Reflect on one's growth in this course and identify weaknesses	

Number of Periods	One	Тwo	Тwo	One
Major Learning Activities	1-1 Introduce the theme of global warming by mentioning the recent climate change 1-2 Design a dialogue between a human being and a god to help students imagine the scenario of global warming; increase students' motivation to learn with a melting Earth-flavored ice cream; deliver basic ideas about global warming to students 1-3 Introduce students to the current situation and provoke them into thinking about the issue of global warming with film clip and a Q&A session 1-4 Discuss how to respond to global warming and lessen the greenhouse effect; write down the solution	<ul> <li>2-1 Explain the concepts of green buildings with the help of pictures; help students grasp the ideas through comparison of different groups of pictures and a Q&amp;A session</li> <li>2-2 Introduce the Reichstag building (Episode 854 of PTS's <i>Follow Me</i> Series) and the Kronsberg Ecological District in Germany</li> <li>2-3 Encourage students to think of green building reatures in their neighborhood; introduce Taiwan's green building examples, such as the Beitou Branch of the Taipei Public Library and the ecohouse of National Taiwan University</li> <li>2-4 Discuss the benefits of green buildings to environmental protection; begin with urban greening to let students understand that eco-greening can be easily applied to their homes: for example, the planting of small trees</li> </ul>	3-1-1 Establish students' architectural concepts with the help of LEGO blocks 3-1-2 Compare real pictures and simulated photos to help students know architectural shapes through everyday items 3-2-1 Provide students with pictures for reference and ask them to design their ideal green secret bases on paper 3-2-2 Ask students to color their green building sketches with colored pencils	4-1-1 Distribute self-evaluation forms for students to comment on their own works 4-1-2 Ask students to come to the podium and comment on their own works; invite other students to give suggestions; additional explanations provided by the teacher 4-2-1 Conclude the course content 4-2-2 Ask students to fill in the course feedback form
Evaluation	Worksheet 1	Worksheet 2	Work Designing	Feedback Form

Table 1. Course Outline of "Love for the Planet • Green Building"

### C. Curriculum Implementation Phase

The process of the course "Love for the Planet • Green Building" is composed of four teaching activities. Details about each activity's implementation are as follows:

### 1. Global Warming: Is It that Serious?

Let students create a dialogue for the conversation between a human being and a god. Then gradually lead them to discuss the issues of "What is global warming?" and "How do we reduce global warming?" When discussing the issues, show students film clips related to global warming (such as drastic changes of the earth, over-cultivation and over-logging, car exhaust fumes, rising

sea levels, polar bears on thin ice, shaved polar bears, BBC's April Fool's Day hoax: *Flying Penguins/Miracles of Evolution*). Furthermore, make a deeper impression on students and help them reflect on human behavior with a Q&A session after the film.

After the film, divide students into groups; each group is responsible for writing a solution. Students have to assume the role of planet-saving doctors providing remedial measures that they can take in their daily lives. After writing about the solution, each group should send a representative to the podium to report the group's measures. This will help students understand that environmental protection can be achieved in their daily lives. After the report, ask students to complete Worksheet 1 (see Appendix 1), reflect on the harm done by human behavior, and consider how they can bring the idea of environmental protection to their daily lives.

### 2. What Is a Green Building?

Give students a rough idea of green buildings by showing them a picture with lush, green vegetation. Then explain to them what a green building is. Ask students to observe the features of five groups of pictures. After showing students the pictures, tell them that the five groups designate the five indices (Energy Saving Indicator, Biodiversity Indicator, Greenery Indicator, Soil Water Content Indicator, Indoor Environment Indicator) of green buildings. Then bring in the other four indices (CO2 Emission Reduction Indicator, Waste Reduction Indicator, Water Resource Indicator, Sewage and Garbage Improvement Indicator) to help students understand the definition and characteristics of green buildings.

Next, introduce students to green building examples at home and abroad. Foreign examples are the Reichstag building and the Kronsberg Ecological District in Germany; domestic examples include the Beitou Branch of the Taipei Public Library and Delta Electronics' green building. Make a deeper impression on students with a Q&A session after showing Episode 854 of PTS's *Follow Me* series.

Afterwards, show pictures of urban greening (Avenue des Champs-Élysées, Renai Road traffic circle) to students. Ask students to discuss what other green spaces there are in Taipei. Use Dunhua South Road and Zhongshan North Road as examples to show to students that quality eco-greening is possible in a city. Then shift the focus to the balconies of Taipei City. Let students understand that the simplest home greening can begin from their own balconies. However, they must bear in mind that greening is just a part of green building construction. Finally, ask students to complete Worksheet 2 (see Appendix 2).

### 3. Designing My Own Green Secret Base

Show students pictures in which a complete house is made of scattered LEGO blocks to help them understand that simple square structures can create a dazzling array of buildings. Juxtapose three groups of pictures (Sagrada Familia vs. ice cream + cookies; Boston Children's Museum vs. milk bottles; a building in Huainan City, Anhui Province vs. pianos and violins) for students to brainstorm. What shapes can they think of based on different geometric patterns on the pictures? Using the foundation of patterns, students can generate many ideas with the help of simple elements. After this, ask students to design their own green buildings and give them three groups of pictures as examples. Let students stretch their imagination and design their own unique green buildings.

## 4. Sharing and Reflecting

Distribute self-evaluation forms to students in class and ask them to comment on their own works according to the evaluation indices. Students should write down detailed evaluation for each item. Next, ask some students to come to the podium and comment on their own works. Other students are encouraged to give suggestions, and the teacher can provide additional explanations. Finally, ask students to fill in the course feedback form.

During the teaching process, the researcher and the in-service art teacher also offered many suggestions for the pre-service art teacher to reflect on her teaching and make adjustments.

	Merits	Suggestions
Material Content	<ul> <li>Units and course contents are coherent, and the arrangement is logical.</li> <li>Her use of subculture pictures popular among students increases students' motivation to learn.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Materials are not evenly distributed. Some sessions are crammed with information, while some lack sufficient materials.</li> <li>With an excess of materials and insufficient time, the quality of teaching and learning is negatively affected.</li> </ul>
Teaching Method	<ul> <li>Her teaching process is smooth, and her composure is fairly well maintained.</li> <li>Her instant awarding of students by increasing their grades in class increases their motivation to learn.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>She must be able to take the whole class into account when lecturing. She should not just focus on a small group of students.</li> <li>She must have better control over the course time.</li> <li>Discussion of some cases can be more detailed. Main points should be reiterated in the end to make a deeper impression on students.</li> </ul>

Table 2. Reflections and Adjustments for the Teaching of the Pre-Service Art Teacher

### D. Curriculum Evaluation Phase

After comparing interviews, document analyses, data collection, reflective journals, teaching observations, and teaching objectives, it can be concluded that students have learned the following skills from the curriculum as a whole:

### 1. What Students Have Learned from the Curriculum as a Whole

# (1) Understanding the Reasons and Outcomes of Global Warming and Devising Methods to Avoid this Problem

To these students, the idea of global warming was abstract. Although they knew the existence of this phenomenon, they did not know how serious it was. However, after the curriculum, most students have developed more thoughts on this issue after watching the film, teacher and student discussion, and worksheet writing. They not only know the seriousness of global warming but also have a deep understanding of its causes and effects. In addition, they are able to provide different solutions.

(2) Understanding the Concept of Green Buildings and Learning to Appreciate Green Building Examples at Home and Abroad

Although these students knew something about green buildings, their concept was not clear. Through the implementation of this curriculum, students understand what green buildings are and the features of green building examples at home and abroad. In addition, they also understand that the simplest eco-greening can begin from their home balconies.

# (3) Expressing Viewpoints through Artistic Creations, Learning to Appreciate Others' Works, and Reflecting on One's Own Works

Students know how to express their views on environmental protection through green building creations. They are also able to apply the green building indices in their green building sketches. It is noteworthy that each student's style, technique, and composition are distinctive, so there is a great variety of work. Because students are asked to go to the podium to share their work, every student can see a different way of representation and understand multiple ways of self-expression. As for the course feedback form in the end, all the students are able to write down details about what they have learned, difficulties they have encountered, self-reflection, and suggestions. They will use these details for further improvement in the future.

#### 2. Observation of and Reflection on Problems Found in "Student Growth and Evaluation" and Suggested Adjustments

(1) Students' lack of basic art skills and experiences still needs to be carefully trained by the teacher. During the teaching process, the researcher found that students were still in need of training to acquire basic artistic skills and gain experience. For example, some students were not familiar with either basic drawing skills or colored pencil painting techniques. Some students had no experience in making public speeches, so they needed the teacher's guidance in some way to be able to express their ideas. All of these are crucial basic skills, so they have to be acquired at an early age. Students will also feel that they have gained a lot from the curriculum if they are able to build these basic skills and experiences.

(2) Insufficient time affects the completion of the course content and the aesthetic quality of students' works. Time is key to the success of curriculum implementation. Because there was only limited time available, students could only draw rough sketches of green buildings and could not make three-dimensional models of them. In some cases, the original teaching plan could not be applied to the actual situation, so there had to be minor adjustments to the content of the worksheets. In addition, when time was not enough for the curriculum implementation, conversations and discussions were easily turned into lectures. Insufficient time also reduced the time available for students' thinking and model making. This affected the completion and aesthetic quality of their works.

# 5. Conclusion and Suggestions

### A. Conclusion

# 1. Art curricula become more meaningful and detailed when the theme is integrated into the course.

In the past, art education focused on creation, so it did not have notable academic achievements. Walker (2001) believes that when we face the cries of multiculturalism and postmodernism, we have to bring more into art education than works that are finished with a perfect design of shapes,

colors, and lines, an attractive theme, and deftness. Instead, we have to describe our own views, explore meanings, and express our understandings and ideas about every issue in our creations. Therefore, apart from the acquisition of creative and appreciative skills in traditional art curricula, this study also incorporates discussions about the theme of environmental protection. This has made the curriculum more comprehensive and more meaningful, and learning has become more in-depth.

# 2. The design of key concepts and discussion focus can be used to guide students into thinking about and expressing their feelings.

This study mainly uses key concepts and discussion to design questions about humanity and guide students into in-depth thinking and discussion. Through their interaction with the teacher, students can clarify their own values. In this study, students were offered an opportunity to think about and discover issues related to the society and time they live in. After gaining an understanding, they could turn their knowledge into power and action. The results of the curriculum implementation show that after discussions about the issue of global warming, students were aware of the seriousness of the problem and the importance of environmental protection. They were also able to incorporate the concepts into their artistic creations.

### 3. Time is a key to the success of curriculum implementation.

Original curriculum plans and goals could not be accomplished due to limited time. When time was not enough for the curriculum implementation, interactions between the teacher and students lessened. In addition, insufficient time also reduced the time available for students' thinking and model making. This affected the completion and aesthetic quality of their works. However, if the teaching time were to be prolonged, it would pose some difficulties to the inservice art teacher when she arranged the curriculum. This is really a dilemma.

#### **B. Suggestions**

# 1. Collaboration between the researcher, pre-service teacher, and in-service teacher can compensate for what each person lacks.

The researcher is familiar with theories, so she can lead the development of the entire curriculum. The intern teacher is more creative, so her course content can better satisfy students' needs. The in-service teacher is experienced in handling the classroom, so she can draw from past experiences that suit students' needs. If the three of them can collaborate on the design of the curriculum, they can compensate for what each person lacks and maximize the benefits of curricula and teaching.

# 2. Key concepts and discussion can provide a direction for the theme and reinforce students' positive attitudes toward value judgments.

Environmental protection and global warming are both abstract concepts. However, the big idea, key concept, and discussion focus can provide a more concrete direction and guidance to the theme of green buildings. Because the big idea is an important issue for human beings, it reflects human experience and can guide students into an understanding of the importance of environmental protection to humanity and the significance of living in harmony with nature. The key concept can help students understand the course structure and explore the meaning of the curriculum. The discussion focus signifies an act of probing. It can bring out the focus of learning and apply concepts of curriculum implementation. All of these can reinforce students' positive attitudes toward value judgments. They are worth incorporating into the themed curriculum plan by teachers.

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## Appendix 1

# **Global Warming: Is It that Serious?**

Name\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Seat Number\_\_\_\_

★ Among the seven global warming film clips played today, which leaves the deepest impression on you? Please check the box (You can check more than one) and write down three reasons.

□1. Drastic Changes of the Earth's Rotation; Days Are Numbered □2. Logging
 Destroys Ecology and Ruins Human Beings in the End □3. Car Exhaust Fumes
 □4. A Little Girl Measuring Height □5. Polar Bears on Thin Ice □6. Shaved Polar
 Bears □7. Flying Penguins on BBC Documentary

Why are you impressed by the film clip? Please give three reasons.
1
2
3

★ Think hard. What can we do to lessen the greenhouse effect? Please provide three methods.

1	
2	
3	

# Appendix 2

# What Is a Green Building?

Name\_\_\_\_\_ Seat Number\_\_\_\_\_

 $\star$ After the curriculum on green buildings...

★ Which of the following buildings meet the standards of green buildings? Please check the box.

□Sheet Metal House
 □Solar Panel Roof
 □Taipei 101
 □Green Balcony
 □Community Eco-Pond
 □Shin Kong Mitsukoshi
 □Beitou Public Library
 □ CKS Memorial Hall

 $\star$  Associate the 9 Major Indices $\sim$ 





★ Choose one from the four green building film clips (the Reichstag building and the Kronsberg Ecological District in Germany, Delta Electronics, Beitou Branch of the Taipei Public Library) played today and write down your thoughts on it (30-50 words).

★ Is your home a green building? If not, what can you do at home to help it meet the standards of green buildings? (Please give three examples.)



# Artistic Personality in Scientific Illustration: A Case Study

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**Abstract:** In this article, we intend to study the mechanisms, processes, and results of artistic research in the scientific and technical field, from the commission of a work of scientific illustration. That is, we examine a request to an artist by a third party (researcher, scientist, editor, or specialist in one of the areas of experimental sciences) to carry out works that allow any of these options (independently or combined): show the results of a scientific investigation, communicate science, or make materials of a didactic or educational nature. To approach artistic research in the scientific field means placing the presence of the artist in a specific environment in the focus of the research itself, with the symbiosis of knowledge and its translation into artistic languages through corporeity. The experience through the body (brain, eye, hand) is a fundamental issue. The coexistence of the artist researcher in the scientific context of research is considered an essential practice in artistic research.

With an initial justification that starts from the interest in considering artistic research necessary in a scientific field, we subsequently contextualize at the theoretical level the way in which an assignment of scientific illustration is addressed for an archaeological investigation. Next, the research process and the field work are described, starting from a project developed by the author. To conclude this article, the results of the artistic experience are discussed, as well as how they favor those of the study in the field of scientific research.

#### Keywords: Scientific illustration, artistic research, archeology, science, scientific communication

**Resumen**: En este artículo se pretenden abordar los mecanismos, procesos y resultados de la investigación artística en el ámbito científico y técnico, a partir del encargo de una obra de ilustración científica. Esto es, la petición al artista, por parte de un tercero (investigador, científico, editor o especialista en alguna de las áreas de las ciencias experimentales), de la realización de obras que permitan alguna de estas opciones (de manera independiente o combinada): mostrar los resultados de una investigación científica, comunicar ciencia, o realizar materiales de carácter didáctico / educativo.

Partiendo de una justificación inicial que nace del interés que nos mueve a considerar necesaria la investigación artística en un ámbito científico, posteriormente se contextualiza a nivel teórico la forma en la que se afronta un encargo de ilustración científica, para una investigación específica de carácter arqueológico, describiendo el proceso de investigación y el trabajo de campo. Para finalizar este artículo, se plantean a modo de discusión los resultados de la experiencia artística y cómo éstos favorecen los del estudio en el ámbito de la investigación científica.

## 1. Introduction

Talking about scientific illustration, scientific drawing, or visual communication of science (Cabezas & López Vílchez, 2016) is generally based on the premise: works must be exact and must accurately represent concepts or elements they elucidate or to which they refer. An artist is a specialist who converts scientific evidence (often difficult to understand even in scientific language) into visual works understandable to the public. This specialization is the origin of the artist's curiosity to understand the things they like as an object of study, so that although scientific illustrators tend to specialize in certain areas (medicine, biology, archeology, etc.), the truth is that the processes the artist engages in to understand connect with methodological and epistemological characteristics of those of any research that can be considered as artistic; this happens regardless of the scientific area that he intends to study. There are many types of works that can be framed within the scope of the three priority objectives cited in the summary of this article (show the results of scientific research, communicate science, and/or make didactic or educational materials). Some of the most innovative include documentary audiovisual media, models, three-dimensional digital models, virtual reality, dioramas, and software applications, among others. However, in this article we are going to focus on scientific illustration, defined here as the field of experimentation where the artistic research object of this study will be. Because it is an area of growing interest in recent times due to the diffusion in social media and information and communication technologies, we can analyze the cause of didactic power of scientific images and their aesthetic appeal. National examples could be the creation in 2017 of the Postgraduate Program in Scientific Illustration at the UPV / EHU, the International Contest of Scientific Illustration Il-lustraciència, organized by the Catalan Association for Scientific Communication (and which in 2017 has reached its 5th edition), or the book Scientific Drawing (Cabezas & López Vílchez, 2016), published by Cátedra.

## 2. Presence and Corporeity in Artistic Research in Scientific Contexts

At the center of this work is the idea of the body; we consider the experience through the body as a fundamental question. The coexistence of the artist researcher in the scientific context of the research is considered an essential practice in artistic research. The understanding of the natural fact addressed in the investigation must be assumed in person. The body as a medium is essential.

The artist, when preparing to do an illustration, has two options: research based on bibliographies, references, or publications of a varied nature; or direct, experiential research. Both options can and should be combined with each other; the greater the accumulated knowledge of the subjects to be addressed by the artist, the more substantiated the artistic results obtained will be. For example, consider the illustration of a bird for a species identification guide. The artist's previous research on ethology, that is, the natural behavior of his species, will be relevant in the realization of an image that really represents the bird. The artist must also have knowledge of the animal, how the shadows affect it, etc. All things will be relevant for the purpose of this type of publication. In addition, it will be relevant to know if it is a work for an introduction to ornithology, or if it is focused on ornithologists with advanced knowledge. Another thing to keep in mind (and this is usually economical) is whether to optimize the elements that allow the representation of a species through its morphological peculiarities. For example, sexual dimorphism can be represented through full-body male and female. On the contrary, in order to

optimize space and resources, the canon of illustrating the full-body male is followed, and the dimorphism of the female emerges through the head or those parts where they differ. This is a solution that, although discriminatory, is common in these publications (Muir Laws, 2012; Mullarney, Svensson, Zetterström, & Grant, 2001).

Accompanying the study work with the use of audiovisual references or with publications made by other authors that have influenced the same aspects beyond the direct contact that the author may establish with the object of study are other factors to account for in such an illustration. However, if the bird that we are going to draw is an extinct species, artistic research will change both at a methodological and epistemological level, with the personal contribution of the author and the justification that he makes of the result acquiring special relevance. So, the choice of colors, shapes, textures, and their adaptation to fossil evidence (which generally does not provide more than bone structures, and sometimes some colors or keratinous structures such as feathers or nails) becomes the responsibility of the artist to give practical and didactic meaning to the evidence, providing an aesthetic, didactic, and educational functionality to the work represented.

Many times, the artist has to make the representation of scenes or elements that are impossible to visualize because he has no previous references, such as past events (for example, the reconstruction of a ritual scene made from funerary remains), theoretical postulations based on scientific evidence (for example, in astrophysical research, where the objects of study are light years from us, and it is impossible to obtain images of them), or cases where the objects of study are so tiny that it is impossible to obtain reference images.

## 3. Art at the Service of Science

The work of the scientific illustrator is meant to meet a requirement from scientific or technical research: that of transforming the objects of study into images to make them understandable to the public (Cerviño, Correia, & Alcaraz, n.d.). This need usually coincides with the culmination of years of work by the scientific researcher, so the graphic representation of those concepts must be the maximum; this is the work of the artist. There are points of view that suggest the role of the scientific illustrator has nothing to do with the artistic experience, placing it closer to the applied arts due to its tendency to avoid the subjectivity inherent in art in favor of accuracy and clarity (Iborra & Gutiérrez, 2013). The epistemological character of scientific illustration is intrinsic to artistic research through preparation and execution. Michael J. Katz (1985) says, "The main purpose of a scientific article is not to speak to the heart, it is to speak to the brain," (p. 15) and the artist must know how to manage the emotional transmission that he makes to his works, adhering to the conceptions of truth, evidence, and the objectivity of the scientific method (Köppen, 2007). However, Köppen points out about the scientific image that

understanding it in its complexity requires a multifaceted and interdisciplinary look that takes into account fundamental topics such as vision, perception and cognition, which are closely related aspects; culture (dominant and subcultures); the functions awarded, declaratively or implicitly; the technologies applied in its production; the techniques; iconicity and aesthetics in pictorial representation; the interests involved in its selection and dissemination and the emotions are denied in the scientific environment. (Köppen, 2010) According to Hernández-Muñoz and Barrio De Santos (2016), in scientific illustration,

creativity must always be at the service of communicative efficiency, or, at least, not contradict it. Even the aesthetic qualities of this type of images also have a utilitarian purpose that consists in showing scientific information in an attractive way, thus increasing interest in the subject matter.

From the perspective of the scientific illustrator artist, I will focus on contextualizing a real scientific illustration commission at a theoretical level for an archaeological research in order to demonstrate that there is artistic research in the field of scientific illustration. Specifically, I will discuss the illustration of *Alfar de las Cogotas* [Pottery of Las Cogotas], a drawing required of me by Juan Jesús Padilla Fernández (2018) for his Doctoral research *Identidades, Cultura y Materialidad Cerámica: Las Cogotas y la Edad del Hierro en el occidente de Iberia* [Identities, Culture and Ceramic Materiality: Las Cogotas and the Iron Age in western Iberia].

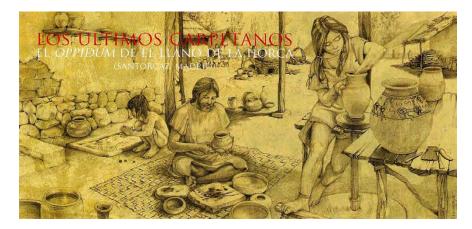
There are numerous documented examples that highlight the importance of scientific illustration in different sociocultural contexts from the beginning of each of the different scientific disciplines (Cabezas & López Vílchez, 2016). The "scientist-artist" has historically passed through art and science with the ease of one who uses one as a descriptive tool for the other. There are scientific disciplines in which this combination has occurred more frequently, as in the case of botany, zoology, or anatomy (Cabezas & López Vílchez, 2016). Scientific illustration has been defined as a fundamental tool for recording experimental results and describing objects of study, so that artists have had to adapt and have evolved in obtaining the artistic skills necessary for this purpose (López Cantos, 2010). Until the appearance of photography, science used scientific illustration and naturalistic painting to record empirically made observations and used these to advance research. Examples include Da Vinci's studies of the flight of birds, the anatomical drawings of Vesalius in the 16th century, and the astronomical illustrations of Galileo, passing through the animal studies of Dürer, the cellular drawings of Hooke (1665), and the expeditions of the centuries XVIII and XIX (Malaspina, Mutis, Sessé and Mociño, or Humboldt, to name the most relevant). The most important European natural history collections were nurtured through expeditions around the world (Ortega-Alonso, 2018). The scientists were accompanied by artists for the detailed record of all kinds of species with an encyclopedic perspective (Oliver Torelló, 2016). Observation through a microscope and the illustrated recording of cellular tissues by these scientific artists are perfect examples: Ramón y Cajal's illustrations about nerve cells and the detailed drawings of prostate sections for Salvador Gil Vernet's works on urology and their application for the treatment of diseases such as prostate cancer fulfill in equal parts a didactic and aesthetic function (Gil-Vernet, 2015).

Few studies focus on the fact that most scientific illustrations were painted by order. And the order of an artistic work, whatever its character, conditions the artist because he submits to the scientific field. The order has to do with the function of the work. Scientific illustration is predisposed since the moment of order to the artistic research process based on a scientific investigation by the science person. In words of Moreno, Valladares, and Martínez (2016), "in artistic creation, therefore in artistic research, the action of creating simultaneously uses reflection, analysis, drawing conclusions and action." The work that an illustrator develops in a scientific field can only be understood from the perspective of artistic research, made from someone else's research. So, we are presented meta-research that supposes the immersion of the

artist in the areas of knowledge he tries to illustrate and sets the objective of the method in the spotlight of the process.

The next case that we are going to describe is about a project that describes the social identities of cultures of the Iron Age, identified through the ceramic materials found in archaeological sites. It becomes essential to deepen my knowledge of the cultures that are addressed in the study; the artist must start a research process that turns him into a connoisseur of the subject that he is going to illustrate. In this way, the artist immerses himself in the researcher's knowledge as a disciple, which leads him to specialize in certain areas of his study to graphically consolidate the results of that research. This complicity between researcher and artist becomes essential for the accurate execution of the illustrations and the optimization of resources, avoiding empty investigations that lead to disposable results.

The study and knowledge of referents is essential, as well as the way other researchers and illustrators have approached similar topics and how they have circumvented the obstacles of research in other scientific projects. In this case, some of the illustrations used, related to ceramic technologies and ceramic archeology, have turned out to be called into question by the subject of this article, sometimes through the graphic reconstruction of scenes based on archaeological records found in deposits, and other times through the generation of visual hypotheses that are supported by other results obtained empirically. The archaeological and scientific context in this type of illustration is so important that sometimes the artistic construction of realities, despite its beauty, is against scientific evidence. An example could be the cover illustration of the book *Los Últimos Carpetanos, el Oppidum del Llano de la Horca* [The Last Carpetanians, the Oppidum of the Plain of the Horca] (Ruiz Zapatero, Märtens, Contreras, & Baquedano, 2012).



*Figure 1.* Los Últimos Carpetanos, el Oppidum del Llano de la Horca [*The Last Carpetanians, the Oppidum of the Plain of the Horca*] *Book Cover (Ruiz Zapatero, Märtens, Contreras, & Baquedano, 2012)* 

In the illustration (see Figure 1), there is a woman from Carpetania (6th-2nd century BC) making pottery with a standing wheel. The scene may appear accurate, but it raises some questions about the scientific criteria described in the illustration. In the 2nd Iron Age, did women make pottery? Is it a convention, or an extrapolation of today's society to the past – a vision of the societies of the past according to our current criteria, in terms of rationality, thought, and equality? Reading the past doesn't allow us to build a real story. Our way of thinking tends to be extrapolated to totally different societies 2000 or 2500 years ago (Blanco González, 2016; Montón Subías, 2010;

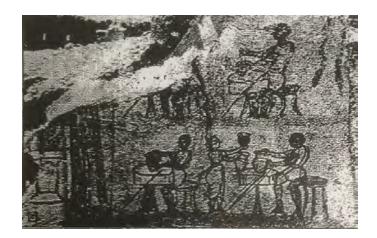


Figure 2: Scene of pottery with foot lathe. Mural de Pompeya (s.I). (Díaz Rodríguez, 2014)



*Figure 3.* Modeling of a ceramic piece "with churros", with a fast hand lathe. Illustrated reconstruction based on ceramic and structural evidence found in the Las Cogotas (clay cylinders) pottery. Author: Diego Ortega-Alonso.

Padilla Fernández, 2018). But it is the scientific method and the archaeological records which allow us to reinterpret and contextualize works like this one. For example, the fingerprints on fired pottery found in the Cogotas pottery, contemporary to the Carpentian culture, indicate that while some pottery was made by men, pottery circumscribed to the domestic sphere was generally made by feminine hands (Padilla Fernández & Chapon, 2015; Padilla Fernández et al.,

in press). So, the research about social identities helps us achieve greater accuracy in the representation of a scientific illustration of an ethnoarchaeological nature, as well as at an epistemological, anthropological, and sociocultural level. Another thing we wonder about this illustration is the foot lathe used by the woman to model the ceramic piece. In fact, in the Carpentian world, there was no foot lathe: there was a ceramic made around it in the Iberian Peninsula from around the 8th century B.C. (Vallejo, 2007). Thus, the foot lathe appearing in the illustration is not compatible, in terms of contemporaneity, with the Carpentian society. The fast foot lathe that appears in Figure 1 reached the Iberian Peninsula with Rome, and therefore, with the disappearance of the Carpentian culture (Díaz Rodríguez, 2014).

So, the construction of scientific realities, or hypotheses based on evidence, should be a priority in scientific illustration; images should be based on the evidence from the archaeological record found at the sites. Figure 3 is made up of four images that show us the process of creating pottery with a hand lathe by a male individual. These images form a deliberate sequence and convey information about the result of an investigation, and in turn, allow an aesthetic in graphic form (McCloud, 1995).

## 4. Knowledge Provides the Methodology

The methodological research that entails the realization of illustrations is composed of three levels of knowledge: scientific, technical, and artistic. Analyzing the role played by each of these three research processes will help us to clarify the epistemological issues provided by the methodology, and the results of the project are of both a scientific and artistic nature.

### 4.1. In the Scientific Field

The artist is obliged to study the subject to be drawn, to represent what the person commissioning the work wants to elucidate, and to do so in the most accessible and didactic way possible so that it is complementary to the contents of scientific research. The artist has a power and a responsibility when creating and constructing realities from scientific evidence or hypotheses. Depending on how evidence and hypotheses are combined, the artistic result will be different. When we speak of archaeological reconstruction, methodological issues are not as important as the epistemological approach on which they are based. When the author of the research speaks of the need to show human relationships rather than to raise generalities from the pieces found and describes the need to know the past "as a cluster of complex cultural memories endowed with their own character" (Padilla Fernández & Dorado Alejos, 2017), the artist must take responsibility for framing the artistic representation in the field of scientific research according to the interests of the author.

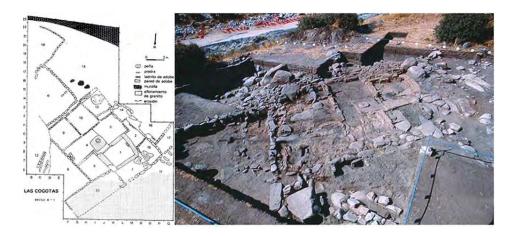


Figure 4. Left: Planimetría del complejo alfarero [Pottery complex planimetry] (Álvarez Sanchís, 1999). Right: fotografía de los restos del alfar de Las Cogotas [photograph of the remains of the pottery of Las Cogotas] (Padilla Fernández, 2010)

To create these illustrations in a strictly scientific field, several questions are raised since we want to reconstruct the only pottery found in the Iberian Peninsula from the 2nd Iron Age. The most important thing is the archaeological context in which it is located. It is necessary to rely on the archaeological sequence, or the data extracted in the archaeological excavation to propose a reconstruction. How is it possible to place each element of the illustration in its location?

We start from the archaeological sources, which are the excavations carried out between 1986-1990 and directed by Gonzalo Ruiz Zapatero in Las Cogotas. Later, Padilla studied the ceramic technology of this deposit through his experience as a potter. He also included in his study, as the main novelty, the structure of pottery. His knowledge of the architectural distribution of current pottery allowed him to distinguish several pieces whose uses could be considered similar to those of today (Padilla Fernández, 2011). This hypothesis is supported by the specificity of the archaeological data found. Why in the data and in the artistic representation do we say that one area is the work area and another is the living area? Precisely because of the materials found in the site. The team of archaeologists led by Ruiz Zapatero notes all the materials in their excavation diary, and this allows us to know, for example, that in zone 14, there are many remains of cooking. This indicates that in that location there must have been a potter's kiln because, from the ethnographic and archaeological points of view, other similar kilns of the time were found where these remains of cooking appear.

The domestic area is interpreted according to the fireplaces that appear in the plan (see Figure 4, area 19), as well as the dishes found. Dishes of Celtiberian character and from the Vettona period did not have any cooking defects, which indicates that it was used. All these data corroborate that, from the scientific point of view, the construction of the illustrations is based on the archaeological context and its sequence (Álvarez Sanchís, 1999).

The evidence found in the Las Cogotas site (with the pottery located outside the walls and using the defensive wall as part of its perimeter) and in others from the Vettona and contemporary times allows us to determine its approximate morphology based on the materials found (García, 2016). All the evidence is transferred to the illustration. Finally, the representation of the people

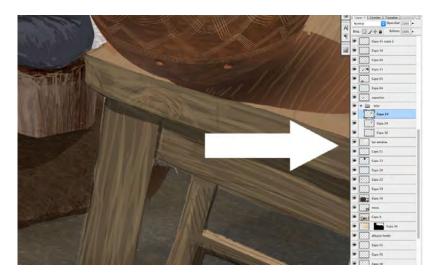
is based on studies that address the hierarchical and organizational structures of the pottery trades at the beginning of their industrialization (Padilla Fernández, 2010; Rodríguez Neila, 2014).

### 4.2. In the Technical Field (Execution)

The methodology to be followed by the artist for the execution of the illustrations will depend on various factors. First, the technical aspects that have made it possible to carry out the archaeological illustrations under study, as well as other criteria related to the optimization of resources, economic and temporal, are very important and also condition the technical execution of the work.

The artist must master the techniques necessary for the work to be correct and to ensure that the people who order the work are satisfied. For the realization of the illustrations, a confluence between the artistic skills of the illustrator, his interest in the subject, and his precise knowledge of image editing and creation software has been necessary. The artist must have demonstrated capacities for realistic drawing, perspective, the adaptation of objects in space, the perception of light, and the theory of color. The intelligibility of the work will largely depend on these capabilities. The artist must acquire theoretical and practical knowledge for the correct use of digital and theoretical tools.

In the case of this research, the illustrations have been developed using digital scientific drawing techniques with bitmaps, using a digital tablet, computer, and image processing software. This methodology makes it possible to speed up the process of creating illustrations, and to solve problems that in the so-called classical techniques (watercolor, acrylic, pencils, etc.) would create difficulties. The realism obtained through digital illustration allows the most significant information to be emphasized, highlighting details that could go unnoticed or displacing irrelevant data (Campos López, 2016). This technique facilitates the interaction between illustrator and archaeologist to correct and make modifications to the works to adapt them to the research needs. The changes are easy to make because the illustrations are structured in independent layers.



*Figure 5. The layers that make up the image can be seen in the right menu. Author Photo.* 

This type of scientific illustration allows the construction and reconstruction of scenes in a process of fluid communication between artist and scientist, which is fundamental. Starting from a plan (or the remains of a site, as in this article) and reconstructing based on the scientific evidence found, and the possibility of placing artistic reconstructions of the elements in different layers of the image, offers the possibility of establishing a continuous dialogue between artist and scientist that enables the former to obtain more information. As a result, we maintain fidelity to the archaeological record and the scientific method.

### 4.3. In the Artistic Field.

The picture is the result of a process of sensitivity and creativity of the artist. The choice of colors, textures, lines, and morphologies corresponds to the artist, who is able to combine, thanks to his knowledge and his creativity, the elements that make up the picture. The idea of art doesn't exclude the functional character of the final product or contaminate it with elements unrelated to scientific research. Scientific illustration is an artistic creation. Scientific illustration is not only scientific production, but also has an artistic dimension; the research processes necessary to achieve it is a fundamental part, and the work of art is, in part, the result of said research (Borgdoff, 2006).

The law includes the artistic recognition of pictures by order, whether they are scientific illustrations or not. It's called moral right: a right of the personality that protects moral integrity, which corresponds to the author by paternity/maternity that unites him with the work he has created, regardless of whether other economic rights may be assigned. In turn, these may have a partial or full character. Intellectual property law (Royal Legislative Decree of April 12, 1996, modified by Law 23/2006 of July 7) states that if a client in Spain proposes an idea for a commission to an illustrator, the intellectual property of the resulting work is whomever made the illustration, not the person who had the idea (Comisión de profesionales del Observatorio de la Ilustración Gráfica, 2011). So, the connection between knowledge-research-experience-artistic creation as reflection (Moreno Montoro, Valladares González, Martínez Morales, 2016), and consequently as an experience of character eminently artistic, finds a place in the field of scientific illustration.

## 5. Conclusion

The artistic research that the scientific illustrator develops in the scientific and technical field offers the possibility of endowing works with a personality inherent in all human creation. As an artistic experience of an epistemological and methodological reflexive nature, it favors the results of studies in the field of scientific research. Add aesthetics and creativity to such research and enhance it to deepen understanding. The learning spaces necessary for its development are inherent to all artistic research, and the personal character of a work, regardless of whether its purpose is scientific communication or dissemination, is intrinsic to its condition of human creation.

The scientific illustrator is like the researcher in any area of science, and the way in which knowledge provides the method varies considerably from one researcher to another, and from one artist to another. The relationship that is established will determine the final result of the work, endowing it on the one hand with artistic personality, and on the other with scientific veracity. The best scientific illustration will be one that combines both aspects equally.



Figure 6. Reconstruction of the pottery of Las Cogotas. Author: Diego Ortega-Alonso. 2017

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# Section V Meta Narratives in Art Education



The chapters in this section apply an introspective approach and examine the narratives of art education itself. What is the basis of our field? What "stories" is art education based on? Can these "stories" be considered globally valid? What art education narratives can be agreed upon across cultures? Which narratives can be considered as topical today, knowing they are subject to ongoing transformation and are time-dependent? The chapters in this section offer these narratives for further professional discussion in which their validity can be confirmed or questioned. The authors focus on both traditional narratives which we tend to perceive as classical, as well as on analyzing their transformation in the era of new media, information and image congestion, and the birth of post-true, liquid societies that pose new global issues. The authors are not building an ivory tower of art education theory; every reflection ultimately leads to the perception of a human being and the world around them, and every creative act is a sensitive reflection of the inner world of the creator, but also external stories—global narratives.



# Artistic Expression as a Source of Classical Art-Education Narratives and Their Transformation due to Digital Technologies

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**Abstract:** The narratives of art education – as well as other narratives – are part of the order of the prevailing discourse and are therefore changeable as well as time and culture dependent. The authors ask whether classical narratives of art education are changing due to the advent and wide spread of new media, which many consider to be the trigger of a paradigmatic change in a number of areas. Does the new media also change the paradigm of our field and its existing narratives? Against the background of the new reality brought about by the new media, the authors will analyze the way they impact fine art and art production in general, the forms of expression, creativity, and creative reflection, as well as new challenges that new media pose to pedagogical practice.

**Abstraktní:** Narativy výtvarné výchovy – stejně jako i narativy jiné – jsou součástí řádu panujícího diskurzu, a jsou tedy proměnlivé a dobově a kulturně podmíněné. Autorky si kladou otázku, zda se klasické narativy výtvarné výchovy proměňují vlivem nástupu a rozšíření nových médií, která mnozí považují za spouštěč paradigmatické změny v řadě oblastí. Mění nová média také paradigma našeho oboru a jeho stávající narativy? Na pozadí nové reality vyvolané novými médii se pokusíme analyzovat, jakým způsobem se jejich vlivem mění výtvarná tvorba a umění, podoby výrazových prostředků, tvořivosti a tvůrčí reflexe – a jakým způsobem nová média mění výzvy pedagogické praxe.

### Introduction

Narratives associated with artistic expression and art education as well as with other narratives are part of the order of the prevailing discourse and are therefore variable and bound by time and culture. This discursive view can certainly be applied not only to various topics and approaches developed within art education, but also to art education as such. Art education, specifically its various conceptions, frames of reference, goals, and accents, are time-bound as well. That allows us to talk about narratives in the sense of basic, often unconscious assumptions, which at this moment make art education art education. There is no doubt that even at this particular time, it is not possible to speak of "one art education" because there is a natural plurality of concepts or curricular definitions, and different national or geographical discourses show different, often very significant cultural specifics.

Interesting and topical questions of today are: what do current concepts and "shades" of art education have in common (meaning what classical, basal narratives determine art education today)? How are classical narratives of art education changing due to the advent and spread of new media and digital technologies, which many rightly consider the trigger of a paradigmatic change in a number of areas? Are digital technologies also changing the paradigm of our field and its current narratives?

Against the background of the new reality evoked by digital media, this study will analyze how they inform the process of art creation and art, forms of expression, ways of artmaking, artistic communication or creative reflection, and how digital technology changes the challenges of pedagogical practice.

## **Artistic Expression: A Source of Classical Art-Education Narratives**

The fundamental category of art education is undoubtedly artistic expression. It is the basis of art teaching; it is the source, result, and possible goal of professional knowledge and educational tasks, and it is no surprise to us that the classical narratives of art education are naturally linked to it.

Artistic expression is one of the expressive manifestations of the human, and as a complex phenomenon associated with all dimensions of the psyche and graphomotor abilities, it can be viewed through the prism of many social sciences such as pedagogy (especially art and special pedagogy), psychology, theory and history of art, philosophy, cultural anthropology, sociology, etc. Artistic expression exists in many forms perceived through our senses, which are rather adequately described in the theory and history of art. These include various planar and spatial forms, intermediate, action, or conceptual forms; artistic expression can be realized in various art media and materials both traditional and non-traditional, from drawing, painting, sculpture, spatial art, through various action expressions working not only with images and material, but also with movement, sound, body, landscape, and other entities, to new media and various forms of contemporary digital expressions. Within the theory of art, there is a centuries-long professional discourse on the relationship between the content and form of a work of art.

Within art pedagogy, artistic expression is usually closely linked to another key category of the field, which is creativity. In this context, artistic expression is understood as a field in which

creativity is primarily manifested and in which it is cultivated – although creativity can be found and cultivated not only in expressive but also in receptive art education.

The creator of artistic expression can be a person throughout their life, whether they are a child or an adult, a professional artist or an amateur. Typically, artistic expression is associated with graphomotor activities, especially with the activity of hands under visual control. A special area is modeling and spatial art, which is based on working with material using not only visual control and perception, but also tactile, haptic contact with the matter. Haptics are also applied to work in various two-dimensional media because materiality also plays an important role in them. The artistic expression of an individual can also work with other conceivable manifestations of the human mind and body.

Artistic expressions exist and are created not only within the artistic field (we use the term in connection with Bourdieu, 1996, where artists, that is, professional creators, are considered to be the originators of artistic expression), but practically in any situation and context of individual and social life. The category of artistic expression includes child's scribble, study drawings created during a walk in nature, automatic drawings drawn with a pen while listening to a boring lecture at school, a picture-card by a child dedicated to a mother for her birthday, embroidery created while watching television, as well as works of art by beginner artists or master artifacts from the collections of prestigious museums. It also includes artistic expressions, for which the established designations such as art brut, outsider art, disability art, crip culture, etc. are used.

Clearly, the assessment of the value of artistic expression depends on the system of social relations in which the work is created and continues its existence. Every creative expression arises amidst certain historical and social circumstances, and its value is measured against the rules prevailing in a given culture. When defining art as opposed to ordinary artistic expression (outside the category of art), it is necessary to perceive the dynamics and instability of any definition; according to Bourdieu (1996), the artistic field is created by the gradual historical development of society, and the value of art is then permanently produced and reproduced within this field. Only the functioning of this field creates an aesthetic disposition, without which the artistic field - and of course art as a separate category - could not function. It is therefore the social conditions that allow the "emergence" of the artist and their products. However, the course of this field is fundamentally influenced not only by the artists, but in greater effect also by other players such as art historians, critics, curators, and art enthusiasts. The artistic field is a space in which the belief in the value of art is shared and constantly renewed (Bourdieu, 1996). It is natural that there are numerous manifestations on the fringes of this field which, in accordance with the dynamics of art in the midst of social and cultural relations, can become an integral part of it, move to its center, and regain or lose relevance. We recall these well-known connections mainly because they are related to the topic of narratives, and because they have a direct influence on the forms of art education.

The result of artistic creation is usually a unique, unrepeatable sensory and cognitively perceptible result which arises from the process of artmaking and functions as a specific communication. The creative result can be viewed by the creator, it can also be perceived, interpreted, and judged by other people; it can reveal various meanings in the process of interpretation regardless of the original intentions of the creator. We can see this pattern in both

highly valued, expert results (works of art within the artistic field) as well as in simple expressions of children, untrained adults, and people with disabilities.

The process of social attribution of value to artistic expressions and the aforementioned dynamics of the artistic field are behind postulating the art category itself, as well as establishing and recognizing so-called children's art, the art of natural nations, art brut, outsider art, or disability art as categories within the artistic field which originally consisted solely of manifestations of high culture in a network of various professional, social, economic, religious, and other rules, laws, and institutional auspices. Their relaxation during the 20<sup>th</sup> century under the fundamental influence of modernity manifested in a whole range of social areas (not only in art) broadened the reach and perspectives of the artistic field and made it possible to perceive the value of these originally neglected and misunderstood manifestations. Their status is thus exposed to discussions, evaluations, and changes just like other creative expressions are.

As stated by Czech theorist Igor Zhoř (1998), art, together with science, is the second basic form through which one learns and interprets the world. Art is a specific socially and culturally determined kind of human activity, a cultural phenomenon that takes many different forms. In the form of artistic creation (in the sense of high art), it has been researched for centuries by the aesthetics and history of art, the psychology of art, the sociology of art, semiotics, and other sciences. Art, but also unprofessional, untrained artistic expression, can be a sensory and intellectually perceptible, internally differentiated phenomenon with a number of specific expressions, but it is also possible to examine the creative process, which precedes perceptible results, establishes their origin, and shows certain specifics that distinguish it from other cultural manifestations.

Artistic expression as a result of a creative activity can occur with different intentions, but also involuntarily or spontaneously. All components of human existence can be applied to its realization: from the corporeality, through the psyche, to the spiritual dimension of the human, which is associated with creation in terms of formation, recognition, and perception of spiritual values through reception or production of artistic expression, and as a means of finding values and meanings of life. Through artmaking, the human develops the spiritual dimension of their being and transcends their early existence through it. In the process of artmaking, intellectual abilities are applied in connection with creativity and sensorimotor functions, as well as emotions – also in connection with imagination, intuition, and visualization of archetypes in the sense of innate patterns of human imagination and feelings.

Artistic expression, especially in its form of a codified professional artistic expression, is also associated with aesthetic pleasure and sensory reception in general, integrally linked with cognitive processes. These are applied both during the perception of artistic expression (the reception is also understood as a creative act), and of course, during creative activities. In addition to cognition, a variety of other processes associated with the processing of perceptions, imaginations, emotions, associations, intuitive stimuli, and inspiration are used in artistic creation. Applying the psychological conceptual apparatus, Kulka (2008) divides the creative process into phases of *preparation – incubation* (maturation) *– inspiration – elaboration – evaluation – correction;* his model draws attention to the intertwining features of intentionality and ignorance, the unpredictability of the unique, the individual grasp of inspiration, the conscious creative

intent, the uniqueness, and to a large extent also to the uniqueness of preference, the choice of individual motives, and the combinations of formal means of expression.

Probably the most interesting and least tangible phase in the creative process is inspiration. It becomes the subject of various interpretations: from supernatural, religiously or mythologically motivated explanations of its sources to psychological interpretations pointing to external and internal sources of inspiration, its conscious and unconscious sources, as well as its connections with different layers and functions of the psyche. Regarding inspiration, Thrash & Elliot (2003, 2004) recognize and analyze three basic characteristics and their relations: (a) transcendence, (b) evocation, and (c) motivation. In connection with inspiration and artistic creation, transcendence is an expression of the factual existence of a reference, a framework or reality that is beyond human understanding. As Thrash & Elliot (2004) explain, inspiration directs us to something beyond our ordinary experience, to something that is more important, more substantial than usual interests and facts; one perceives an overlap, something better, more valuable, and relates to it. Evocation, another characteristic of inspiration, concerns the fact that inspiration is spontaneous, evoked by some fact - it is not a conscious act of the human, and the individual is not directly responsible for it; one cannot evoke it themselves because inspiration is independent of their will. Finally, inspiration also includes the motivation to express or manifest what is newly perceived through inspiration. Motivation is characterized by a desire, an effort to fulfill a specific strong need arising from inspiration.

That is also why artistic creation is often associated with formative experience and has cognitive, therapeutic, and relaxing effects. As a specific manifestation of the human, it also has a spiritual and ethical dimension. From a psychological point of view, it can be stated that it builds on the complex and interconnected functions of the psyche and is associated with the semiotic function, and specifically with the human ability to symbolize. That is why we refer to it as an expression – in addition to other expressive manifestations of speech, drama, movement, music, etc. As Slavík (2017) explains, one conceptualizes one's experience with the world through expression. He goes on to postulate that expression is a tool for communicating and understanding, and therefore it belongs to intersubjective reality; its role in cognition is directly related to the ability of a person to share content with other people through their conceptual expression. In accordance with Goodman (2007), we will generally refer to this way of content mediation as symbolization. In this broadest sense, we consider symbolization to be a general functional instrument for expressing and sharing content among people through artifacts to which content can be attributed and which can be interpreted meaningfully (Slavík, 2017).

According to Slavík (2017), expression makes it possible to formulate messages that are not the result of

factual deterministic, but ego-adaptive decision-making. Therefore, they have a different nature than positivistically conceived research messages: they contain a selective system of information about how the author of an expressive work—a representative of a society and culture—captures the events, attitudes and values of the world of their time through objectifying and intersubjectively conditioned symbolization. (Slavík, 2017, p. XY – translated by the authors of the chapter)

However, artistic expression is not only a manifestation of human expression or a statement (and thus a specific communication), but it is also a subject of reflection and the process of searching for meanings and interpretation. A chapter by Slavík and Dytrtová entitled *A Narrative on A Narrative* (elsewhere in this publication) is devoted to this key aspect and function of artistic expression. As these authors summarize, **expression** is understood as an autonomous author's statement (the authors metaphorically refer to it as a narrative of freedom and associate it with spontaneity and creativity), and **reflection**, as the second basic narrative of art education, is an "exploratory" narrative associated with critical thinking about what was expressed by the manifestation of expression, or what is implicit in the result of artistic expression.

In the context of art pedagogy, in addition to the ontogenetic peculiarities of artistic expression, it is necessary to think about all the above contexts, because artistic expression is the basis of teaching and educational tasks in art education. As Slavík (2013) reminds us in this context, artistic creation is one of the important and very specific forms of a didactic transformation of a content, because from a pedagogical point of view, pupils learn something through it and creation has a cognitive benefit for them.

# Art Education Narratives as a Variable Result of the Praxis and Expert Reflection (A Side-Note on the Analysis)

A number of disciplines have contributed to the knowledge and rational, conceptual grasp of artistic expression and its research, as well as to the establishment, stabilization, and further development of the basic narratives of art education. Art education associated with artistic expression and art traditionally has a didactic discourse of exceptional quality.

Each examines somewhat different but interrelated issues: developmental psychology focuses on its ontogenesis and the connection with various dimensions of the psyche (especially research focused on the relationship between sensory perception and creation or the requirements of the so-called semiotic function described by Piaget); psychotherapy examines the therapeutic ability of artistic expression and the issue of designing various undesirable states, traumas, and problems into artifacts; pedagogy reflects on children's manifestations - unique and developmentally conditioned, the possibilities of their initiation and optimal leadership, as well as their educational and formative possibilities; philosophy points to the meaning of these human manifestations and their sources; art theory explains its various aspects in the mode of interpretation and social application, as well as its historical and contemporary forms and means of expression, the basic problem of form and content and the rules of the process of meaningmaking; art history deals with the development of its forms and various stylistic and content aspects in historical contexts. Cultural anthropology usually describes the forms and functions of artistic expression in different cultures and seeks similarities and differences in the external forms and cultural meanings of artistic culture of different ethnicities and civilizations. Sociology analyzes the status of art and the artist and the social context of this phenomenon. Just to name a few, let us mention the issues of the social construction of art, the problem of so-called cultural competencies or "cultural capital" of various social groups, gender aspects of artistic creation, social application of creators, etc. This includes the area of influence of "global narratives," which are addressed in the chapters of this publication.

Of course, the position of the given field in education has an influence on the degree of professional reflection of (children's) artistic expression and also on the establishment or change of art education narratives. In the Czech lands, the history of *drawing* in the curriculum dates back to 1774; in 1869, *drawing* became a compulsory part of education at all Austro-Hungarian schools. Elsewhere it may have happened at different times; however, the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be perceived as an important point in time that helps us understand where the classical narratives of art education, now considered fundamental, grow from. The introduction of art education into the education system naturally required methodological and professional care, and the just-beginning research into children's artistic expression and education had an impact on the changes in art education and its forms as well as on the establishment of its narratives. Looking at this recent, yet much different past warns us that the current "commonplaces" are again only a narrative of the time. Like the generation of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, quite possibly the generation of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century will take a new perspective on the phenomenon of children's artistic expression and significance – perhaps precisely due to digital technologies or other contemporary phenomena.

Thus, artistic expression can be viewed in a complex network of pedagogical, psychological, artistic and other contexts; for a basic description of what we now call the basis of art education, the current interpretation is perhaps sufficient – although it is necessarily incomplete.

# What Have Digital Technologies Brought to Art and Artistic Communication?

The whole of our study deals with whether and how the described narratives of art and education have been disrupted or altered by new media and digital technologies. But before we try to offer an answer, we need to define other concepts of our theoretical analysis. The very choice of the term colors the possible message of the conclusions. New media (or new media art) in various definitions always includes art production created on a certain "new" technological basis, innovatively using the possibilities given by technological development. It usually establishes new forms or even types of artistic expression, and often also new topics, among which are reflections about the technology changing the existing form of human culture.

If new media in art are defined by a symbiosis of technological innovations and innovations in artistic practices, it remains to be said how far into history we turn to technological change within new media so that they can still be considered "new." After all, letterpress, lithography, or daguerreotype were also innovations. For example, Kera (2013), like other authors such as Rush (2005) or Triebe and Jana (2009), also includes in the category of new media photography, film, radio, television, satellites, video, and other technologies that influenced and transformed traditional forms of artistic creation. (Manovich goes even further, when as early as 2000 he had already included databases.<sup>1</sup>)

It is this incomprehensibility that leads many authors to prefer the term *digital art* (Colson, 2007; Lieser, 2009; Paul, 2008; Simanowski, 2011; or the curators of the Digital Art Museum.) This shifts the scope of new media to the digital era, for example, to the post-analogue period when the advent of computers and the Internet completely changed the current way of human communication, work, and the way we obtain information, but also the form of music, audio-vision, fine arts, and the whole culture.

It is important to emphasize that the adjective *digital* – whether we associate it with art or any other phenomenon – refers to intangible objects whose existence is bound to a binary system, that is, to the well-known ones and zeros. These numbers can encode words, image information, music, and sounds, but also applications or entire databases. An important feature of digital objects is their mutual compatibility – it allows for easy distribution of digital data or the ability to copy and modify them, which is one of the aspects that has brought a great, perhaps paradigmatic change to art (e.g., there was a fundamental change in the status of authorship and the aura of an artwork or its ability to become a commodity).

Lieser (2009) uses the phrase *digital art* as a general term for any work of art using computer technology. It follows from the concept of *digital art* in that the output is a work in a digital form, in the background of which there is a binary code; its opposite is considered works of analogue nature.<sup>2</sup>

Many digital objects or services operate exclusively or mainly on the Internet, and the Internet – although it is an infrastructure rather than a technology—is a necessary basis for many manifestations of new media art. In any case, every phase of the development of the digital world (tools, technologies, the Internet) was immediately sought after by artists who were able to use them innovatively in the early 1990s for their own, entirely original artistic expressions. More importantly, they made them visible, reminding us that these tools and products of new technology should be reflected rather than taken for granted or perceived as neutral or asymptomatic.

Undoubtedly, artistic expression has been greatly expanded by digital online culture by both tools and space. Cyberspace, virtual space, or the virtual world—as it is most often referred to—is one of the achievements of the described technological development and embodies the new possibilities that digitization brings to the human. Not only in the beginning, but perhaps even more so today, virtuality raises both expectations and concerns. Initially, people discovered these places; despite their material unreality, they could visit and inhabit them with caution, asking whether a dystopian scenario could occur and technology could cause an irreversible development of society in the wrong direction.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, people saw virtuality as an opportunity to expand existing forms of human experience, and despite the initial imperfections of early products (given the imperfections of graphics tools and display capabilities, as well as the imperfections of 3D creation and rendering software), they enthusiastically began to interact and experiment with different ways of existence.

From the beginning, users have entered virtual worlds most often through computer and video games, which have also triggered the interest of new media artists encouraging them to parody or modify the virtual spaces. Cyberspace has offered entirely new opportunities for activist artists. It provided them not only with the medium of a website, but also with a platform that allows them to share information in a fast and unlimited manner and with complete anonymity. Many artists work under a hidden identity or use avatars (see Šobáňová et al., 2015).<sup>4</sup> The art of new media reminds us of another potential narrative, which is the fate of using everything new for artistic expression, the narrative of creativity, for which the new medium is nothing more than a challenge to explore and subjugate.

Increasingly, we associate the art of new media with its specific content; this can be very often observed in art that reflects and criticizes commercial or other aspects of new technologies or the contemporary media world. These works of art are extremely valuable in that they reflect an essential aspect of today's world. As Kera (2013) observes, they reflect on the connection between civilization and technology and the ubiquity of technology. Digital art seeks to show different forms of socio-technological relationships and to grasp the space between autonomy, addiction, and the symbiosis of art with the media, as well as people with machines. The new media in the arts connect various machines, organisms, and social structures into common units in an innovative way, changing the boundaries between natural and artificial, *physis* and *techné* (Kera, 2013).

A special phenomenon brought about by the technological development and expansion of the Internet is hacking, and its special artistic position is hacktivism. Closely related to this phenomenon is also cultural jamming (parodies of e-shops, clones of politicians or multinational corporations, modifications of popular computer games), which has found an unlimited field of inspiration and possibilities on the Internet. These manifestations of the digital underground are sympathetic in their subversiveness and draw attention to the risky realities of today's world. Already, the pioneers of new media made them visible and reminded us that new tools and technological products should be critically reflected, not taken for granted or perceived as neutral or asymptomatic.

Lev Manovich (2001) defines new media in a narrower way, thus getting closer to the concept of digital media as opposed to defining new media as a combination of technological innovations with forms of artistic expression. According to Manovich, new media (not only in art) are characterized by principles that he elaborated on in more detail in his work *The Language of New Media* published in 2001. The first two principles are numerical representation and modularity that is related to it, from which three more are derived: automation, variability, and transcoding. To this day, Manovich's twenty-year-old analysis concisely explains what happens when we copy files, work in a graphics editor, or perceive digital audiovisual works on a monitor.

One of the most visible principles is the automation and acceleration of previously slow and demanding operations, which are made possible by numerical coding and a modular structure. In the field of technical development, automation is one of the main efforts and the goal is to develop and implement various automatic devices. Automation in the context of digital art represents a key change that disrupts the classical narratives of artistic creation; it shows the previously unforeseen, namely that the human element can be replaced by a computer in certain parts of the creative process. In it, or in its software, for example, various templates or easy-to-use digital data editing algorithms may be available. In the field of art, automation is consequently applied in so-called generative art, which raises many questions regarding the authorship and the necessity of the human dimension of art.

Automation is also related to the considerable variability of new media, the fourth of the principles that Manovich elaborated on. Variability is a positive consequence of numerical coding and modularity. As Manovich explains (2001), a new-media work is not something fixed, but exists in endless versions produced by the activities of the computer. The variability is thus manifested by the possibility of generating a number of versions of a certain work, such as color variations of computer graphics or compositional variants of a net-art collage. It is obvious that

variability stems from the modularity of new media: elements of a certain medium, relatively separate, can be arbitrarily combined and assembled into new units. However, the variability of new media (not only of works of art) is present also in the normal activities of computer users and the Internet. All of the activities related to the interactivity of websites – where we choose from menus, using hypertext, or regularly updating programs or websites – can be included in the principle of variability. After all, a website appears in endless versions on the monitors of its visitors; by using menus or hyperlinks, each new user creates other variants of the site. This moment is also a significant change that has taken place in art and penetrates art education: if a work of art takes the form of a website or a data set, the current category of the original loses its meaning, as does the aura attached to the original of the work of art.

It is clear that the new media are fundamentally changing the established boundaries of how art has been viewed so far. For example, the art production and operation related to such works is changing, specifically the exhibition of new media works and the methods of their archiving. Art also loses the function and value of a commodity. Furthermore, the meaning of the original changes completely. Classical art forms build on their authenticity – it is not possible to think that medieval panel paintings or Michelangelo's sculpture can have equally valuable doubles; the value of these works is based on their uniqueness, on the "aura" of their original, which was created by the author. On the contrary, digital works of art are – as a consequence – essentially a set of zeros and ones. Viewers do not perceive them in this form, but this does not change the fact that the data file stored on the creator's computer is exactly the same as its copy on the gallery's or viewer's computer.

And further: while classical work firmly and relatively still exists in its material form (although it is threatened by external conditions), digital images, computer animations, or net-art projects need a certain and well-coordinated context for their existence formed by software and hardware tools. A separate issue is the rapid development of these tools, their permanent replacement, obsolescence, and impending incompatibility (for example, reading a file from a floppy disk is now impossible for the owner of a regular computer). Variability and other principles of new media bring with them a serious problem of the authenticity of a work of art and its value. While the work of the 'old' media has been given by a fixed structure of its individual sensory elements and has been characterized by them once and for all, the work of the new media is open, variable, and unstable because "a computer — and computer culture in its wake — substitute every constant by a variable" (Novak in Manovich, 2001, p. 62). The question is whether new media works can nevertheless be understood as an autonomous statement of the artist (as we were used to in the works of 'old' media) when they are equally the work of the artist, computer, and viewer's choices. Or is this choice and the prepared algorithm the artistic statement?

Manovich (2001) also draws attention to the fact that the manifestation, or rather the consequence, of the 'computerization of the media' is the gradual cultural transcoding. This principle refers to the transcoding of cultural forms and contents (comprehensible to the human) into computer data adapted to the machine and understandable to the machine in particular. The primary significance of the properties of digital data is not cultural (content, significance, aesthetic quality, etc.), but purely technical – suitable primarily for computer communication (type of file, size, format, etc.). We see that "new media in general can be thought of as consisting from two distinct layers: the 'cultural layer' and the 'computer layer.'" (Manovich, 2001, p. 63)

The issue of cultural transcoding is an open and urgent question of the overall influence of new media on human culture. Only the future and concentrated research of this phenomenon will show how profound the cultural change of our times is. Undoubtedly, the computer and cultural layers interact, and the result of this influence is contemporary computer culture, or in Manovich's (2001) words, "a blend of human and computer meanings, of traditional ways human culture modeled the world and computer's own ways to represent it" (p. 64). Perhaps, it is this aspect that has the greatest potential to change the basic narratives of art education and art creation – among others, also because it addresses the deepest structures of human culture.

# Are New Media and Digital Technologies Changing the Fundamental Narratives that Stem from Artistic Expression?

While there seems to be a lack of research directed at finding the answer to the exact question in the title, we can see a number of studies reflecting on the changes that digital tools bring to art and art production. Regarding engaging with art by perceiving it, the immediate responses suggest that the internet and social media increase the engagement of viewers and diversify arts audiences, making art a more participatory experience. Undoubtedly, social media plays an important role in broadening the boundaries of what is considered art as Thomson, Purcell and Rainie conclude in their study published in 2013.

In his paper, Giulio Lughi (2014) postulates that digital media offer a new conceptual and operational scenario, reconfiguring on the one hand the expectations of individuals and institutions about digital tools, and on the other offering the artists new opportunities to elaborate their expressiveness and experimental creativity. What he refers to in particular is the strong transmedia and participatory nature of digital media which affect the creative processes, introducing the aspect of interactivity. As Lughi (2014) maintains,

contemporary cultures are increasingly based on the exchange of information, symbols, images, desires, expectations, in a world where the users are increasingly mobile in the international arena, undefined with respect to the class of origin, transversal and globalized: in this context, the artistic and aesthetic experiences – connected and enhanced by digital media – seem to be the pillars and the foundations for the reflexivity which is nowadays necessary to understand the dynamics and changes in social streams, the new logic of cultural production and consumption, the new forms of active citizenship that are taking shape in the contemporary landscape.

While many admit that digital technology is deployed by most of today's art at some level, be that during the production, dissemination, or consumption, Claire Bishop (2012) postulates that consciously or not, artistic decisions to work with certain formats and media are determined on a deep level by the digital, which has become "the shaping condition – even the structuring paradox" (Lughi, 2014) Examining closely the dominant forms of contemporary art, she finds that their "operational logic and systems of spectatorship prove intimately connected to the technological revolution we are undergoing" (Lughi, 2014) However, she observes that instead of addressing "the way in which the forms and languages of new media have altered our relationship to perception, history, language, and social relations," contemporary artists seem to express apparent disavowal of the digital while finding a new fascination for the analogue (Lughi,

2014). Nevertheless, many art projects are the result of an artistic interdisciplinary inquiry applying society-wide issues with arts-technology experimentation.

In the introduction to our study, we stated that the source of classical narratives of art education is art, or the expressive statement of the human. At the same time, we identified the assumptions and characteristics of artistic creation, or the entire narrative associated with it. Analyzing this, we operated on highly abstract aspects of artistic expression and, at least with a brief remark, we connected it with another central category of the field, which is creativity. On a rather general level, we conclude that the basic narratives do not change due to digital technologies, or rather, most do not change.

Even after the advent of digital technologies—be they simple tools or deeper principles of creation—artistic expression remains a complex means of expression connected with all dimensions of the psyche. A potential change can be identified in the area of the expected use of graphomotor abilities of the human and the natural involvement of haptics and other senses – not just sight (or hearing in audiovisual content), which is enough for us in creating digital graphics, collages, or videos. The more we include digital tools in the creative process, the more time we spend in the environment without haptic experience (or with limited haptic experience), and the brain receives different stimuli to that received when working with classical material. Various authors, such as Lancaster (1973), De Bolla (2002), Lange-Berndt (2015), and Timotej Blažek elsewhere in this publication, address the question of the meaning of materiality and how the absence of tactile sensations affects the process by which the brain interprets various perceptions and gives them order and meaning.

Digital technologies allow us to create with the support of various advanced and preset tools, and the creator no longer relies solely on their graphomotor abilities or the ability to master art material and tools. On the other hand, the ability to work with a tool, the need to conquer the creative means and medium with which one creates, is still present in digital creation – without skills and effort, even art creation with advanced technological tools does not exceed the level of mere "production" or "coloring-book" activity, and it will not become a full-fledged means of expression.

Nevertheless, the ease with which high-quality and even professional "images" can be produced today—which until recently were associated with creative "excellence"—with highly professional knowledge of tools and skills to master them, even in photography, where the technical medium has always been what significantly influenced the result, cannot be overlooked. (Photography was also the first "new" medium to urgently open questions of authorship and the boundaries between "natural" and "technical" creation; it addressed the question of the extent to which artistic expression is the work of the creator and the product of the device.)

The advent of new media has expanded existing forms of human experience and brought considerable democratization of the art field (virtually anyone can be a creator, but also literally everyone can be the owner or user of, for example, an art video placed on YouTube). At the same time, new media teaches us to reconcile with the transience and instability of these new art forms. If we step out of the artistic environment, then of course we must also apply the aspect of democracy to the production of paintings or other artifacts. Together with the aforementioned ease of production, simplicity, availability, or the fact that it is not necessary to concentrate, we

can work recklessly, tentatively without fear of error, but all the less focused. In addition, elaboration or other common aspects of creativity are no longer necessary to produce a "good" creative result; the production of seemingly perfect images can now be realized without being creative. Another kind of question is the change in, or even the reduction and disappearance of the process of creation (often replaced by just a technical algorithm), which we know is – at least in the context of education – more valuable than the result.

The ease with which virtually anyone can create perfect images today also contributes to their overproduction and devaluation. The return of traditional methods and art techniques, as well as folk crafts and "analogue" creative methods, appears as a natural countercurrent. It is probably impossible to determine how influential this current is and will be; however, it exists and shows that both positions of creation—fast, easy,<sup>5</sup> digital-based, demanding, handicraft-based—play an important role in the lives of today's professional creators and also in the lives of laymen, children, and the youth, and that they can coexist very well. We commonly see this when watching, for example, art students who approach sketching or searching for the "good shape" of the composition in a completely different way than previous generations. Digital photography is a completely natural helper for them in this process, and it would be foolish to prevent them from using it. Creators always use all the procedures that are available and that suit them best for their creative purposes.

Regarding the nature of the artistic result, it is certainly the choice of a particular person which path they choose and what ways of expression they apply. The abovementioned return to tradition and craftsmanship responds not only to the available ease, but also appreciates the complexity of the creative process, the principle of subduing the medium during creation, "struggling" with the technique or material, as well as a specific way of creation accompanied by rhythm, repetition of technological procedures, and imperfect yet compelling and meaningmaking craftsmanship. Returning to tradition, we rediscover the satisfaction brought by the natural slowness of creation, its spread over time, the longitudinality given by the properties of the material and the rules that must be observed when working with it. Therefore, it is the opposite of speed, effortless copying, step automation, "filter" smoothness, technical excellence.

Artist Daniela Mikulášková (2021), who works with classical embroidery, has expressed this aspect very aptly when she says,

embroidery is an activity that forces us to significantly slow down our perception, so that the hand can follow the eye at one point. We must always be present, meaning we can only be at this particular point where we are right now. We cannot accelerate or overtake. We often realize this fact afterwards, in moments when we no longer embroider. We begin to feel strong and intense time delays, time emptiness, often even the emptiness of words, the futility of events of all kinds (we are sorry for the time lost). This experience changes our inner essence, it comes to our consciousness, there is a moment of realization that there is enough time for everything, that stress is only constructed by us, an illusion created by a system of belief and coercion, and we can go further in our imagination, to the border where time and space are one, to the place where even death means nothing, and the soul is eternal.<sup>6</sup>

It can be assumed that our inner essence is also changed by the opposite: creation where there is no contact with material or haptic perception, creation based on the principle of clicking and quick response, which instead of eternity leads us to transience, tics, compulsion, alertness, speed, or even nervous behavior. But the reality is not that simple, and our judgments of this kind of expression may be superficial. In art, which touches on new reality and is always ahead, we find a lot of evidence that even digital creation does not have to be fast, easy, or not requiring artistic technical skill – and it does not have to be superficial at all. And above all: it can be completely arbitrarily mixed with classical techniques. Just as the invention of the automobile did not diminish the value of walking, wandering in nature, or spiritual pilgrimage, tools based on automation and accelerating the creation of the result do not mean the end of creation based on the human working with material and applying concentrated, meditative procedures.

Nevertheless, the aspect of speed, easy copying, modularity, automation, or other features typical of the digital world have evoked many of the typical manifestations of digital-based creation. In addition to intermediality, these include the application of the principles of appropriation, collage, copying of third-party content, pop culture allusions, playfulness, shock effects, mystification, user participation in the creation of the work, and the use of various technical finesse, which, for example, violate established standards of user interaction and web content.

With digital art (especially with content that is freely available on the Internet), we also associate the removal of barriers between so-called high art and a wider audience. Many of the artists who pioneered digital art praised the democratization of the art movement and enthusiastically welcomed the approaching era in which virtually anyone can consume and own art - right at home on their monitor. On the other hand (apart from the fact that the above applies only to the inhabitants of countries where people have access to electricity, computers, and the Internet), it is necessary to stay down to earth: many of the considered art projects are, to ordinary people who are uncustomed to interact with contemporary art, incomprehensible, just like other artistic expressions. The need to know the context of the development of art, art theory, and many other contexts in order to fully understand the given artistic expression is certainly still valid because now we also have the technological context to deal with and to reflect. The frequent use of motifs from popular culture also poses a problem: firstly, the content of popular culture ages incredibly fast, so after a few years we cease to understand the allusions. Secondly, it has limited cultural validity. Hence, another of the popular narratives disintegrates: the idea that artistic expression (or art as its excellent layer) is something like a lingua franca - a universally comprehensible "language" that people all over the world understand. Of course, the impact of visual and other sensory art forms does not disappear, but the technological basis of new artistic expressions rather sharpens the knowledge that one "artifact" becomes, in the process of being perceived and interpreted by different people, a thousand of artifacts with different meanings rather than a means of matter-of-course understanding. However, the rejection of this traditional narrative was not brought about by digital art; it was deconstructed earlier.

The basic narratives include the narrative of creation as the sovereign manifestation of the human, or the narrative of the human as the creator – with all possible philosophical or metaphysical connotations. This narrative, too, seems to be eroded by digital technologies, and it is best seen in the art that emerges as a result of the workings of various generative software. Many visual phenomena that appear to us on the monitor are created directly on the computer in the programming language, not by the artist's hands – despite the fact that their presentation may be

different each time depending on the quality of the user's electronic device. The question of the extent to which digital art is still the work of the human and the extent to which it is the work of the computer (and thus the extent to which it retains the human dimension) will probably become more and more urgent with the further development of artificial intelligence. In this case, it is no longer just the activity of generative software (it is still created by the human), but another level is considered here in which human nature is on the decline again and the concept of *authorship* loses its original meaning. Although we are not exactly in the realm of science fiction, where artificial intelligence becomes independent and acquires consciousness similar to human consciousness, we can observe other tendencies typical of digital art that transform authorship. Some contemporary artists do not create classical "author-based" works, but rather a kind of platform that they offer to the public to be used freely. Through their interaction, the public becomes a co-creator of the work. Related to this is the question of the aura and the value of digital art in general, which has ceased to be necessarily a unique, authentic original, and instead dwells in thousands of copies on the net. The technological base, which is naturally becoming obsolete, urges us to reflect on the dependence of digital art on rapidly obsolete technology or on the durability and validity of digital artifacts in general. We can observe that these aspects of creation and their outcomes, which may have seemed to us to be the basic narratives: "exceptional/unique creator of art" or "enduring values of art," are also disrupted in the digital world. However, they relate more to the art field itself and less to art education, where these narratives have an impact on the study of art, not on the artwork of pupils and students themselves.

The analysis of new media leads us to identify one more consequence: art ceases to reside in an imaginary ivory tower and speaks more and more frequently on current social issues. It is increasingly more relevant to life; artists are activists who address the public directly. The monitor definitely becomes a space for creative work and experimentation; artists test the possibilities of a new language of art and completely new yet untried approaches. This confirms the narrative of the variability of art and artistic creation in conjunction with the technological and social development of the human, as well as the narrative of creativity, which has no boundaries and for which each stimulus is a challenge to apply. While other "certainties" of art and art education may fall, this narrative seems truly fundamental.

From the very beginning, digital art thematized the new and unrivaled influential medium - the Internet. It has been researched and reflected by artists, and the network has been deconstructed by projects that critically evaluate and actively disrupt the established idea of network interaction and human experience with cyberspace. Likewise, the seam between human and artificial intelligence has been mapped; the fact is that digital entities are losing dependence on the real world, detaching themselves from the human on the computer and living their independent lives - another very exciting topic for many new media artists. But another burning concern is that the differences between reality and mystification, between truth and falsehood are blurred - after all, on the web, reality and pseudoreality blend together, and what is true and what is its modified version ceases to be essential - the Internet user has no way to distinguish one from the other. This fact was pointed out by many of the artists at a very early stage in the development of the web. Once amused by their early actions, today we see how big a social problem this is. What will happen next when the existing certainties have disappeared, and the truth is constantly relativized? This problem is certainly of an older date (it has already emerged with modernity), but only today is it so dangerous. Artists show how unbearably easy it is to modify content and reveal how dangerous and stupid it would be to relax only for a second the efforts of critical

analyses. Art thus remains a specific and irreplaceable way of exploring the world and reflecting on it; this narrative seems to be increasingly valid.

As data have been added to the stream constantly flowing through the network, in addition to tools, artists began to be offered content that had not yet been made available. As we have stated elsewhere, artists have never had so much eloquent 'material' documenting human behavior and thinking at a given historical moment, and it has never before been so important to offer people whose humorous, pathetic, and tragic outbursts overwhelm cyberspace an interpretation of these manifestations - or at least some kind of a distance, a reflection. Thus, to the same extent as the medium and technological tools themselves, the human themselves began to explore with new means-their behavior, interests, or natural tendencies-which manifest themselves in cyberspace in a complete unfettered manner. The use of trivial, tasteless, or stupid content to create an art project can have a deep justification: we are surrounded by advanced technology and the Internet offers us the best of human culture, but on the Internet most people consume ballast, boulevard, porn, primitive games, or silly popular music. Artistic work that makes these facts visible can thus be considered another phase of reflection on the digital age in which the initial intoxication with the very possibility of creating web content and its free sharing has disappeared, and a deeper reflection of human manifestations of network behavior and their meanings has begun.

Digital art also raises the question of what it means to be human in the digital age, whether and how human nature is changing in cyberspace, and how a society characterized by sophisticated control mechanisms and frighteningly comprehensive information systems reduces the human. Although digital art projects often have a simple or humorous tone, there is always hidden a surprising idea drawing our attention to the fact that is little reflected and that relates to the functioning of the Internet, but also unusual technical and programming skills and originality manifested by modifications of existing systems, working with error or with digital waste (with cached data, spams), unusual user interconnections, discovery visualizations, and many others.

Digital creation confirms the thesis that art is not the process of generating artifacts, but above all the creation of questions – topical, shocking, disturbing, but absolutely necessary. It is they who can disrupt the way we normally see things and problematize our accepted and non-reflected ideas about ourselves and the world we live in.

We see that when it comes to other identified assumptions or whole narratives based on artistic expression, digital technologies not only do not disturb their validity, but rather contribute to their confirmation, whether it concerns the establishment of the value of artistic expression within social relations, or the very stages of artistic expression and involvement of various intentions in the artmaking process (new impulses and tools already enter the phases of artmaking). Likewise, the multitude of functions of artistic expression remains, and among them the presupposition of its communicative effect, which can be subjected to interpretation and formed into an open, pluralistic multitude of individual judgments and recognized meanings. The key narrative of creation as a sovereign, free, personal expression and narrative of the fate of the reflection of creation – the narrative on a narrative, as Slavík & Dytrtová (2021) called it, remains intact.

## Conclusion

Today, digital technologies intervene in all areas of life and have established a new, distinctive area of art. Together with the Internet, digital technologies have undoubtedly transformed our behavior, habits, communication, and perception. Of course, they also influence artistic expression, art, and art education, and in the future - with improving software tools, fast internet, mobile communication, powerful projection technology, or social networks - their influence will increase even further. It is natural to ask whether (or how) these rapid changes affect the basic narratives of art education. This study offers some insights arising from the analysis of classical narratives associated with artistic expression, which is the basis of art and art education, and from the analysis of digital art understood as an experimental practice of creation based on digital technologies, and also as a work critically reflecting this area of human culture. However, the analysis is necessarily limited, among other things, because the problem is too complicated and requires the perception of more disciplines. This conclusion should therefore only be seen as a partial stimulus for discussion and further research. Naturally, there are other problems related to the topic which can contribute to the transformation of the narratives of art education even more significantly, but we are not yet able to realize it. (Just as we thought a few years ago that the main risk to the younger generation could be frequent video game playing, or the alleged "dumbifying" effect of interacting with digital tools, today we perceive as the most dangerous threats the influencing and abusing of the moods of entire societies as well as the manipulation through fake news and the breaking-down of the cohesion of democracies.)

The validity of the conclusions of our analysis is further influenced by the fact that we have focused only on the analysis of art and art creation, not on the behavior and specifics of the learners, or children and youth without whom it is of course difficult to draw far-reaching conclusions about art education. In short, the theory must be confirmed by practice, and we are aware that changes in students' behavior and thinking always have a fundamental effect on the form of education. However, this issue has not been the subject of our analysis; we do not yet have the necessary data to assess these issues.

Our goal was a theoretical analysis based on the identified classical narratives on the one hand, and the identified changes brought about by digital art and digital-based artistic communication on the other. Our analysis, as well as common pedagogical or (in the case of digital tools) user experience confirm that in a relatively short period of existence of digital media, many fundamental innovations and changes that digital technologies have brought to art and art creation and secondarily (but not necessarily) to art education can be identified. Naturally, art education continues to be informed by the curriculum or intentions, concepts, and pedagogical strategies of teachers who can define the extent to which digital tools or digital art will be part of their art lessons.

It seems that from classical narratives based on artistic expression, digital technology is changing, particularly in the assumption that art creation requires human graphomotor abilities and that the aspect of materiality is always present in it. Digital media further changes the nature of authorship and access to a work of art (classical definitions or assumptions lose their validity here), but also changes the way in which we perceive artistic creation, which is necessarily affected by the media and the overproduction of images and aesthetics produced in large numbers on social networks. The method of art creation itself has also changed not only by using

digital tools to create the final product, but also by involving technologies in all phases of creation. Today, children and young people have access to the production of perfect images, which leads us to reflect on the value and satisfactoriness of such works (which sometimes require almost no skills or abilities), and to appreciate classical media or the "wrestling" with material that is something that brings satisfaction and the feeling that creation creates something valuable. In a situation of volatile, unfocused, and never-ending interaction with the content of digital media, the natural processuality of handicrafts, its temporal dimension and meditative effects also acquire a new value. To evaluate the seriousness of the described changes or tendencies is, of course, up to each autonomous player of art education.

As with the consideration of other risks or traps of digital technologies, it is true that in the position of an educator or curriculum creator, it is possible to adopt strategies that respond to these risks and that work instructively with current trends. Evaluating pupils with whom the teacher works or finding the necessary strategies is the task of every teacher. The prerequisite for success is, of course, constant monitoring of trends and an effort to critically reflect on and respond to them. In the future, this also remains the task of the didactic discourse of art education and the task of everyone involved in art education so that art does not lead to the production of superficial, easy products, but in the educational context it remains a means of forming student experience and new knowledge. From this perspective, it does not seem important whether classical or digital tools are used; it is important whether the artistic expression continues to be a creative effort for a statement that can be reflected and offered to others.

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### Endnotes

- 1 Wilson (2010) ranks the art of working with information and data on the border of art and science, see his representative monograph *Art* + *Science*, 2010.
- 2 Lieser (2009) proposes to label as digital art all manifestations for the creation of which the potential of computers or the Internet has been used; that is, works that would not otherwise have been possible. This means that the development in the field of art is directly dependent on technological development the expansion of which gradually allowed the production of computer systems with reasonable size, price and electricity consumption, so they soon fell not only into the hands of artists but also into ordinary households. We are talking about the democratization of computing power, which, of course,

continues and breeds, as Chatfield puts it, a culture based on a historically unprecedented relationship between the human and the machine. (Chatfield, 2013)

- 3 Many artists also created works colored in this way; even a special science fiction genre emerged cyberpunk which thematized the possible outcome of technological development into a totalitarian form of government or the irreversible dehumanization and computerization of society.
- 4 Citovat Net art
- 5 We are, of course, aware that ease or speed can only be apparent, and we could name a number of digital works that are the result of a highly demanding process; here, however, we respond to the indisputable fact that digital tools make it possible to produce high-quality images easily and quickly so is the usual image production flooding social networks, so young people are used to working with images using all fast and intuitive applications, filters, editors. If they wanted to publish a revised photograph or still life with food and a cup of coffee a few years ago, it would require advanced knowledge of photo editing (without making reference to classical media such as drawing or painting). Today, everything is a matter of moments.
- 6 The citation is taken from the Facebook profile of the artist, 2021. Translated by the authors of the study.



# The Transformation of the Narrative of Creativity in Art Education

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**Abstract:** In contemporary society, creativity is perceived as a "spell" that can solve almost all contemporary problems, from global issues and the economic prosperity of society to the personal happiness of the individual. For education, creativity has become a central concept associated with the quality of education in all disciplines, although historically, creativity in education has been associated primarily with the art field. We consider this connection to be important for the emergence of the narrative of creativity in art education. Narratives are the primary sources of human learning. They convey complex experiences in a simple way, but due to a large degree of generalization, they may not be accurate or true. We will try to show here that creativity does not only represent originality, and the concept of creativity in art education has fundamentally changed since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The presented concepts of art education represent thought currents that were of special importance to art education and influenced education in the field. The aim of the paper is to show the transformation of the narrative of creativity, which is so closely connected with the field that it is often considered a synonym of art education.

Keywords: creativity, narratives, art education, implicit theory

**Abstrakt:** Výtvarná výchova je těsněji než jakýkoli jiný předmět spojena s tvořivostí. Přestože je vyžadováno tvořivé myšlení v celém kurikulu a tvořivost náleží mezi stěžejní cíle vzdělávání, díky kulturní, sociální a historické zkušenosti tvořivost spojujeme především s uměním a výtvarnou oblastí. Tato zkušenost vytváří základ narativu tvořivosti ve výtvarné výchově. Narativy náleží mezi primární zdroje lidského učení, neboť jednoduchým způsobem zprostředkovávají komplexní zkušenosti. Díky značné míře zobecnění však nemusí být vždy přesné či pravdivé. Pokusíme se zde ukázat, že tvořivost nezastupuje pouze originalitu, i že se pojetí tvořivosti ve výtvarné výchově v průběhu 20. století až do současnosti zásadně proměnilo. Prezentované koncepce výtvarného vzdělávání zastupují myšlenkové proudy, které měly pro výtvarnou výchovu zvláštní význam a ovlivnily vzdělávání v oboru. Příspěvek si klade za cíl ukázat proměnu konstruktu, který považujeme za samozřejmý a svázaný s oborem tak těsně, že je často považován za synonymum výtvarné výchovy.

### Introduction

Creativity is a central concept of contemporary education. It is perceived not as a gift, but as a widely distributed ability (Sawyer, 2012), as a life approach (Sternberg, 2007) that allows one to accept and cope with change, solve problems, come up with new solutions, and overcome stereotypes of thinking. Among educational subjects, creativity is not exclusively linked to art education; however, it is expected that creativity will be effectively supported in the arts. The subject of art education is also increasingly required to take a committed approach to great social narratives, which should be reflected in teaching and interpreted in an artistic form (Day & Hurwitz, 2012; Eisner, 2001; Neperud, 1995; Shin, 2016). Above all, critical pedagogy in particular (Cipolle, 2010; Shin, 2016) brings global topics to teaching, such as social and cultural inequality, refugees, gender and racial equality, feminism, multicultural understanding, ecology, etc. Art education is thus used as a means to integrate those into teaching. Art pedagogy faces the question of what contents and goals need to be fulfilled in first place. Questions include whether to address the social agenda and become a possible solution to social issues in the framework of responsible pedagogy (Alexander & Ross, 2017), whether to use the potential of large topics and interpret educational content through them (Shipe, 2017), or to look away from them completely.<sup>1</sup>

The topic of this paper is creativity. However, creativity is not an attribute of artwork or a means of achieving educational, social, or economic goals. The very narrative of creativity means, in other words, a cultural scheme that is widely shared, which explains and at the same time shapes human knowledge and experience and transforms them into narrative (Stephens & McCallum, 2013; Wyer, 2014). We will therefore focus on the transformation of the perception of creativity in the subject of art education from the 20th century up to the present time. Contemporary education works with the concept of *creativity* with such a frequency that it is naturally becoming devalued and empty. However, creativity can undoubtedly be considered one of the most important educational motifs of the 20th century. Since the 1950s, creativity has ceased to be a matter of personal growth, self-actualization, and well-being (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2010; Maslow, 1976; Sternberg, 1999) and has instead become a political, economic, and social issue. Creativity is seen as a way to solve multiple social issues, including those related to the problems of the global economy (EC, 2008). As a result, it has become a central theme in defining educational goals in the Western cultural circle, and it has significantly influenced the creation of curricula worldwide (NACCCE, 1999; P21, 2018; QCA, 2004; UNESCO, 1995, 2006, 2010, 2013). Without exaggeration, creativity can be described as a great story of the global world, interpreted both officially by the authorities and at the same time implicitly shared across societies.

## The Narrative of Creativity

Most of the information about the world we live in is told through stories. Schank (1995) depicts five basic types of stories: 1) official ones that are communicated by official sources, 2) fictional / adapted ones, 3) stories based on direct experience, 4) stories communicated by other people, and 5) stories shared by society. Thus, narratives either arise from other people from whom we receive them, are generated by society, or are based on our own experience (Schank & Abelson, 1995). Narratives provide us with a basic orientation in the world, convey norms and values, help us solve or understand new situations, and at the same time, they influence our attitude toward them (Wyer, 2004). The advantage of the narrative is its immediate presence around us, but it is only a representation of certain experience. On the basis of generalized narratives (Wyer, 2004),

implicit (lay) theories arise (Runco, 1999; Sternberg, 1985), which indicate a way of understanding a particular construct. Thanks to these mechanisms, complex and complicated units are easier for us to grasp; on the other hand, they are reduced only to some selected characteristics. Schank (1995) emphasizes that the understanding of the narrative also depends on knowledge of the cultural context as well as implicit and explicit theories about the construct and sources that the narrative communicates. Thus, in the case of creativity, different ways of understanding as well as the way of content reduction show that the understanding of the construct of creativity will differ in various contexts.

Although creativity is an integral part of the curriculum and is considered an increasingly important competence (EC, 2008; FEP 2007; Ferrari, Cachia & Punie, 2009; OECD, 2008; QCA 2004; UNESCO, 2006, 2010, 2013b), it is not easy for teachers themselves to define it.<sup>2</sup> Using a narrative rather than an explicit definition shows that the narrative sometimes provides the only explanation that is available.

# The Trends in Art Education

In the practice of art education, one can meet with different theoretical bases and methods of formulation of curriculum content. Creativity plays an important role in all of them; however, the difference is in the way it is interpreted, how it is used, and where it is directed. RVP (Framework Education Program) gives teachers a great degree of freedom in shaping the content of the curriculum. Teachers are also required to co-create and interpret the curriculum (RVP, 2007). In the current education system, teachers can choose individual concepts freely and intentionally; nevertheless, if teachers are not familiar with the subject, they often only mirror the way of teaching in which they themselves were educated. During the 20th century, two trends were profiled in art education; Efland (1990) defines them as linear and at the same time cyclical. Each trend not only presents a different way of grasping creativity, but also presents a different narrative. Looking at the examples of different concepts and trends that have become more prominent in art education and their relationship to creativity, we will show how the concept of creativity has changed depending on the narrative, whether presented by official authorities or implicitly spread by society. Schank (1990) shows that the transformation of narrative is a natural phenomenon, similar to the parallel existence of narratives.

**The romantic / expressive trend** sees creativity primarily as a source of self-actualization, self-knowledge, and personal growth. It was shaped by humanistic philosophy, using the ideas of J. Ruskin and J. Dewey (Dewey, 1934). The pupils and their cognition were the central points of education. The benefits of art were intended primarily for the students themselves, not for a society that would use his/her personal creativity. In the 1950s and 1960s, V. Lowenfeld supported this movement with his creative conception of art education (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1997), in which art became primarily a means of the pupil's creative self-expression. The emphasis on subjectivity and expressiveness in creation was primarily a response to the school's growing pressure for knowledge, standardized testing, and measurable performance.

**The scientific / rational** approach does not glorify creativity; it perceives it more as a commodity or the goal of education, which as a result serves both individuals and society. This view of the subject began to be communicated in connection with the growing need to defend the importance of art education, define its educational content, and evaluate the outcomes of education just as it

was done in other subjects (Clark, Day, & Greer, 1985; Delacruz Manley & Dunn, 1996; Eisner, 1987).

These two movements represent two key perspectives on art education. One emphasizes the student and his/her personal needs, while the other stresses the content of the discipline along with the interests and needs of society. The current curriculum attempts to integrate both approaches: children's expressiveness and creativity with emphasis on the traditional goals of the subject (aesthetics, history, criticism, art, communication) and topics brought by postmodernism (feminism, ecology, multiculturalism, semiotics, visual culture), as well as economic crisis and refugee crisis (Day & Hurwitz, 2012; Neperud, 1995; Shin, 2017). Both movements perceive creativity as a democratically distributed quality (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; NACCCE, 1999; QCA, 2004; Runco, 2004a), or in other words, as the ability of each individual. It is therefore considered an important competence that allows students to succeed in the job market and has the potential to help solve current and future problems of society. Although it is a pragmatic motivation, it is important for the field that the high demand for creativity increases the value and the need for quality art education.

# Creativity in Art Education Concepts in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**Reform pedagogy** was most prominent between 1900 and 1940. It reacted to the situation in education at the time, which in art education (i.e., in the subject of drawing) emphasized copying, visually realistic depiction, and decorative creation. The reform stream was represented by a number of pedagogical personalities on both continents (Dewey, Cizek, Havránek, Štech, Čáda, Švarc) (David, 2008; Day & Hurwitz, 2012). The interest in the expressive and creative aspect of artistic creation was based mainly on the theory of personality development. The core requirement was to support the child's creativity, expressiveness, and ability to express one's own unique experiences in an authentic form.

Art education as a way of **creative self-expression** was a natural continuation of the efforts of the reform movement and is associated with Viktor Lowenfeld. He had influenced art education worldwide for several decades, and it is Lowenfeld himself who is attributed to have had the most significant influence on the subject from 1950 to 1980. Art education, in addition to cognitive and social development of the pupil's personality, mainly followed the development of fulfilling pupils' creative potential. In line with scientific knowledge about the promotion of creativity, motivation and the teacher's ability to motivate pupils played a crucial role here, replacing explicit instructions. In the Czech Republic, due to the political situation after 1945,<sup>3</sup> V. Lowenfeld's legacy was introduced a bit later, but it lasted even longer. The very concept of creativity was in sharp contrast to the position of the individual in the society of that time, from which conformity was required. On the contrary to socialistic society, independent thinking and the ability to overcome given boundaries and question norms are essential skills for creativity. Art education and art in this period were more of a political and educational tool with a greater emphasis on the craft than the artistic side.

From the 1950s onwards, creativity began to be perceived as a dominant social theme. In the 1960s and 1970s, it became part of the political game thanks to the so-called "Cold War" (i.e., the need to win space races, excessive armament, and economic competition between the East and the West). In 1950, J. P. Guilford had presented creativity as a central theme for education and

research. Thanks to him, a great potential for its development began to be seen in art and art education. Creativity thus pointed out the importance of art education not only as a means of expression and a possible way of self-expression, but also as a tool useful for society.

Another important moment in which art education and the topic of creativity came to the forefront of the interest of scientific research was Project Zero (Project Zero, 2016a). It was research started by Nelson Goodman at Harvard University in 1968. The project focused on creativity, intelligence, and visual perception. Its aim was to demystify art, to point out its constructive nature, and to perceive it as a non-linguistic sign communication system and a way of understanding (Gardner, 1993). Art and creation began to be seriously perceived as a scientific discipline with applicable research results. Project Zero is still a living project and the individual programs that are created within its research mainly address the issues of creative thinking, art education, and the transferability of creative principles from the art field to the entire curriculum (see Arts Propel, Artful thinking).

Since the 1980s, the DBAE movement (Discipline Based Art Education) has been present in art education; DBAE emphasizes the rational and scientific grasp of the subject. It deviates from art education focused on the child and puts more emphasis on the content and curriculum. The creative component of the course is extended by the history, aesthetics, and critical reflection of creation. Eisner (2002) explains these four pillars as what is done with art. That is, art is created; its qualities are appreciated; art is set in a time context; art is talked about, assessed, and evaluated. The formulation of this program was a response to the growing need to re-defend the importance of art education, to place it as a core component of education, to define its educational content, and to evaluate learning outcomes as was done in other subjects (Clark, Day & Greer, 1985; Eisner, 1987; Greer, 1984). Behind the creation of DBAE, there was an effort to create a comprehensive curriculum for art education. Creativity appears as one of the four explicitly defined goals of art education. Furthermore, it is the area of Civilization and Society (understanding of art forms presented by different cultures); Communication (effective artistic communication) and Ability to choose (decision-making based on critical evaluation, not only on subjective preferences). The central requirement, which is related to the fulfillment of all formulated goals, is creative thinking and creative problem solving, not just creativity associated with expressiveness.

In the 90s, new topics closely related to society entered art education. Those included ecology, social and gender issues, and multicultural issues. Those questions influenced opinions on the meaning and goals of education as a whole. The field of visual culture, advertising, and mass media has become especially important to art education. Its key concept is "visual literacy," a concept that John Debes had introduced into education in 1969. It is the competence to perceive visually and to understand what we are looking at. This need had shaped the critical pedagogical movement of VCAE (Visual Culture Art Education) (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2004; Day & Hurwitz, 2012), which addresses the issue of perception and visual culture in art education as a key educational topic. The aim is for students to acquire the ability to "see," to analyze the artistic representation, to ask questions about what they see, and to be aware of the cultural and social context of the work. Applying creative thinking is a basic VCAE skill for a student to acquire. As a result, creativity is not required solely when working with art material. Creativity is not perceived only as an output competence of the educational process, but rather as its necessary condition.

Since the 1990s, the DBAE and VCAE have strongly influenced art education and a large part of national curricula not only in the Western cultural circle. Creativity does not appear in them as an exceptional goal, but rather as a natural part, condition, and output of education. All applied procedures and activities used in one's own creation, reflection, and contemplation or evaluation of a work of art require a creative approach. It is not just about creativity on the side of the student, but also on the side of the teacher. The teacher is considered to be an expert in the field, educational situation, and current social and cultural context. It is therefore the responsibility of the teacher to choose the content of the curriculum and the most effective way to present it to pupils.

**Arts Propel** and **Artful thinking** are among the projects covered by Harvard University in Project Zero. Their main goals include research into human potential—intelligence, creativity, and interdisciplinary thinking—and finding ways to support it. Arts Propel (Project Zero, 2016b), led by Howard Gardner, focuses primarily on art education and education through art. Self-creation, perception of a work of art, and reflection are activities that allow people to apply creativity, creative thinking, solve open-ended problems, and retrospectively evaluate their own creative processes. The project Artful Thinking (Tishman & Palmer, 2006) shows art as a functional way to support thinking and conscious learning. Strategies that lead to so called creative output are the result of a certain mental routine; therefore, creativity is considered an achievable and acquirable skill. Art education and the arts are areas through which it is possible to develop and apply those mental abilities. Art education is thus considered a key subject which lies at the heart of the curriculum, from which all other areas of education can benefit.

Currently, projects are being applied in art education, whose primary goal is not to teach the history of art or art itself, but to develop cognitive abilities, social skills, and technological competencies to fulfill personal growth goals. The mission of education in general has become to move toward "21st-century skills" (OECD 2017; P21, 2015; WEF, 2015). Whether it is education through art with a focus on art or visual literacy, emphasis is placed on creativity, critical thinking, the ability to work with open-ended problems, cooperation, communication, independent decision-making, and the transferability of knowledge and skills to other subjects. An example of this approach is the concept of **Tab** (Teaching for artistic behavior). It is a studio way of teaching art education based on the principle of one's own choice. Thanks to independent decision-making, it creates a space for learning and the development of competencies transferable outside of art education. Similarly, **VTS** (Visual thinking strategies) and its goals are formulated; VTS is focused on critical thinking, the ability to think about visual communication, contexts, and their connections with other areas. This approach is very often used in gallery and museum education. It uses informal conditions, works with ambiguity and the possibility of different ways of interpretation, and is characterized by a great tolerance for "error." These are practices that are among the key ways to promote creativity.

In accordance with the direction of art education and the demand of society, the requirements and visions of UNESCO (2006) have been formulated, which support both approaches to art education—learning in the arts and culture and learning through art. In addition to the aforementioned competencies and development goals in cognition, social skills, the sphere of personal growth, and building personal and collective identity, the role of art as a way of understanding cultural diversity and the path to social cohesion is emphasized.

### Summary

The perception of creativity changed significantly during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, if we examine the concept of creativity over time (Dacey, 1999; Pope, 2005; Runco, 2004a; Sawyer, 2012; Sternberg, 1999), we notice other changes in this narrative – from exclusively divine ability to the gift of Muses, the prerogative of geniuses to creativity as a democratically distributed ability that includes even such forms such as children's and everyday creativity (Dacey, 1999; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; Kaufman & Sternberg, 2010; Runco, 2004b, 2011; Sawyer, 2012). In education at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, creativity was an adored skill of an adult-unaffected child, which manifested itself primarily in the art and artistic field. Yet it is now conceived as a natural part of education, a basic competence necessary for both the individuals and their successful life in society as well as for society as a whole. It occupies a strong place in the curriculum not only in art education, but is also required across all educational areas. Creativity has become an explicitly formulated requirement and an implicitly required approach to education (RVP, 2007). In addition to creativity linked to a specific area, general creativity has also become indispensable.

The value attached to creativity emphasizes the indispensability of quality art education and points to the potential of art education in supporting creativity. At the same time, however, by emphasizing the importance of creativity in many contexts, the very content of the term "creativity" is disappearing. The existence of a narrative of creativity means that everyone knows what is being talked about, but only a few can define or clearly characterize creativity. General awareness or implicitly shared theory is insufficient if we want to take the issue more seriously. There is a difference when it comes to general creativity or creativity linked to a specific domain, the characteristics of the creative personality, the creative product, or the conditions that allow creativity. Similarly, there is a significant difference if we perceive creativity in terms of exceptional works, little everyday creativity, or the creativity of children.

Due to the inaccurate idea of the content of creativity, it is difficult to really support it. A look into pedagogical practice shows that it is much easier to implement the support of creativity in documents rather than in teaching itself. There are numerous topics available for potential research such as the questions of how the narrative of creativity is reflected in art education, how teachers understand the concept of creativity, what they associate with it, how they support it, and to what extent the support of creativity is really their own goal.

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## Endnotes

- 1 In the Czech context, thanks to national history, experience with communism, one-party government, and the Soviet occupation, the demand for a committed approach brings negative connotations and is thus perceived with great fear and skepticism. This may also be one of the reasons why teachers, especially in primary school, often stick to safe, non-conflicting topics. However, it should be emphasized that agility in relation to social issues is definitely not a guarantee of higher quality of the subject.
- 2 The standard definition of creativity includes two basic conditions: novelty (originality) and usefulness (relevance to the problem being solved) (Runco & Jaeger, 2015). When describing creativity, teachers most often limit themselves to originality, which is not a sufficient condition in itself (Štěpánková, 2016).
- 3 Communist Coup



# A Narrative on a Narrative: The Czech Experience

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**Abstract:** The term *narrative* includes many variations and shades. One of them is reflection – the ability of a narrative to look upon itself and thus create a narrative about a narrative. In art and education, reflection can become the mirror of the author and the reporter of their responsibility for their artwork. The importance of reflection as a safeguard against irresponsibility increases with the growing power of our actions. Therefore, reflection is a general condition of morality.

The text focuses on the process in which the reflection of art has become an important part of art education, and which has completed its transformation from modernist to postmodern form. The paper relates to the particular experience of Czech art education, in which in the early 1990s the reflection of expressive artwork has been promoted not only as an educational tool, but also as a projection of social development after the Velvet Revolution.

**Abstrakt:** Pojem narativ zahrnuje mnoho variant a odstínů. Jedním z nich je reflexe – schopnost narativu nahlížet na sebe sama a tvořit tím narativ o narativu. V umění a ve výchově se reflexe může stát zrcadlem autora a reportérem jeho zodpovědnosti za své dílo. Závažnost reflexe jako pojistky proti nezodpovědnosti roste se vzrůstající mocí našich činů. Proto je reflexe obecnou podmínkou mravnosti.

Text se v historickém ohlédnutí věnuje procesu, v němž se reflexe tvorby stávala význačnou součástí výtvarné výchovy a dovršovala tím její přerod z modernistické do postmoderní podoby. Výklad se týká konkrétní zkušenosti z české výtvarné výchovy, v níž se na počátku devadesátých let dvacátého století reflexe expresivní tvorby prosazovala nejenom jako vzdělávací nástroj, ale též jako projekce společenského vývoje po sametové revoluci.

Motto: Each of us has the opportunity to contribute to a change. Find what you are good at, what you can do, and do it. Not only corals will be grateful to you for that. – Ruth Gates

A narrative is a way of worldmaking; narratives make worlds and there are no worlds without a narrative (Goodman, 1988). Narratives can not only make worlds, but also destroy them, only to form new and different worlds on the ruins of the previous ones. Only through the narratives that we tell and share together do we realize our reality – the worlds we live. Narratives are a cultural link between the worlds of our real possibilities and the worlds of our reflections, fantasies, desires, and fears.

There are worlds in human culture where people are in perfect harmony. It is above all the world of mathematics, also the world of physics, chemistry, etc. Their narratives do not allow for intersubjective differences in interpretation, which are firmly rooted in the worlds of our real possibilities. Art is different. Radically dissenting opinions about its narratives are common, even necessary, because art narratives mirror reflections, fears, and desires of their authors and perceivers. An art narrative, therefore, is not a tool to be applied as are the narratives in mathematics or the exact sciences, but it is a stimulus for our perception and critical comparison: a stimulus for our reflection. An art narrative has the power to encourage reflections on its themes: *it inspires narratives on the narrative*.

Reflection makes an art narrative exceptional. It adds to the narrative a special interest in the very process of *how the world is made* followed by an ethical appeal: is it good? As Zuidervaart (2015) states, ethical conduct is based on autonomous participation; it requires space for the consideration of responsibility and a critical reflective dialogue. In art and in education associated with art, a reflective dialogue can become a mirror for the author and reporter of their responsibility for the narratives that create or frustrate the world. From this point of view, reflection is a general condition of morality. The seriousness of reflection as a safeguard against irresponsibility towards others, the world or oneself, increases with the growing power of our actions.

In the following text, with the support of a brief historical glance, we will focus on the process in which the reflection on expressive artmaking becomes a significant part of art education, and thus completes its transformation from a modernist concept to a form beyond modernity. The interpretation concerns a specific experience of Czech art education, in which in the early 1990s, the reflection of expressive artmaking was promoted not only as an educational tool, but also as a projection of the social development associated with the Velvet Revolution. Looking more closely, links to global narratives can be seen in this local event. These links are given not only by the fact that they are somehow reflected in the local conditions from the outside, but also by the fact that the local and the global are born from a common human foundation, the possibilities and limits of which no human can escape.

## 1. Spontaneity and Creativity – A Narrative on Freedom

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, under the influence of the visions of J. Ruskin and W. Morris, the Arts and Crafts movement developed in line with Rousseau's pedocentric tendencies, which generally began gaining ground in Europe with the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With regard to the

autonomy of the pupil's personality and children's spontaneous interests, they were to counterbalance the low level of empathy, excessive normativity, or drill at school and were to become a means for improving society.

The social and political justification for the interest in children's art was the effort to reveal the *true nature*: the original sources of creative expression. This effort was voiced in E. Key's famous work – *The Century of the Child*, in which the author calls for the liberation of creativity as the original human instinct. Among other things, creativity manifests itself in spontaneous children's drawing, analogous to Art Brut or the work of natural nations. These trends in *the turn to the child* found new impulses in the 1930s and 1940s in psychological theories of creativity, especially in Viktor Lowenfeld (1987).<sup>1</sup> The concept of creativity later became the main guide for both theories and practical procedures in art education in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In Czechoslovakia, between 1948 and 1989, the concept of creativity counterbalanced the unification efforts of the then regime and was a tool for strengthening the autonomy, originality, and flexibility of art teachers. One of the leading theoreticians of Czech art education at the time wrote that the phenomenon of creativity was therefore so strongly accepted because it seemed to be in harmony with those efforts aimed at self-realization (Uždil, 1988). On this basis, the *narrative on freedom* was formed in Czechoslovak art education.

The narrative on freedom in art education was in inspiring harmony with modernist approaches in art. It was guided by the belief that imagination in the creative process should not be limited by external barriers, so that it could come from the deepest psychological sources of creation and be autonomous and original. In educational practice, the narrative on freedom manifested itself in four symptoms of the *spontaneous-creative conception of teaching*. These include:

- a) respecting the specific nature of children's expression,
- b) emphasizing the process of expressive creation rather than its result,
- c) strengthening the motivational component of teaching,
- d) weakening the reflective component of teaching.

However, as the INSEA Congress of Rotterdam in 1981 and later showed, the very phenomenon of the *spontaneity of the creative process* began to provoke criticism. The result was the strengthening of the educational side of art education: an emphasis on knowledge of art or aesthetics. An example is the concept of DBAE – Discipline Based Art Education (Eisner, 1972).

With regard to the different social and political situations, the DBAE trend did not find the breeding ground in Czechoslovak art education at the time as it continued to be influenced by the narrative on freedom. At the end of the 1980s, this narrative manifested itself in the spontaneous interest of teachers in the therapeutic aspects of art education.

# 2. Between Freedom of Speech and Exploratory Judgment: A Narrative on a Narrative

Art therapy was not an officially recognized discipline in the then Czechoslovakia. Perhaps it was why art teachers were inspired by it: because they sought in it the inspiration not only for free creative expression, but also for deeper knowledge – for a better understanding of what expressive

work says about a human. It resonated with Ricoeur's (1967) idea that an artwork is a mirror of conscience, a person encounters their own face.

The opposition to the rigidity of the then political regime, expressed by the general sharing of the narrative on freedom, manifested itself in schools, among other things, in the desire for open dialogue and a deeper examination of the Gauguin question, *what are we, where do we come from and where are we going*. It is therefore no coincidence that in school education, which was then politicized in many ways in Czechoslovakia and burdened with various formalisms, approaches close to the humanistic concept of psychotherapy, and even art therapy, began to be applied. At that time, the Czech humanist psychotherapist Čálek wrote that psychotherapy developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century into a discipline that gains a deep understanding of human affairs more than any other field. Therefore, it was psychotherapy that was seen as a tool to fulfil the expectations and challenges contained in the narrative on freedom.

Immediately after the Velvet Revolution in 1989, these tendencies manifested themselves in the fact that students of pedagogical faculties, whose opinions gained social and political weight thanks to their strong participation in the revolutionary movement, promoted the inclusion of art therapy in their teacher-training education. The effects of art therapy, or more generally, expressive therapy, were initially most pronounced in the Czech Republic in a subject following the tradition of Anglo-Saxon pedagogy – in drama education. Eva Machková (1992), the pioneer of drama education, said that drama education can also be sociotherapy, or psychotherapy.

A similar trend has appeared in art education, but it was accompanied by critical controversies. Through them, it was clarified that the benefit of the art therapeutic approach for art education is not only in connection with the tradition of the narrative on freedom, but mainly in the fact that art therapy is not limited to freedom of speech itself. Art therapy also aims at the insight into the work, revealing responsibility for what has been expressed. That is why the methods of art therapy are often not limited to spontaneous creative expression, but are accompanied by reflection – *a narrative on a narrative*.

It should now be clarified that the words "*narrative on a narrative*" refer to two kinds of narrativisation in art therapy (analogous to art or art education). The first is a narrative on freedom, and we call it *expression*. Expression is understood as an autonomous author's statement of urgent topics. The second type of narrativisation means *reflection* and has a different nature. It is an exploratory narrative that is associated with critical reflection on what has been expressed and with discovering what is implicit in expression.

In addition, we need to distinguish between two different types of reflection: the *author-oriented* type of reflection versus the *theme-oriented* one. It was the difference in the types of reflection that was the main topic of the above-mentioned controversies about the relationship between art therapy and art education. In art therapy, it is author-oriented reflection; on the other hand, theme-oriented reflection prevails in art, although it also deals with the empirical author of the work. The center of the controversy concerned whether reflection in art education can address the life history of a pupil – an empirical author of an expressive work. That is, to what extent can or may reflection in art education be psychotherapeutic? We will return to this question later.

### 3. A Narrative on a Narrative: Exploring Human Maxims

Reflection, regardless of its type, usually takes the form of *a dialogue – a reflective dialogue*. A reflective dialogue is a hermeneutic process by which participants compare their judgments and together seek a deeper understanding of the studied topics. Through a reflective dialogue, the expressive creative work appears in its unique social and ethical form as *a symbolic articulation of human maxims*.

According to Kant (1987), a maxim is a principle – "subjective determination of the will," which is to be measured by the right to general consent. Typically, these are maxims in the field of ethics, for example, those expressed in the biblical Ten Commandments. However, maxims can be understood more broadly than just in the range of the most frequently examined questions of morality. A person turns to the world with an unspoken claim to universal consent whenever they manifest themselves as the originator-author, as the author of their actions and judgments. This is not only when a person is exposed to an ethically contradictory situation of moral examination, but every time they freely express their opinion, fantasies, or wishes and desires.

Therefore, a maxim can be understood in the broadest possible sense as *a determinant of the subjective will to the manner and scope of the author's action, which is exposed to responsibility for possible consequences* (Weber, 1978). The expressive work does not describe maxims directly, but illuminates their nature by depicting or demonstrating a certain conception of the world and way of being; it is an expression of how the human will toward managing being is reflected in the world by way of a creative symbolic action, for which one bears the author's responsibility.

In practice, the articulated maxims are confronted with traditions, public opinion, ethical norms or political power, and at the same time with personal will and desire based on the eternal incompleteness of life. Claims from all these parties are not in mutual harmony with each other or with the personal maxim, and all their possible discrepancies must be resolved in a specific decision-making process in practice without having an absolutely valid model for individual events. That is why it is so important to go beyond the narrative on freedom and accept the fate of its reflection: a narrative on a narrative.

The discovery of a narrative on a narrative was brought by art therapy to Czech art education at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. However, as mentioned above, the reflection in art therapy is mainly *author-oriented*. By this, we mean that it turns to the life story of the empirical author of the work and aims to solve their difficulties in life situations. In art education, this type of reflection is also possible, but it is differently oriented. It is much more inclined to think about general topics, i.e., to a *theme-oriented* type of reflection.

In the above-mentioned controversies in Czech art education in the early 1990s, the nature of reflection or the nature of a narrative on a narrative in art education was clarified (Slavík, 2001). In retrospect, this can be interpreted as the search for a convenient way to explore human maxims. The author's maxims, encrypted in a work of art, point to the "embodiment" of their author, who lives the reality of the world only thanks to their senses and their body. And they also point to their fateful "embeddedness" in the environment of their historical time. Based on their embodiment and embeddedness, the author cannot be relieved of the responsibility for what they say with their work. Therefore, through their work (consciously or unconsciously), they call for

autonomous participation, defining the space for consideration of responsibility and encouraging their audience to engage in a critical reflective dialogue on worldmaking.

### 4. A Narrative on Responsibility

Discussions or controversies from the 1990s led to the deepening of theory and enriching of practice in Czech art education. From today's point of view, the search for alternatives at that time resulted in the program formulation of a new culture of education (Weinert, 1997). Already at the very beginning of the 1990s, it was clear from the discussions that confusing education with therapy at will or to refer to it as therapy had brought no benefit, although Comenius's "correction of human affairs" seen always as a task of education is an obvious analogy to "guarding the meaning of life" (Vymětal, 1992), which is the aim of psychotherapy. On these considerations, a new concept has been gradually developed: art-philetics (Slavík, 2003).

The term art-philetics was inspired by H. Broudy (1972, 1976) and his thought on the philetics approach in education. However, the art-philetics concept, beyond Broudy's concept, emphasizes the heuristic, exploratory, and cognitive character of the philetics methodology (Slavík 2004). In this way, art-philetics have continued the heuristic tradition of approaches based on reflective insight, which opens people's eyes to serious topics and thus encourages a reflective dialogue. However, while expressive therapy uses a dialogue primarily for treatment, in education it should play a motivational role for studying: *studying maxims that combine a personal approach to a theme* (*concept*) with its cultural and environmental context.

In art-philetics, inspirations evoked by expressive work and a reflective dialogue about it are referred to as *cognitive motifs* (Hajdušková & Slavík, 2010).<sup>2</sup> A cognitive motif is a stimulus to study a certain content or topic caused by the interaction of a person with an expressive work in connection with a reflective dialogue. In a cognitive motif, thematization and motivation complement each other because a cognitive motif focuses attention on a certain theme and motivates viewers to perform a deep study of this theme.

The philetic approach through cognitive motifs emphasizes the pupil's interpretation of the world through creation and its interpretation. Therefore, in a loose connection to Beittel (1974), we can characterize it as *formative hermeneutics*: through the construction of knowledge in a social context, the interpreting subject itself changes. Thus, the philetic approach coincides with the constructivist models of education, as follows from the constructivist concept of *auto-socio-construction* (Bassis, 1977). It is to be said that "we shape our understanding of reality through interaction with each other and at the same time we change ourselves" (King & McCarthy Auriffeille, 2014, p. 13).

The discovery of responsibility evoked by a narrative on a narrative has led art-philetics to understand that *the freedom of worldmaking is reaching its limits in the world of real possibilities*. Therefore, if we want to keep account of responsibility, we need to distinguish the objectivity of the world of our real possibilities from the *subjectivity* of the author's reflections and fantasies and the *intersubjectivity* of human understanding and communication of the world. In art-philetics, this distinction has become the basis for theoretical interpretations that clarify the relationships between the world of real possibilities and the fantasy worlds of our thoughts, fears, or desires,

and gives us the opportunity to apply in educational practice the reflection of expressive work to personally engaged learning of human maxims.

# 5. A Narrative on a Narrative as a Way of Learning and a Tool for Responsibility

To illustrate the nature of a narrative on a narrative, we will focus on a work of art that invites viewers to participate autonomously: the work of Anna Hulačová.<sup>3</sup> It is a critical, appealing project called *InSection*.<sup>4</sup> Her work is an example of a work calling for responsibility for the narratives that make or frustrate the world. We will think of it in the same way as a teacher might who, with the support in the works of art, prepares lessons for reflective dialogues with their students.

These concrete works without bases balance between the worlds of birth and ruin. Their theme is exceptional: with her visual metaphors, the author refers us to the world of wounded or dying bees. At a time of acute threat to bees from ecologically catastrophic relationships, human vs. the world thus provides a stimulus for reflection and critical dialogue. Her work is an example of complicated ethological relationships that are not in harmony with each other, with the personal maxim of the author, or with the rest of us.



*Figure 1. Anna Hulačová,* Éntomos. *Left:* Agro-boot; *Behind it:* We are all in it; *In the front:* TV Show; *Behind it:* Wasp Madonna, Sting Life



Figure 2. Anna Hulačová, To the Source, 2018, concrete, pencil drawing on metal sheet



Figure 3. Anna Hulačová, Wasp Madonna, 2018; Behind it: Sting Life, Kettle, concrete, pencil drawing on metal sheet



Figure 4. Anna Hulačová, Enjoy the Field, 2018, concrete, pencil drawing on metal sheet



Figure 5. Anna Hulačová, Enjoy the Field, 2018, concrete, pencil drawing on metal sheet



Figure 6. Anna Hulačová, Wasp Madonna; Right: Agro-boot, 2018, concrete, pencil drawing on metal sheet

We will base our dialogue with the work of Anna Hulačová on the connection and on the contrast between *objectification* and *authentication*. By objectification we mean an approach that is based on generalizations – on opinions that expect general agreement. The generalization is based on "third person ontology" (Searle, 2004) and assumes intersubjectively shared ideas or values. We will use Nelson Goodman's (1968) terminology to distinguish three types of symbolization: *denotation, exemplification, expression.*<sup>5</sup>

We understand authentication<sup>6</sup> as the verification of the scope of authority, or the effectiveness of the work on its recipients. If the work is authenticated by the recipient, then it affects them personally and can lead to changes in their experience or even in their behavior. Authentication is based on "first person ontology" (Searle, 2004) and presupposes personal involvement in relation to the narrative mediated by the work. To characterize authentication, we will use terminology proposed by the theory of art-philetics.<sup>7</sup>

The combination of objectification with authentication is a condition for resolving oscillations between noetic perspectives of "I" vs. "s/he / them" through a dialogue. Thanks to the combination of objectification with authentication, the key interpretive and creative dilemma of I vs. they is being uncovered.

The following reflection of Anna Hulačová's work is intended to be a starting point for teachers to prepare learning tasks for art education lessons. The teacher bases their preparation of learning tasks on the interpretations we offer here. The learning tasks are to stimulate *a reflective dialogue* between students and to inspire them to engage in heuristics: to discover *cognitive motives*. These

discoveries are supposed to grow out of authentic student dialogues, but they are intended to lead students to a deeper knowledge of the world based on the study of credible knowledge. In this way, by a narrative on a narrative, students during school lessons explore the human maxims contained in the work.

To ensure clarity, we will divide our reflection into two layers. We will keep the context of mutual references, objectively given facts of the work, connotational discoveries, and metaphorical consequences in the main text, and we will place the theoretical background, which clarifies the methods of analysis of the work, in endnotes.

The works of the *InSection* project address the existential theme of *Living* and *Survival* through visual metaphors. The names refer to the essence of life common to humans and insects. They refer to the *Sources*, to the original and repeated *Injections*. They announce in the titles that *We are all part of it*, we also discover the sacral connotations, *Wasp Madonna*.<sup>8</sup> We watch the common shared world as a rhythm expressed by organic shapes, which magically affect the viewer with their homogeneity and repetition. Hulačová creates a strange set of intrinsically close curves, which are very stylized, but at the same time, intimately familiar,<sup>9</sup> like the picturesqueness of nativity scenes, like wooden toys from childhood, like traditional Christmas pastries, like leavened dough.<sup>10</sup>

We discover organic reciprocity or coexistence: *To the Source* (see Figure 2), by its shape, it creates a relation to *Sting Life*, (an object in the middle, the name of which can be interpreted as *being stung by life* or *the sting of life*; see Figure 3). In both objects, we can see a similar writhing movement of a stinging insect, but we accept Hulačová's metaphor from the name of the works, namely that life stings, or that life is that stinging.

In drastic sections and cut-outs made of sheet metal, which appear as a contrast to the round shape on almost all objects, we can see a cross-section of some organs (see Figure 2). It might seem repulsive, but its expression by a glossy drawing on a plate is, on the contrary, delicate, fragile and attractive as a plant ornament and has the poetics of old botanical and biological atlases.<sup>11</sup> We perceive the order of petals in them, although we feel the organicity of the intestines and bladders. There has been a consolidated and proven order for millions of years, which we commonly see when looking into the entrails of a skinned rabbit or a disemboweled fish.<sup>12</sup>

The symmetry in *Enjoy the Field* (see Figures 4 and 5) is both a reflection and a dialogue. Let us refer to this relationship of two faces as a primordial and existential position. The metaphor of this work is profound, multiple:<sup>13</sup> this symmetry is not only an age-old "look into the face of another," it is also a duplication of images. It is a magical world of the double and the like. The species proximity is expressed and at the same time distinguished mainly by the attribute of the flower. Playing with attributes, Hulačová achieves fast recognition of figures. It is reminiscent of medieval emblematics or children's transparent clarity of folklore.<sup>14</sup>

Magical duplication and mutual similarity are shown to the viewer in great convulsions. We know it, for example, from the behavior of bees when they fall on their backs and then wriggle because they need to loosen their wings. In this way, the artefacts refer to either dead or trapped insects and establish an existential content-related as well as a shape-visual connection with the works entitled *To the Source* and *Sting Life*.

The metaphor is again completed by a brutal cut. Each such cut can generate countless figures, portraits, and creatures from an abstract block or spasm of a bee with a simple technical intervention: slicing. It is absurd that the modeling and spatial qualities of faces make it possible to acquire still new knowledge even with a thin cut.

The expressive impact of the work, and thus also the viewer's authentication, is amplified by the fact that one is also the other: body spasm and an impressive architectural milled round shape is also a carving method, but also a metaphor for "looking into a face of another" (Lévinas).<sup>15</sup> We can also understand it as a double magical resemblance, which is close to the identity of the same, but can never quite reach it (twins).<sup>16</sup> In her work, Anna Hulačová combines craft practices (based on instructions and repeated routines) and visual metaphors (concerning basic life functions). Thus, her work reaches the *naivety* and depth of patterns of folk art, passed down from generation to generation as if its destiny were to preserve the wisdom of the human race.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the expressiveness of the work, we need to appreciate the importance of the role in the metaphor of expression played by names and the symbolic system of words in building visual and material metaphors. Let us therefore turn to another part of Hulačová's work: *Wasp Madonna* (see Figures 3 and 6).

The dynamics of the work are based on the high abstraction and uncertainty of the shapes on the one hand, and on the other hand it links to the culturally frequented theme of Madonna, here in a special contrast to the adverb *wasp-like*. The object of Madonna is protective in its shapes; it is bent, embracing, closing in the energetic rhythm of triple linearity. Its counterpart is a small object around which this protection zone is created. If we know that it is Madonna, then we can metaphorically call this zone a hug.

The names and the system of words give the abstract form an interpretive contextual framework: *what* we are to understand the object as, what is the metaphorical area in which we compare meanings and thus recognize the message of the work and realize the maxims the work deals with. To have a better grasp of this game of meanings, we will use a thought experiment: we will suggest a change – an alteration – of the work (the term *alteration*: Kulka, 1989).

Let us consider, for example, how the work would change if the same object were called *Three Marys* (Figure 3), now developing a rhythm not of a double, but of a triple (quite literally contained in an embracing shape). Or, when offering a view from the other side (Figure 6): what roles would parts of the object assume if it were called *Bird Mound*? (Here we are developing the shape of a small object).

The title *Wasp Madonna* transforms a peculiar, protected object in a similar way. It demonstrates the expected unity of Mother and Child. Anything more specific about Madonnas and their children would damage this object. The metaphorical relationship to the Madonnas is therefore distant, so that the gesture of surrounding the little one by a big one or by a wasp has a more important and humanly broader connection with other living creatures who take care of their larvae or pupae, *the little ones*.

These experiments of thought demonstrate the ambiguity of exemplifying shapes. Exemplified properties (if adapted as such by the author) willingly assume more and more roles. Therefore,

designing an alteration should always be associated with carefully considering which of the possible roles best suits the object. It follows that when reflecting the work, an alteration allows us to think about the decision-making process the creator applied during the artmaking process. We expect the creator to choose the semantically most saturated and metaphorically most surprising of all possible alterations. The experiment of thought with designing alterations is thus a way to understand the qualities of the work that carries the message – the author's expression of human maxims.

### Conclusion

In Anna Hulačová's work, which was the subject of our consideration, human maxims are shown through the impressive expression of *strange things*, things that happen to passive and seemingly powerless objects. They arouse compassion in the viewer: what happened to them!? It's as if animated toys get sick. Someone who is shaped, stroked, crammed, stylized, grows and cannot leave. In her expression, the author mixes human, animal, insect, and plant perspectives in an effort to express concerns about the loss of harmonious bonds in the relationship system in which we all live together and make our worlds.

Unlike the world of science, which states how many insects and consequently bird species disappear – and we all know these are devastating numbers – the world of art expresses the same thing through a metaphorical connection, the internal structure of which includes both the personal (authentication) point of view of the author or interpreter, and the objectified system of values of the world of humanity. Art depicts and thus examines the maxims of how the world *should be* in an effort to give original answers to the urgent questions that life and the world ask people in their historical time.

Such maxims are encrypted in works of art. It is a matter of culture or education to decipher them through a narrative on a narrative. It is nothing less than a call for responsibility addressed to each individual. After all, education is not about big words, but about awakening activity in future generations' own value-based activity. In this sense, we have introduced the motto from the statement of biologist and fighter for the protection of the underwater world Ruth Gates. We will now supplement it with an idea from the Czech art historian Milena Bartlová who wishes that everybody from the Czech art scene understands that the only meaning that art can have today and tomorrow is to be fully committed to the new organization of society: so that it can stop the destruction of life on Earth and help people adapt to profound changes that will soon enforce destruction that can no longer be averted.

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### Endnotes

- 1 Victor Lowenfeld's findings from research into creativity began to penetrate the Czech environment as early as the end of the 1930s, as Lowenfeld worked intensively with Czech art educators at the time. These stimuli later co-determined the global direction of the field throughout the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2 Cognitive motifs are further divided into *educational motifs* (typical for expressive educational fields) and *therapeutic motifs* (traditional in expressive therapies). While within the therapeutic motive the study focuses mainly on the personal history of the client and the social context, the educational motive leads the pupil or student to learn about the connection between their personal experience with a certain existential concept and the way it is processed in art or in culture.
- 3 Examples from the work of this author will be selected from the exhibition *Éntomos*, where the works of Anna Hulačová, Zsóia Keresztes, and František Janoušek were shown in Prague (November 21, 2018 March 3, 2019) held at the Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace, curated by Sandra Baborovská, [online], [cit. 11. 12. 2018]. Retrievable from: <u>http://www.ghmp.cz/entomos-hulacova-keresztes-janousek/</u>
- 4 The chapter in the book *Metafora a médium* [Metaphor and Medium] (Dytrtová, 2019) deals with this project in more detail.
- 5 *Exemplification* the way a work is created: in our case, the objects are made of concrete and the straight sections are made of sheet metal with pencil drawings; *denotation* to what the work refers, what we have recognized in our cultural knowledge of the work; and *expression* metaphorical exemplification: what are the visual metaphors of the work, i.e., what human content does the work attract based on what it refers to (denotation) and what it relatively objectively shows (exemplification). These concepts are interconnected so that movement in one type of reference causes changes in the other two.
- 6 The term *authentication* is loosely taken from the theory of literature (Doležel, 1998). Authentication is a way of responding to an expressive work; authentication depends on whether the expression is impressive enough for the perceiver and if it is credible in the context of the world created by the work. Doležel's idea of the authentication function borrows from J. L. Austin's theory of performative speech acts. According to Austin, these acts can carry a specific illocutionary force, meaning that they become a part of the action itself.
- 7 Thematic components (balancing the denotation reference), constructive (related to the exemplification reference), and empathic and experiential, which, in contrast to the expression reference, allow the perceiver to oscillate between two cognitive perspectives (self-experiential, my private opinion; s/he / they empathy towards the opinion of others). An interface that allows us to compare private and shared values and views.
- 8 Using the names of the works, the author clearly identifies in what role we should understand the objects, "as what" we should accept them.
- 9 We generate these interpretive considerations in the layer of exemplification how the concrete is shaped, colored, kneaded, the fact that they are not placed on bases, that the shapes are similarly repeated across objects.
- 10 With her approach to artmaking, Hulačová makes sure we find a large number of analogies, and thus creates a satellite layer of interpretation around the work, which in the end contextually anchors the work into the expression established by these analogies.

- 11 These interpretations are generated by reasoning in the denotation layer what the object refers to and by what.
- 12 This method consistently anchors the found denotations into a concrete lived experience in order to strengthen both the essential aspect of the context that the work creates about our experience and the privacy of the work's perception (my memories, my perception of the world, the experiential component).
- 13 Hulačová creates very dense and interconnected metaphors, multi-meaning connections, but using very lapidary and seemingly naive means. This creates a cocktail of expressions: high abstraction and naivety, complex consideration in elementary form; therefore, under these conditions, a cyclical mythological timelessness arises.
- 14 We now turn to expression, a metaphorical symbolisation that necessarily requires the performer to create a metaphorical shift. The advantage of this method is that the formed metaphorical leap *justifies the literal properties of the work* and thus keeps the interpretation closely linked to the structure of the work. However, this time it is not done by the experience of the creator who created the work, but the experience of the perceiver who shares the values upheld by the work.
- 15 Emmanuel Lévinas (1906 1995): A naive, *godless* existence expands and gains grounds until it meets the Face of Another, which is defenceless and *naked*, but commands *You shall not kill*. Ethics begin by accepting this command, which in this sense is the basis and the beginning of philosophy.
- 16 Again, we can recall the effectiveness of the magic of mirrors: they show what is not possible. There are no two same things. They either don't occupy the same place, or they don't occupy the same time. Similarity is therefore a very effective visual method that raises the question of proximity and process oscillation to the impossibility of being *the same* under visually almost indistinguishable conditions.



## Software Art as an Alternative Approach to the Theoretical Reflection and Use of Digital Technologies in Art Education

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**Abstract:** Software has become a phenomenon that penetrates all spheres of contemporary life, whether in areas of work, fun, or everyday life. Software and digital technologies play a significant role in art education because they significantly affect ways of creation, distribution, and reception of artworks. Moreover, software, through its functions and operations of program code, brings to a classroom a set of preconditions, ideas, and ideologies. Unfortunately, this specific position of software in art education has not been studied enough. Software in art education is rather viewed as something self-evident, unproblematic, and transparent, and it plays the role of a useful tool that is usually connected with some uncritical enthusiasm in the sense of automatic enrichment and modernization of teaching methods. It is one of the global narratives, which to a large extent determines dominant ways of reflection and application/implementation of digital technologies in art education, although it omits a critical consideration of program code, an inventive praxis of writing program code, or the reflection on issues related to digital glitch, dysfunction, and inefficiency. For this purpose, I suggest implementing a new area of artistic creation known as Software Art into art education. Software art is focused on the creation of artworks that expose ideological and artistic dimensions of software and show us its creative potential as an independent medium. Thus, this art praxis might challenge the global narrative about digital technologies in art education and contribute to the formulation of a new and more complex narrative which may include invisible layers of software, original methods of using software, alternative models of software, and the inefficiency and dysfunction of software.

**Abstrakt:** Cílem tohoto textu je představení a kritické zhodnocení signifikantního, přestože na první pohled ne zcela zjevného globálního narativu v oblasti výtvarné výchovy, který je spjat s digitálními technologiemi. Sousloví globální narativ je zde užíváno pro označení korpusu teoretických textů a výroků, které konstruují specifický narativ týkající se role digitálních technologií ve výtvarné výchově a definují možné způsoby jejich užití. Právě samozřejmá přítomnost těchto technologií v naší současné kultuře je důvodem proč následující narativ může lehce uniknout naší pozornosti. Aby bylo možné odkrýt jeho kontury, je nutné zaměřit se na kritické zhodnocení fenoménu, který natrvalo zakotvil v našich životech a signifikantně je ovlivnil – softwaru.

#### 1. Introduction

The main goal of this study is to introduce and critically evaluate a significant global narrative in art education that is connected with digital technologies. The expression "global narrative" refers to the corpus of theoretical studies and utterances that constructs a specific narrative related to the role of digital technologies in art education and defines the possible methods of their use. The natural presence of digital technologies in contemporary culture is the reason why the following narrative might easily escape our attention. To be able to uncover its contours, it requires us to focus on the critical analysis of the phenomenon that is deeply rooted in our technologically saturated society and significantly changes our lives: that is, software.

We are used to expecting flawless function, regular updates, and the incessant influx of new information from software applications we work with every day. David M. Berry (2011) points out the fact that the functioning of new media is based on arithmetic operations that transform a wide range of phenomena, objects, and activities into an array of digital data and insert the specific form of instrumentality and rationality grounded in calculation, prediction, and order into our thinking. Similarly, Jean Francois Lyotard (1993) mentions that our contemporary society is controlled by the logic of efficiency and productivity, which was also inscribed into digital technologies. The constant flux of digital code controls operations of digital machines and to a large extent, affects our everyday interactions, working methods, and leisure activities. For that reason, it is not allowed to be interrupted because it takes care of the smooth running of our civilization and participates in maintaining the dream about a productive and rationally governed society. In this context, digital technologies are seen as a useful and efficient tool for achieving our goals that might be regarded as a symbol of newness and continuous progress.

This understanding of digital technologies has a significant influence on the ways they are used and conceptualized in art education. Texts devoted to this issue predominantly adopt the vision of digital technologies that correctly follow assigned instructions, accept the role of an obedient tool, develop our creativity, and allow us to create artworks or facilitate their production (Black, 2011; Buffington, 2008; Chung, 2007; Delacruz, 2009; Liao, 2008; Roland, 2010; Taylor, 2006; Taylor & Carpenter, 2007). Neither complex operations of digital code nor limits or dysfunctions of digital technologies are reflected in these studies, except for fleeting mentions. The main attention is limited to the specific purpose for which the technology might be used, in this case, for the enrichment of art education (Knochel, 2016). New technologies are frequently perceived as useful tools that bring innovations and greater efficiency into art education. This optimistic approach to digital technologies reflects the typical enlightenment worldview characterized by faith in progress, rationality, and instrumentality that automatically contribute to improving society (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2009). If there is some effort to investigate the effects of new technologies and their impact on our lives, it is only based on the analysis of audiovisual representations produced by digital technologies (online worlds, social networks, computer games), not on the characteristics of the software medium (McClure, 2013; Sweeny, 2010; Taylor, 2006; Vančát, 2012). In spite of the fact that these research insights might be useful, they only develop a partial perspective on digital media, omitting their less visible layers.

The next important issue is related to the narrowed view of the creative potential of digital technologies in art education, which is only focused on the level of a graphical user interface

(that is, the visual surface of software applications), and assumes their full functionality (Black, 2011; Buffington, 2008; Chung, 2007; Delacruz, 2009; Liao, 2008; Roland, 2010; Taylor, 2006; Taylor & Carpenter, 2007). As a result, to a large extent, creative programming practices are excluded from theoretical debates taking place in the field of art education.<sup>1</sup> There is also a lack of studies investigating the critical and aesthetic potential of digital glitch or dysfunction (Knochel, 2015).<sup>2</sup> In view of the fact that these assumptions are shared across the wide range of theoretical studies, we can talk about a relevant global narrative related to the use of digital technologies in the teaching process that has gradually become an important part of artistic pedagogy. This narrative takes an optimistic and instrumental approach to the application of digital technologies into the teaching process and omits a creative and ideological dimension of digital code.

However, some theorists attempted to challenge this narrative in the last few years and strive for its critical revision. In their theoretical works, they point out two crucial consequences that bring the reductive view of digital technologies in the context of art education. Aaron Knochel (2016) subjects the vision concerning the neutrality of digital technologies to a thorough critical investigation and outlines software as a significant autonomous agent participating in the teaching process. Robert W. Sweeny (2015) takes a close look at digital glitch, decentralization, and dysfunction in art education, and describes their positive potential that might bring new impulses into teaching.

### 2. Software as an Autonomous Agent

Knochel (2016), in his study Photoshop Teaches with(out) you: Actant Agencies and Non-human Pedagogy, asserts that technology used in art education becomes an invisible and overlooked part of the teaching process. Whether students work with graphic software, video editing software, or other software applications, they often fail to realize the existence of the software medium mediating a simulation and instead pay exclusive attention to its graphical interface and functions. Bolter and Grusin (2000) describe this process as immediacy, that is, the state during which a medium becomes transparent and allows a user to forget its presence entirely. This invisibility (transparency) represents an ideal role assigned to digital technologies in the teaching process because it enables students to completely immerse themselves in their artistic creation. In this ideal situation, technologies become an obedient tool or silent companion that is intended for the realization of a student's creative ideas, and software actions are completely ignored. Therefore, technology is seen as a neutral tool hiding any signs of its presence. The result is a one-sided relationship that develops between user and technology in art education. For that reason, Knochel (2016) employs a useful research framework called Actor-Network Theory (hereafter referred to as ANT) to make visible actions and effects of digital technologies in the teaching process. This method was established by three philosophers from the field of Science and Technology Studies (Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, and John Law) in the early eighties (Knochel, 2016).

Creators of ANT put forth their claim that social reality is not only constructed by human beings, but is also co-created by objects or phenomena, and they attribute the ability to act to them (Latour, 2007). John Law (1992) points out that human interactions, which form the basis of sociology, almost always take place with the assistance of various types of objects.

Consequently, any kind of social reality is created and maintained by a heterogeneous set of actors (people, technologies, texts, and the like), that develop a wide range of interactions with each other (Law, 1992). They collectively form a temporary network of relations, where each actor is assigned a role and a way of acting. ANT's main task is to map the mutual shaping, movement, acting, and specific roles of all actors. Bruno Latour (2007) describes the network of actors as a set of autonomous worlds that formed some connections among themselves without losing their uniqueness (Latour, 2007). Therefore, ANT does not attempt to translate all actors into one common denominator, but gives them an equal opportunity for expression, whether it is an object, text, human, or technology. That is why Latour (2007) presents ANT as a symmetrical approach to the study of social phenomena.

Based on the theory, Knochel (2016) outlines the art classroom as a network of human and technological actors mutually shaping each other but simultaneously still retaining autonomy of the distinctive worlds that these actors occupy. He draws his attention to the graphic program Adobe Photoshop and investigates this piece of software as one of the technological actors frequently participating in the teaching of art education. He challenges its seeming neutrality and gradually makes visible a set of beliefs, ideas, techniques, and ideologies that were inserted into its functions, operations, and graphical interface by a group of programmers and designers taking part in the development of Adobe Photoshop (Knochel, 2016).<sup>3</sup> To illustrate and support this idea, Knochel (2016) mentions several of the following examples in his study.

Adobe Photoshop brings the concept of retouch into the teaching process. Although this technique refers to a broader range of meanings (creatively highlighting selected aspects of photography, restoration of damaged photographs, and the like) and might be used for different purposes, Knochel (2016) points out the fact that Adobe Photoshop users frequently use this program for retouching their faces and bodies captured in photographs. In this way, users remove all seeming imperfections related to their physical appearance. These retouched images are uploaded to social networks on a mass scale where they serve for building a flawless virtual identity. In this case, the technique of retouch has a gender dimension because it refers to cosmetic surgery, the ideal of beauty, and the ubiquitous retouching of a woman's body in magazines, which reinforces gender stereotypes (Knochel, 2016).

Adobe Photoshop's next distinctive feature is a specific technique of image modification, usually called live image (Knochel, 2016). This technique allows the user to make changes in different layers of an image and return or cancel all these modifications whenever they want. This function is possible due to the temporary digital memory where the original image is always stored, and is why we can modify our photographs over and over again. In this way, Adobe Photoshop manifests a specific concept of time because it gives us an opportunity to travel back and forth in time as we freely manipulate an image and continuously check its distinctive forms at different time points. Adobe Photoshop also demonstrates a policy of large corporations in many ways (Knochel, 2016).

The source code of the graphic program is proprietary, which means that it is unavailable to users, and it cannot be modified or used for writing their own piece of software. Nowadays, we frequently encounter projects aimed at cultivating programming literacy (The European Coding Initiative, EU Code Week), user-friendly applications for learning any programming languages

(online platforms like Codecademy or freeCodeCamp), and platforms for sharing and collaborative creation of software (such as the website github.com/). That is why we cannot overlook the fact that commercial software applications generally do not allow the user to creatively modify its source code and reduce the user's involvement with software to a predefined set of actions, in contrast to an open-source software having its source code freely available for customization. Regular publishing of new versions or various add-ons of Adobe Photoshop that are always promoted as unique and indispensable supports a policy of planned obsolescence. This business strategy tries to induce customers to continually purchase new versions or replacements of original products that (sometimes seemingly) become obsolete. In the context of software development, users are persuaded to buy new versions of software that they work with in order to expand and update its functions without any opportunity to participate in its improvement and modification (Knochel, 2016).

As the examples show, Adobe Photoshop develops its own actions within the teaching process that affect software users and brings into art education the corporate ideology, new perception of time, or gender stereotypes concerning the ideal of beauty and objectification of the human body. For that reason, Knochel (2016) points out the fact that one of the crucial challenges of contemporary art education is a critical reflection on the hidden curriculum that software brings into the teaching process.

### 3. Dysfunction, Decentralization, and Glitches in the Teaching Process

When we encounter some kind of dysfunction connecting with digital media or software in the art classroom, we usually interpret this situation as an interruption of the teaching process. That is because the dysfunction or glitch is still regarded as something inappropriate that prevents us from the instrumental use of digital technologies and consequently needs to be eliminated. However, Robert W. Sweeny (2015) states that dysfunction, glitch, and decentralization can be understood as creative teaching methods through which we might take a more comprehensive view of the role of digital technologies in our lives and contemporary art. He suggests that art education teachers should be inspired by digital art that investigates dysfunctional aspects of complex networks, manifests a great variety of glitches we can encounter in the digital world, and subverts prescribed ways of using digital technologies (Sweeny, 2015).

As an example, Sweeny (2015) mentions the artwork *ASCII History of Moving Images* by Slovenian artist Vuk Ćosić, including a set of films converted into text characters that make the original image illegible and Nam June Paik's artistic experiments with the distortion of a TV image via magnet through which he set himself against conventional methods of using this medium. Sweeny (2015) adds that these artists frequently work outside of corporate structures. Therefore, their work might serve as an inspiration for creative work with digital technologies in the school setting because their artworks challenge prejudices and ideologies that are generated by the corporate structures.

Sweeny (2015) also criticizes existing educational models that take advantage of possibilities offered by digital networks and digital technologies since these models work with the idea of their flawless functioning and present them in an unproblematic and utopian way. However, complex digital networks are always connected with dysfunction, which also applies to their

use in the art classroom. To be able to provide students with a more balanced and more realistic picture of digital technologies and networks, it is necessary to include their dysfunctions and stagnation in the high school curriculum (Sweeny, 2015). It is a vital way to get to the closer examination of different kinds of digital failures and glitches that might be a starting point for their creative application in the teaching of art education.

### 4. Software Art

The new perspectives on the role of digital media in art education that were introduced above show the importance of critical reflection and creative exploration of digital media use in the art classroom. Nonetheless, the fundamental question concerning two main requirements posed by Aaron Knochel (2016) and Robert W. Sweeny (2015) remain to be addressed: How do we make specific actions visible when software escapes our attention and expose prejudices hiding within this medium? How do we practically incorporate dysfunction and glitch into the teaching process?

Suitable means for achieving these goals might be a new art movement known as software art, which was established in the late nineties.<sup>4</sup> The primary material of the art is software itself that becomes an expressive medium in artistic hands. Through the creation of various software artworks, artists not only convey their emotions, ideas, and attitudes regarding software, but they also critically reflect ideologies grounded in software applications, uncover the role of software in contemporary culture, or invent new forms of artistic creativity (Cramer & Gabriel, 2001). Therefore, the computer program ceases to be a mere instrument intended for creating videos, images, or sounds and acquires the status of the medium with specific artistic qualities.

Software art includes a wide range of continually changing art forms because software is going through constant development. However, we can distinguish several basic categories and specific artistic strategies that are typical of the art movement. Software artists create artworks that parody visual styles and functions of mainstream software applications and show us their stereotypes, limits, or various cultural, political, and social overlaps. The next category is literary or poetic works aimed at the investigation of digital code as a particular form of language, in which machine and human language are entwined. In this case, artists search for the poetic and aesthetic qualities of computer code by writing digital poems or literary texts. The important theme of software art is destruction that has a critical or creative dimension. Artists make computer viruses that destruct the surface representation (graphical user interface) of software applications in order to reveal the hidden code structures behind them or to distort images, videos, and computer games to transform them into artworks that bring new aesthetic impulses into artistic creation. Software artworks can also be used for realizing live audiovisual performances, including the constantly changing flux of images, sounds, and animations whose various combinations and deformations are controlled by precisely defined software instructions. The last category comprises the creation of politically oriented artworks that make comments on current political events or serve as software tools supporting diverse activistic practices in digital space (Broeckmann, 2003; Cramer & Gabriel, 2001).

In the several following examples, software art will be presented as an inspirational art movement that might introduce new impetuses into art education and change established ways of conceptualization and use of digital media in the teaching process.

# 5. A Critical Reflection of the Software's Actions and Graphical User Interface (GUI)

Creativity as an inseparable part of art education can be stimulated by using innovative digital tools in the teaching process, but, on the other hand, this essential skill could also be potentially subordinate to a technological rationalization that would transform creativity into a set of predefined rules and procedures. Therefore, a digital technologies application in art education might have an ambivalent character. New media theorist Lev Manovich (2013) reflects on this issue in the book Software Takes Command. He takes a critical look at the above-mentioned Adobe Photoshop graphics program. Manovich (2013) notices that Adobe Photoshop offers a wide range of creative modifications of photographs and pictures based on prearranged templates and simulations of different effects. In the program, we can simply change colors in our photography, adjust brightness, add some text captions, apply additional filters, and the like. Most of these functions are controlled by setting numerical values that define a desired intensity of a given effect. In this case, we encounter software of a mathematical nature that is even manifested in the program intended for artistic creation. The mathematical nature ensures its general accessibility - a creation or modification of an image is reduced to a broad set of adjustable (programmable) parameters (Manovich, 2013). Automatic application of these effects by one mouse click requires significantly less activity and skills from users than modifying analogue photography. For that reason, creativity and artistic techniques might be partially automatized in graphic programs and take the form of rationalized rules and procedures (Manovich, 2013).

However, it does not mean that it is impossible to create original artworks with the assistance of Adobe Photoshop. That is because all artistic media are characterized by a set of limits that might encourage creativity in artists and enable them to make artwork that stresses the typical qualities of a chosen medium. On the other hand, all Adobe Photoshop's tools are described by specific algorithms (sets of rules that precisely define execution of a particular task) that always emphasize or omit some aspects of an original artistic technique or process. Furthermore, current graphics programs do not attempt to develop more innovative approaches to their user interface and functions, which have been almost identical across these programs since the 1970s. Although the implementation of these approaches could bring new methods of artistic creation that are unattainable via other media, an example of an alternative approach to the user interface of a graphics program can be interactive plant growing by Christa Sommerer and Laurent Mignonneau. In this art installation, the visitor controls the growth of virtual plants by physically touching them. Every encounter between flowers and a visitor generates a specific event during which distinctive visual forms are produced. Visitors go through the intensive artistic experience that has a unique and playful character.

The software artwork *Auto-Illustrator* by British artist Adrian Ward (2001) addresses this ambivalent question concerning creativity in the age of digital media. *Auto-Illustrator* makes visible typical actions of Adobe Photoshop that usually escape our attention and parodies its

basic functions. Ward made the artwork so that it resembles standard graphics programs at first sight. We can paint an image with the assistance of standard tools, such as a pencil or paintbrush, create geometric shapes, and use a wide range of templates of different painting styles. Nonetheless, when we start using this program, we notice that it does not work in a standard way. When we attempt to draw a certain shape or line, *Auto-Illustrator* subsequently changes our drawing. The initial straight line is transformed into a curved line, and the shape we have drawn is filled with some kind of color. It seems that *Auto-Illustrator* draws instead of us and suggests how our final drawing should look. Of course, this exaggerated assistance demonstrates through parodic hyperbole the automatizing creativity that is typical of current graphics programs; however, it is manifested much more inconspicuously. Therefore, *Auto-Illustrator* uncovers subtle software operations and highlights its significant role in the creation of art. Graphics software is no longer seen as a seemingly passive servant or tool for making artworks, but as an autonomous agent substantially participating in the process of its creation.

The next surprise can be caused by the fact that Auto-Illustrator's functions do not always do what we would expect from them. For example, when we want to remove a part of our image, we will click on a well-known icon that depicts an eraser. However, this eraser does not erase the image, as we would assume; instead, it places small moving bugs on the canvas that leave thin lines behind them as they crawl across the image. In this way, Auto-Illustrator parodies well-established program functions and asks the question of why all graphics programs roughly include an identical set of functions, and why we cannot find anything surprising or subversive in them. The next part of Auto-Illustrator comprises a wide range of graphics effects that can change our image to a particular painting or design style. We can choose from numerous possible effects such as a geometric style abstract resembling paintings by Piet Mondrian or a design style used by IKEA. It is necessary to emphasize that these effects do not only serve for image editing, but they also develop sharp criticism on the gradual trivialization of historical painting styles that we might commonly encounter on mugs, tablecloths, or in graphics programs as simply applicable effects. The IKEA style filter points out to the mass standardization of taste and art design through the furniture that is widely used all over the world. The graphics software, with its standardized functions and effects, to some degree forms a general idea of taste and aesthetic qualities that affect the visual style and design of final images. As an example, we can mention manipulated images shared on Instagram edited by an almost identical set of tools.

*Auto-Illustrator's* unconventional behavior might lead to users ceasing to perceive this graphics program as a mere intermediary tool whereby they create something else with its help, and instead shift their attention to the nature of the program itself. They start to realize that *Auto-Illustrator* speaks to them in some sense and conveys specific ideas, reflections, and assumptions. However, the same goes for mainstream software. If we borrow the term "interpellation" from the French philosopher Louis Althusser (Fulka, 2002), we can say that mainstream software interpellates users. That is because it inconspicuously communicates certain information or truths to them as if it were something evident, natural, and unquestionable. For that reason, users might treat the given "truths" in an unproblematic way and accept them without critical consideration of their ideological background. Users do not realize that these are prejudices, patterns of behavior, or values confirmed by their position in the given ideological structure (Fulka, 2002). On the contrary, *Auto-Illustrator* speaks openly to users, and encourages them to

think critically about its functions, operations, or visual design and compare this program with other similar applications. *Auto-Illustrator* can be regarded as a special kind of program that, in the spirit of modernism, investigates the software medium in which it was created, and comments on its conditions, possibilities, limits, ideologies, and creative potential.

However, software art is not exclusively focused on parodic rendering and criticizing other programs. Some artworks experiment with new kinds of software functions and actions that are disengaged from the one-sided instrumentality. For example, the Wimp graphics program created by the DX Lab art group does not work with a standard type of GUI, which we are used to, but instead it uses our computer's desktop as GUI and simultaneously as an image intended for editing. Wimp utilizes all opened programs, text files, videos, or icons placed on our desktop as an initial graphic material for making audiovisual artwork. A user can freely apply a wide choice of effects to every component of their own desktop. These effects show a user's trivial graphic elements, with which they work every day, in a different light. Wimp automatically generates an original animated collage from these elements presenting our work tools extracted from the original context. Thereby, it encourages us to critically reflect on the typical aesthetic characteristics of digital media.

The One Word Movie program by Beat Brogle and Philippe Zimmermann is able to look up a set of images on the internet based on one word typed in by a user and makes a short film from them. The final artwork displays a rapid sequence of images downloaded from the internet that are related to a specific one-word expression. This artwork not only allows us to look into a vast database of images referring to the chosen word, but it makes us realize that this space is so extensive that it far exceeds our human perspective. For that reason, we have to rely on various software agents with elements of artificial intelligence that, at its own machine pace, look up, sort out, and analyze images we use on a daily basis.

The artworks mentioned above prove that software activity does not have to be limited to the constant repetition of standardized actions whose efficacy is continually improved, as we saw in the case of graphics programs used in art education. Software artists show that the software's ability to execute something can be used for making artworks that are aimed at investigating our online identity, processes taking place inside digital technologies, or particular aesthetics of digital media.

# 6. Look Below the Surface: Creative Destruction, Dysfunction, and Decentralization

Computer viruses are predominantly perceived as malicious programs that can delete data saved on our hard drives or disrupt the computer's functioning (Parikka, 2007). However, software artists challenge this assumption because they include the partly autonomous program into their artworks and present computer viruses in different roles or contexts, emphasizing their artistic and activistic potential. *The Lovers* art installation by Sneha Solanki uses a computer virus to perform a strong feeling of love as romantic contagion. The artwork consists of two connected computers standing opposite one another. A different romantic poem is displayed on each computer screen. One of the computers is infected with a computer virus that starts to cause gradual distortions of the poem and, after a while, infects the second computer where the

same process is executed. Both poems are becoming less and less legible, and metaphorically represent the experience of love as a process during which we lose our mind and intense emotions take over our behavior. *The Lovers* uses exaggeration by comparing lovers to the connected computers and uses the computer virus as a metaphor referring to the irrational aspect of love. This artwork demonstrates the expressive potential of a computer virus that is able to convey feelings of a human being in love without any words. On the contrary to the medium of literature, it realizes the performance of this process in real-time. The gradual destruction caused by a computer virus takes the form of creative practice because it aptly demonstrates temporary "loss of reason" that might be experienced by two people in love.

The Fork Bomb simple piece of code by Alex McLean is the representative example of a destruction program that might bring about the breakdown of a computer system. When we execute this program consisting of a few lines of code, we activate the uncontrolled replication of processes in our computer that gradually overwhelm the computer memory capacity and put an increasing strain on the computer processor. At the moment when our computer depletes all available resources, it breaks down. This collapse is accompanied by specific disintegration of the image on the screen and subsequent shutdown of the computer. This artwork encourages us to realize the fragility of computer technologies because a few lines of code can lead to a severe breakdown of a computer system. If this code were to be applied en mass, it could cause damage to many important digital systems that constitute an inseparable part of our life. Fork bomb refers to the power of words endowed with the particular kind of power in the context of contemporary culture, manifested in the control of the vast network of digital systems. Therefore, Alex McLean's artwork shifts our attention from the graphical user interface to what underlies it - to the computer code that conducts running all software applications on our digital devices. In addition, it also has an aesthetic dimension due to the fact that every computer experiences breakdowns in a unique way depending on specific hardware specifications, which is manifested by a different visual output generated by a computer immediately before its shutdown.

Software artwork entitled [collection] created by Mary Flanagan takes the form of a computer virus spreading among computers and collecting different kinds of data saved on computers, such as photographs, texts, music, or source code. These items of data are sent to the central server, where they are combined and projected on the screen as audiovisual animations. [collection] creates an original map of our actions in digital space and puts together our virtual identity from the available shards of data. It shows us the hidden architecture of a computer because an integral part of the animations is source code coming from usually unavailable system files that take care of an operating system's proper functioning. The artwork has a decentralized nature because it uses the local internet network for its functioning and a computer virus that collects pieces of data from computers and creates new collages from them. For that reason, we can see this artwork as an interesting tool that might be creatively included when teaching art education. Specifically, the computer virus does not only gather materials that we consider important in the context of art education (for example, student artworks created in the art classroom), but it automatically collects all data without any distinction between them, such as emotional message, system files, saved web pages, and the like. That is why it might be used for the critical reflection of a complex structure of memory in the digital space. We can imagine that students would be provided with items of texts, images, sounds, or

system files collected by the computer virus in order to make connections between these distinctive elements in the form of digital visual collage. Every student would make a unique network composed of the fragments accompanied by word association evoked by specific connections among substantial and trivial, human and machine, or emotional and logical elements. The resulting "visual and cognitive maps" would be the basis for the following activity focused on a collective evaluation of the impact of digital media on our experience, remembering, and sharing of memories.

The mentioned artworks that work with decentralization, digital glitch, or computer virus thoroughly investigate these phenomena and find their creative dimension. They draw our attention to the fact that dysfunction, distortion, and destruction are an inseparable part of digital media's existence. Therefore, they question the notion of flawlessly functioning digital technologies that present images in high resolution to us and play the role of invisible tools modestly hiding in the background and patiently waiting for the next task.

### 7. Artistic Software as a New View of Digital Media in Teaching

In the text, we have introduced software art as a way of innovating existing approaches to using digital media in teaching art education and undermined predominant narratives encompassing digital technologies in the field of art education. Software art was presented as a counterbalance to mainstream software applications with their typical characteristics, such as standardization, rationalization, hiding their own code and operations from our eyes, and the user's inconspicuous interpellation. On the contrary, artistic software employs various techniques of creative destruction, attempts to make software ideologies and actions visible, lets us look into its code and is open to further modifications, brings new perspectives on the nature of digital space and our digital identity, or symbolically outlines shapes of our emotions.

These essential aspects of artistic software might expand the teaching of art education and develop a more complex view of the role of digital technologies in education. Artistic software can be seen as an autonomous agent in the art classroom that does not hide its activity; on the contrary, it becomes a special partner in the creation process speaking openly to us through its functions and developing a set of actions that positively affect or encourage students' artmaking. Artistic software, with its art strategies and a wide range of approaches to the reflection on digital media, shows how to critically revise the existing global narrative concerning digital media application in teaching art education. Furthermore, it outlines a new narrative that would be able to thematize and discuss an invisible layer of digital technologies (operations of digital code, ideologies, and values inscribed in software), original methods of their use (alternative software models), and their inefficiency or dysfunction (creative potential of a digital glitch, computer virus, and the like).

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### Endnotes

- 1 However, we can find several exceptions here (see Ettinger, 1988; Peppler, 2013).
- 2 The aesthetic of digital glitch is in the spotlight of many artists that do creative experiments with it and use it as an artistic material for example, Rosa Menkman, Tony Scott, or Jorge Castro.
- 3 Naturally, software is not the only medium that contains a broad set of prejudices, assumptions, and ideologies. Any medium, theory, or symbolic system is not neutral, but always formulates a particular explanation of the world and becomes an intermediary between us and the outer reality.
- 4 Neither Aaron Knochel nor Robert W. Sweeny directly mention software art in their texts.



## The Collective Body of Filmic Pedagogies: An Ethnographic Approach to 'Vitality Affects'

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**Abstract:** Film studies have often appealed to the figure of the spectator as fundamental for understanding both the powers and effects of cinema. But beyond such abstract, paradoxically disembodied mention, this paper proposes a methodological approach to audience corporeality through two case studies related to the so called "filmic pedagogies" – i.e., the historic crossroad between ways of seeing and of learning which arises from the view of moving images. In a nutshell, how can an ethnography about an audiovisual learning process which takes place in an urban context and out of a formal institution give an account of that "festival of affects" that, according to Roland Barthes, we call a movie?

Keywords: Spectator, filmic pedagogies, ethnography, 15M Movement, learning event, vitality affects

**Resumen:** Los estudios fílmicos han invocado a menudo la figura del espectador como primordial a la hora de entender los poderes y efectos del cine. Pero más allá de esa apelación abstracta y paradójicamente desencarnada, este artículo propone una aproximación metodológica a la corporalidad del público a partir de dos casos de estudio relacionados con las "pedagogías fílmicas" –esto es, con el cruce histórico entre formas de ver y de aprender que se instituye en torno al visionado de imágenes en movimiento. En definitiva, ¿cómo una etnografía sobre un proceso de aprendizaje audiovisual, el cual se sitúa en un contexto urbano y fuera de una institución formal, puede dar cuenta de ese "festival de afectos" al que según Roland Barthes llamamos *película*?

### Introduction: A Viewer Without a Body

"Nous sommes la genèse et la vie momentanée de ce monde suspendu à une somme d'artifices [We are the genesis and momentary life of this world suspended by a sum of artifices]" says Jean Louis Schefer (1997, p. 6), film critic and theorist, at the beginning of one of his key references: *L'homme ordinaire du cinema* [The ordinary man of cinema]. This statement appears many times – albeit with changes – in the main texts (and writers) of cinema of the last century. In one of his most famous texts (*El travelling de Kapo* [Kapo's travels]), Serge Daney (1998) adopts the truncated tale of *Nuit et brouillard* [Night and fog] (directed by Alain Resnais in 1956) as an ethical reference for modern cinema: "The sphere of visibility is no longer available: there are absences and gaps, necessary gaps and superfluous fillings, missing images always and forever insufficient looks. Show and viewer assume their responsibilities" (p. 31). In addition, the critic and documentarian Jean-Louis Comolli (2007) refers to 1895 as an anniversary that commemorates "less the invention of cinema...Than...of the viewer as the subject of the cinema" (p. 214).

So, the viewer becomes a co-producer of sense and an interlocutor essential to what parades across the screen. At the end of *La imagen-movimiento* [The image-movement], Gilles Deleuze (1984) talks about Alfred Hitchcock as the first director in film history who

no longer conceives a film on the basis of two terms: the director and the film to be made; but of three: the director, the film, and the public...whose reactions are an integral part of the film (and this is the explicit sense of the *suspense*, because the viewer is the first in 'knowing' relationships." (p. 281)

In *La imagen-tiempo* [The image-time], the continuation of that first volume, Deleuze (1986) thinks about the viewer as "a spiritual automaton" (pp. 209-232) who is moved to feel and think through the images.

This constant call for the figure of the viewer is paradoxical in the way that it seems to have no body or, at least, one "Neutral, not sexed or gendered, not racialized, foreignized or otherized" (Ciancio, 2016, p. 246). Although Deleuze (1986) relates modern cinema to a kind of inverted Platonism that recovers the body and reconciles it with thought, what kind of form *does* this corporeality take in the face of the screen? It's as though the discourse on the collaborative, thinking and anonymous place of the viewer was covering an empirical void whose main evidence would be, in the end, the lack of an embodied presence. In other words, how is this generic and philosophical allusion able to move toward an inquiry into the body by using a case study and, moreover, by utilizing a post-qualitative methodology?

I'll try to explain how I have tried to give myself, in my doctoral research, that step that can be described as *toward the (corpo)real*. The thesis document in which it was finally materialized, and whose public presentation was held in January 2018, is entitled *Estética de la proyección audiovisual*. *Asamblea, ficción y derecho a la ciudad en Poble Sec, Barcelona* [Aesthetics of audiovisual projection. Assembly, fiction and right to the city in Poble Sec, Barcelona]. But the projections where I carried out an ethnographic study a few years earlier, from 2012 to 2014, took place within a collective learning process in an urban context of Barcelona. The Cinefórum de la Assemblea de Veins i Veines of the Poble Sec neighborhood (CPS), between January and July 2012, and the group of activist cinema Taller de Ficció de Poble Sec (TdF), from spring 2012 to summer 2014, became the

two case studies of the research.<sup>1</sup> They both were linked to the 15M Movement that spread throughout the city after the occupation of Plaza Catalunya, while the movie projections turned out to be their main aesthetic method in order to organize learning and discussion groups about current political or cultural issues, including among these the conflicts of the neighborhood where the projections were located in a periodic and itinerant fashion.

Both the CPS and the TdF organized in public institutions of Poble Sec –for example, El Sortidor Civic Center, La Casa del Mar or El Ateneu Rebel– spaces intended to produce common knowledge. The projection of fictional movies or documentaries concerning the CPS, or short films on areas of the neighborhood which endured urbanistic problematics, concerning the TdF, were followed by a debate in a circle. This assembly debate served to situate in a current context the sequences that had just been seen. Also, it was a way of connecting a community close to the 15M Movement, which was established in Poble Sec in July of 2011 through a neighbors' assembly, with the daily life of its environment and with other people and groups not necessarily related in ideological terms. While the Spanish Transition, the current meaning of general strikes, the notion of public space, or the relationship between architectural design and coexistence in a neighborhood square, for example, were submitted for consideration through the viewing of a film; the room at dark—which could actually be an auditorium, a meeting room, or even a kitchen—gave way to a reconfiguration of the spectators into participants of a kind of open class.

That conversion—the black box of the cinema that is transformed into a classroom that approximates the real and allows us to see it and rethink it in depth—is the conversion that film pedagogies have made from the beginning. Practices in totally different places and times, such as the service of cinematography of the Pedagogical Missions in Spain between 1931 and 1934, the cinema-train of Alexander Medvedkin in the USSR between 1932 and 1933, the Grupo Cine Liberación in Argentina in the 60s and 70s, or the Dziga Vertov group in France from 1968 to 1972, shared that they had taken charge of "a public of students" and would "not stop going back on the images and sounds, to designate them, duplicate them, comment on them, put them in the abyss…have them at seeing, *taking care of them*" (Daney, 2004, p. 46).

Elizabeth Ellsworth (2005) says that the place where learning occurs is not necessarily located in formal institutions and can even be "peculiar, irregular, abnormal or difficult to classify" (p. 5). Furthermore, when a singular location provides experiences that act as a "pivot point between movement/sensation and thought," it also opens up the possibility of a subjective becoming of the participants "in the making" (p. 8). Watching a movie, in this sense, "has a material nature that involves biological and molecular events taking place in the body of the viewer and in the physical and imagined space between the viewer and the film" (p. 6). Thus, how could I investigate that human and material learning "event" that CPS sought to host once or twice a month in different areas of Poble Sec, and TdF more sporadically but also in an ambulant way?<sup>2</sup> But the most important thing is: how should I give an ethnographic account—since the ethnography was one of the methodological pillars of the research—of what viewers do when they watch a movie?

In sum, how do the singular bodies of a film audience aimed at learning and collective debate work, and in what way can that corporeality be captured and described?

### The 'Soundtrack' of the Projection

The Ateneu Rebel is a social center located in the north of Poble Sec and managed by a leftist civic association. In the fall of 2011 and winter of 2012, this place was transferred to the Assemblea de Veïns i Veïnes so that they could meet there. It was also, after the Casa del Mar and Centro Cívico El Sortidor,<sup>3</sup> the place chosen to host the almost sixty people who attended the fourth session of the Cineforum, held on May 10, 2012. *Videogramas de una revolución* [Videograms of a revolution] (directed by Harun Farocki and Andrej Ujica in 1992) was projected at that time. While the film shows the collapse of the Nicolae Ceauşescu regime in Romania in 1989, it served to address how audiovisual media represents violence and what forms of political resistance should be taken in the neighborhood in front of the crisis. The general strike of March 29 had resulted in more than a hundred detainees in Barcelona, and the attempt by the Generalitat de Catalunya to criminalize the protests seemed evident to those of us who were part of the motor group of the Cineforum.

A regular co-organizer of the Cineforum sessions explains:

[*Videogramas*] is a documentary that I didn't know about and that will generate many things for me because of the production. Many people told me about it too. Thinking from another place, and thinking about how stories and speeches are constructed, is what can stir us inside.

After the projection, the 90-minute discussion was stimulated at the beginning by the journalist Guillem Martínez and by Felipe Aranguren, a member of the older people's activist group *yayoflautas*. "It was about thinking through an audiovisual piece and making it a story about what our life could be," recalls a regular spectator, also involved at the Poble Sec Assemblea at that time. Both statements refer to the intellectual and sensitive deployment that was made of the film; this led to talk about the media as producers of the sense of the world, or about the pain and anger unemployed people experienced.

If the projection functioned as the radiating center of this common learning—although later the issue presented by each film, like *Videograms of a Revolution*, was moved to another context, sometimes being completely diverted—my inquiry should also capture what happened in that initial hour and a half in which a group of people remained more or less silent in front of the screen. How does it become intelligible from the ethnographic description that some images "remove us from the inside," make us "think from another place," or constitute a story that touches "our life?" Certainly, a film session is not limited—as criticism is accustomed to doing—to the film being screened, but rather—as part of that criticism has reminded us—includes the interplay of relationships that occur in darkness and that exceed the content of what has been seen. Roland Barthes (1986) explains it by speaking of the "twilight reverie" that "precedes hypnosis…and leads the individual, from street to street, from poster to poster, until he is finally submerged in a dark cube, anonymous, indifferent, where that festival of affections that we call a movie will take place" (p. 351). How to register the affections of that festival is not clear.

In *The Body of Cinema*, Raymond Bellour (2013) proposes a model of understanding that remains anchored in a story that is partly autobiographical, partly essayistic, but not empirical. In his words, the projection room is a "virtual place" in which there is a meeting between two bodies: the "body of the films, of all the films that one by one, shot by shot, compose and decompose it"

and "the body of the viewer, who is affected by the vision of each film, as an indication of a memory theater of inordinate proportions, through each film and in front of all films" (p. 18). Bellour doesn't associate this type of body conjunction with sleep, but rather with hypnosis.

Existe entre el cine y la hipnosis una verdadera correspondencia de dispositivos y esta correspondencia es también el efecto de una historia. Supone así las articulaciones, progresivas y escalonadas, entre tres órdenes de dispositivos: combinaciones de máquinas, situaciones psíquicas (terapéuticas, experimentales), modos de espectáculos que inducen formas de arte. (Bellour, 2013, pp. 94-95)

[There is a true correspondence of devices between cinema and hypnosis, and this correspondence is also the effect of a story. It thus supposes the articulations, progressive and staggered, between three orders of devices: combinations of machines, psychic situations (therapeutic, experimental), modes of spectacles that induce art forms.]

Exploring what happens in a film session involves taking into account the signs and evidence of the hypnotic circuit that connects the body of the film, in constant movement on the screen, with the bodies of the public, reacting in groups and individually to such movements. In my PhD, I sought to turn this scheme into a methodological orientation for undertaking a kind of anthropology of projection. During the course of each film session, my position was that of an ordinary spectator, although situated at the end of the room to try to cover the breadth of the scene. One of the peculiarities of this space is that it was dark; that is, the public's response was more audible than visible. I did not want to bother anyone with my observation, so listening before seeing became the main way to unravel that "virtual place."

According to Sarah Pink (2009), the idea of participant observation must be rethought in ethnography beyond the gaze: "Participation might be understood as producing multisensorial and emplaced ways of knowing whereby visual observation is not necessarily privileged" (p. 63). This implies that the ethnographer becomes in a certain way a partner in the practices that s/he investigates: "The sensory ethnographer would not only observe and document other people's sensory categories and behaviours, but seek routes through which to develop experience-based empathetic understandings of what others might be experiencing and knowing" (p. 65). In my case, after helping to set up the projection equipment, and sometimes after presenting the session, the sensory turn consisted of sitting at the back of the room, listening carefully, and recording the bodily dialogue between the spectators and the film.

In this way, the projection space mirrors what R. Murray Schaefer (1993) defined as a "soundscape;" that is, an acoustic environment isolated as a field of study and composed of events that are heard rather than objects that are seen. However, what are the events that could be heard during film projections? First Barthes (1986) and years later Bellour (2013), through the psychologist Daniel Stern (1985), offer us an answer: affections. The soundtrack that emerges between the film and the audience, sometimes composed of more individualized parts and other times of more group moments, is as a result an exchange of affections. So, how do we report in writing, going from the field notes to the final research report, that "festival?" To what extent can the ethnographer avoid the temptation to give obvious, wrong, and barely verified (or hardly verifiable) meanings to reactions that are ambivalent, such as a laugh or a sigh?

#### **Vitality Affects**

Raymond Bellour (2013) talks about the "attunement of affections" that occurs in the space of projection and exceeds the mention of discrete emotions such as anger, happiness, disgust, fear, surprise, etc. In contrast, the "vitality affects," which the psychologist Daniel Stern (1985) opposes to the "categorical ones," are those that according to Bellour (2013) mobilize the encounter between the body of the spectators and the audiovisual one of the film. While with the categorical affects "for so long and especially since Darwin, it has been wanted to endow emotions with a recognizable sense," vitality affects are "both visible and psychological and suppose the translation expressive of an inner sensation" (pp. 171-172). Stern (1985), cited by Bellour (2013), explains it as follows: "There are a thousand smiles, a thousand getting-out-of-chairs, a thousand variations of performance of any and all movements, and each one presents a different vitality affect" (p. 80).

Although children perceive the acts of the world in terms of vitality affects much more exclusively than adults, the viewers are, too, "analogous to the child who is their precursor" (Bellour, 2013 p. 173), meeting again at a movie theater a similar link to the real. For referring to these qualities of experience, a very different taxonomy from the categorical one is needed. Rather, it requires to be based on dynamic or kinetic expressions: agitation, fleeting, crescendo, explosive, etc. In the following excerpt of my doctoral thesis, I tried precisely to introduce this type of expressiveness to rewrite and expand my field notes on a moment of the projection of *Veinte años es nada* (directed by Joaquim Jorda in 2005), organized by the CPS on 27 February 2012 in the kitchen of the Centro Civico del Sortidor.<sup>4</sup> The following paragraphs seek to expose *dynamically* the play of actions and reactions that occurs between the screen and the audience:

Ese cuerpo común, que permanece a la espera y a oscuras, va entrando en el juego narrativo que lleva hacia la existencia truncada de Juan Manzanares a través de las palabras de Pepi –las cuales no la desvelan, no obstante, hasta el tercio final de *Veinte años*. Las pisadas sobre la nieve extienden fuera de la pantalla un silencio mancomunado, cuya respiración atraviesa la sala de parte a parte, y cuyas interrupciones, para reír o rumiar alguna reacción, se imbrican al grupo de escenas que transcurre en un pueblo de los Pirineos. Alli´ fueron a parar, huyendo de la ciudad, otras dos obreras de Numax que formaron una familia y que reciben ahora la visita de la Pepi. Hasta aqui´, la película ha ido acumulando reencuentros y recuerdos, ¿pero adónde se dirige y para qué? Muy cerca de mí, una espectadora suspira y parece ponerse otra vez a la espera.

A la que vez que le proporciona un desenlace al ejercicio de memoria en torno a Numax, el atraco de un banco de Valls, tras el que Manzanares es capturado por la Guardia Civil, empuja a la sala a un nuevo cuerpo a cuerpo en el que los afectos giran de golpe. La secuencia se compone de dos entrevistas –al que era entonces gobernador civil de Tarragona, Vicente Valero, y a Mateu Segui´, abogado de Juan– que van puntuando imágenes de archivo de una televisión local que llegó a retransmitir el suceso. El locutor, excedido por el directo, hace lo que puede. Habla a varios metros de distancia de la sucursal bancaria, en el edificio de enfrente, desde el que apenas vislumbra lo que está ocurriendo dentro. A medida que su locución empieza a juntar obviedades, imprecisiones y absurdos, se suceden también las risas más aca<sup>´</sup>, deteniéndose entremedias para recibir el siguiente despropósito, es decir, acompasadas al ciclo de ese discurso patético y al zoom de la cámara, que intenta colarse en vano en el interior del banco. Veo y oigo a Tomás Lucero, junto a la cocina, sentado en una mesa, al frente de la marea: se levanta un palmo y separa un poco las manos, simétricamente, como a punto de aplaudir. La sala, finalmente, estalla en una gran carcajada colectiva entre la que se incluye la suya. (Castro-Varela, 2008a, p. 75)

[This common body, waiting expectantly in the darkness, gradually enters into the narrative play leading them through Pepi's words towards the cut-short existence of Juan Manzanares, which she does not reveal, however, until the final third of Twenty Years. Her footsteps in the snow spread a shared silence out from the screen, a silence whose breathing envelops the room, and whose interruptions, to laugh or murmur some reaction, interweave with a sequence of scenes set in a village in the Pyrenees. This is where two workers from Numax end up, fleeing from the city and forming a family that Pepi visits. Up to now the film has accumulated reunions and memories, but where is it going, and what for? Very close to me, a woman in the audience sighs and begins waiting once again.

At the same time as providing a denouement to the exercise of memory around Numax, the bank holdup in Valls, where Manzanares is captured by the Civil Guard, pushes the room into a new physical encounter in which people's feelings suddenly take a new turn. The sequence is made up of two interviews, one with the then governor of Tarragona, Vicente Valero, and the other with Mateu Segui, Juan's lawyer, cut with archive shots from a local television which happened to catch the event live. The presenter, not up to the task of commenting on the action, does what he can. He speaks only a few metres from the bank, from a building across the street where he can hardly catch a glimpse of what's happening inside. At the same time as he mixes obviousness, imprecision and absurdity in his commentary, we hear laughter from this side of the screen, pausing only to take in the next gaffe, i.e. it is synchronized with the rhythms of the ridiculous commentary and the camera zooming in as it tries in vain to get a look inside the bank. I hear and see Tomas Lucero sitting at a table next to the cooker, on the crest of this wave of mirth: he lifts up his palms and slightly separates his hands, symmetrically, as if he's about to clap. Finally the whole room bursts into a huge collective laugh, including his.]

The sights and the laughs, the murmurs and the silences, the modulation of the breathing as a sign of (non)attention, structure the response of the spectators, while its rhythm, following the course of the movie, is more audible than visible. A few months after these sessions, I interviewed several spectators about their experience during the screenings. Most of them did not remember anything (sometimes not even the title), but they did emphasize the hypnotic nature of the viewing and its crucial influence in the debates that followed. One participant explains:

Part of it was relaxation, I think. What is powerful about the image, unlike a conference, is that the way of entering yourself is different. You evade and travel, I don't know where. It takes you to places inside, more personal. The moment of

silence and what you receive, even if you are with more people. It made you think about other things. People lost track of time.

The interventions of Taller de Ficció in Poble Sec were much more widely spaced than those of the CPS, although the procedures were very similar, and the places where the sessions were held (such as CC. del Sortidor) were sometimes the same. TdF was made up of eight neighbors from Poble Sec, including myself, who were interested in producing audiovisual stories<sup>5</sup> alternative to the dominant documentary logic. These stories were about what was happening in some hot spots of the urban territory. Examples include Plaza de las Navas, the largest in Poble Sec, whose remodeling took more than five years to complete and whose final design, moreover, gave rise to many complaints and problems of coexistence; or the street Purissima Concepció, where an urban plan of the Barcelona City Council approved at the beginning of the century led to the expulsion of many neighbors (many of whom had grown up there) and to the demolition of three buildings. The pieces and materials that were screened in both places were later combined with a debate in circle and encouraged participants to rethink the city in infrastructural and relational terms. It was both a filmic and educational activity on the urban.

In 2014, the activity of the TdF moved to Purissima Concepcio to create an audiovisual archive on the street, made of interviews with neighbors and ex-neighbors, sequences of demolitions, old photographs, drawings and cognitive maps, etc. Finally, the group decided to occupy the space left by the demolition, clean it up, and set up a summer cinema projected on a white painted wall at the back of the site and a sign that marked C-I-N-E-M-A in red letters. The sessions that were organized in the renamed El Solar de la Puri between spring and autumn of that year brought together materials from the archive (especially interviews) with some fiction films that could dialogue with the former. This scene took place on the night of July 30, during a projection that linked the words of Samira and Nora – two sisters who live in Purissima with their family and who remembered the past of the street and imagined their future – with the animated film *My Neighbor Totoro* (directed by Hayao Miyazaki in 1988):

El audio se escucha ligeramente descompasado de las imágenes, y a veces con zumbidos metálicos, porque grabamos la entrevista con dos micros y Gabriel tuvo que resincronizar después una parte de la banda de sonido. El resultado incomoda un poco, como si las espectadoras fuesen a destiempo del material proyectado. Con todo, al acabar suena un fuerte aplauso y las sonrisas de Samira y Nora se ensanchan un poco más. Los créditos de *Mi vecino Totoro* transitan a continuación la pantalla con su animación colorida. Por primera vez las criaturas se han extendido sobre la lona, todas juntas. Luego marcharán y volverán a cada poco, no siendo capaces de permanecer quietas más de media hora. Saïd se sale del Solar un rato para darle patadas al balón, y un chico mayor, amigo suyo, le llama la atención por estar haciendo ruido. Enseguida entra de nuevo y se tira junto a sus colegas, a la izquierda de todo y a apenas metro y medio de la proyección.

El hijo de unos vecinos cuya vivienda toca el Solar por el lado contrario al del cine, y que todavía no conoce bien al resto de chavales, se mete en medio del grupo y no se levanta en todo el rato. Debe tener unos ocho años. Hay una larga escena en que una de las niñas protagonistas cae sobre la panza de Totoro, durmiente y mucho más grande que ella. La película se dejar llevar varios minutos por esa escena de relajamiento y sueño, en la que no ocurre nada salvo los plácidos ronquidos del monstruo. Justo en ese momento, Saïd se tiende completamente sobre la lona, apoyando la cabeza en el pecho de otro amigo, y parece participar de ese esparcimiento corporal que se ve en la pantalla mediante su propia posición. Es como un circuito que conecta las imágenes a su forma de estar, y que envuelve su tronco con ellas, suspendiendo por unos minutos la necesidad de moverse. Capturándolo en el curso de ese trance. (Castro-Varela, 2008a, p. 238)

[The audio sounds out of step with the images, and sometimes with metallic hums, because we recorded the interview with two microphones and Gabriel had to resynchronize a part later. The result is a bit uncomfortable, as if the viewers were out of time for the projected material. However, at the end there is a loud applause and Samira's and Nora's smiles widen a little more. The credits of *My Neighbor Totoro* then travel the screen with their colorful animation. For the first time, some children have spread out on the canvas, all together. Then they will march and return from time to time, not being able to remain still for more than half an hour. Saïd leaves the Solar for a while to kick the ball, and an older boy, a friend of his, tells him off because he is making noise. Immediately he enters again and throws himself next to his colleagues, to the left of everything and barely a meter and a half from the projection.

A child, the son of neighbors, gets in the middle of the group and does not get up all the time. He must be about eight years old. There is a long scene in which one of the main girls falls on Totoro's sleeping belly, much bigger than her. The film is carried away for several minutes by that scene of relaxation and sleep, in which nothing happens except the placid snoring of the monster. Right at that moment, Saïd lies completely on the canvas, resting his head on the chest of another friend, and he seems to participate in that corporal relaxation that is seen on the screen through her own position. It is like a circuit that connects the images to his way of being, and that wraps his trunk with them, suspending for a few minutes the need to move. The scene captures him in the course of that trance].

The ethnographic account attempts to explain the connection between the film as a moving body and the position of the children that reproduces, in the end, the laxity of the images. My descriptive option tries not to use categorical terms but always maintain a state of constant variation, equivalent in a way to that of an epidermis that shrinks or bristles or perspires in contact with the outside.<sup>6</sup> In other words, that skin through which two bodies – that of the cinema and that of the spectators – touch each other would indicate here the depth of what I could reach to say, as well as the limits of my own situated view (or listening) (Haraway, 1995).

### Conclusions

In this article I have spoken, first, of the paradox of a film critic that has constantly invoked the figure of a disembodied spectator. Second, I have explained my own ethnographic attempt to think about and introduce the corporality of the public in the two case studies of my doctoral research, also related to the practice of film pedagogies. I do not present this methodological proposal as a generic solution to cover that gap; I am aware that it has arisen under the practical

limitations that I experienced being art (researcher) and part (member of both groups) during field work. However, any situated observation—in this text I affirm that it is more a matter of listening than looking—should make clear that it is precisely "in the epistemology of partial perspectives where the possibility of an objective, sustained and rational search is found" (Haraway, 1995, p. 15).

The CPS and TdF film sessions were developed from an assembly of human and non-human elements: the projection device, also composed of various assembled parts (a light cannon, a screen, a computer, speakers, etc.); the furniture and the places and rooms where the sessions took place, and whose spatiality was in turn remodeled; educational and relational practices based on discussion, attentive listening, or caring; and of course, the movie screening. The connection between screen / viewer is precisely hybrid insofar as two bodies, one material and the other of flesh and bones, come into contact and establish a continuity of sensations and affections. Therefore, an important part of this assemblage was the bodily exchange that took place in the shadows while watching the film. In many ways, it resulted in the trigger for the learning that was going to take place around an assembly circle.

Definitely, if "the spectator is a person among the crowd and a body of loneliness, hidden in the closed place of the show but open by the latter to all winds" (Bellour, 2013, p. 137), my job consisted of looking for the signs swinging from the common to the individual in front of the screen. These signs were, in the case of the Cineforum and Taller de Ficció Poble Sec, the skin of a collective corporeality peeking through images and learning.

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#### Endnotes

- 1 My connection with both cases was not given by the fieldwork, but because I was a co-founding member and co-organizer of their activities before I even knew that I was going to investigate them in my doctoral research. In another article, I explain the epistemic and methodological difficulties of maintaining these two positions in what I have described as a "contorted research" (see Castro-Varela, 2008b).
- 2 The sessions thus connect with the itinerant forms that the cinematograph adopted in its beginnings (see Allen, 1980, 1998; Deslandes & Richard, 1968), some of which continued from the 1930s onwards through political and / or pedagogical projects such as those mentioned.
- 3 La Casa del Mar is a public building of the Generalitat de Catalunya located in the border between Poble Sec and the port area of Barcelona. There is an auditorium in which congresses and official events are usually held. El Sortidor Civic Center is a sociocultural facility located in the square of the same name, one of the busiest in the neighborhood.
- 4 The film shows the life at the beginning of the 21st century of a group of women workers who had occupied a Barcelona factory in 1979. At the same time, it composed a counter-narrative of the Spanish Transition, whose hegemonic account was also being questioned by the 15M Movement.
- 5 Based on the work of contemporary filmmakers (Pedro Costa or Jia Zhang-ke and *El Espectador Emancipado* by Jacques Rancière), the practice of TdF was supported by a reconceptualization of the idea of fiction, according to which it no longer consists of "telling inventions" or "appearances" opposed to reality, but rather a "work" that involves "constructing other realities, other forms of common sense, that is, other spatio-temporal arrangements, other communities of words and things, of forms and meanings. " The "work of fiction" is one that establishes "new relationships between words and visible forms, words and writing, a here and a there, a then and a now" (Rancière, 2010, p. 104).
- 6 According to Sara Ahmed (2004), the skin separates us from others and from the other, but it is also a body surface that mediates "the relationship between internal and external, or inside and outside" (p. 29).



# A la Parrilla Suena Mejor (Grilled<sup>1</sup> sounds better): Podcast as a Project Based Learning Didactic Tool for Music History and Event Management

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Abstract: This paper deals with different didactic strategies of podcasts in the teaching- learning context of Music History in Graduate University Education. Specifically, the podcast is presented here as a tool for the study, analysis, and management of pre-existent music events-festivals, musical projects, etc.—with students if the BA in Cultural Management program at the Universidad de Córdoba. Using this tool, which facilitates the Project Based Learning (PBL) process, the students can understand, experience, and examine different Western Art Music repertoires and the way these repertoires are mediated and managed by a range of institutions and organizations as crucial elements in the learning process of future professionals of cultural management. First, this article attends to some aspects regarding the pedagogy of music history from a critical point of view, considering both the theoretical framework and the syllabus associated with the degree in Cultural Management, and dealing also with the importance of podcasts and PBL in music education. I describe the main characteristics of the project A la parrilla suena mejor which is developed in two steps: analysis and diagnosis, and broadcasting and promotion. Furthermore, I discuss the didactic importance of podcasts in order to understand music histories as well as a professional tool in order to communicate ideas related to musical events. This chapter is based on the homologous article published in Spanish in Tercio Creciente journal. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17561/rtc.n15.5

# Keywords: Music History; Music Education; Podcast; Graduate (University) Education; Project Based Learning (PBL); Cultural Management; Musical Events

**Resumen:** Este artículo expone diversas aplicaciones didácticas del podcast para la enseñanza y aprendizaje de la asignatura Historia de la Música en el ámbito universitario. Concretamente, se fundamenta su utilidad como herramienta para el estudio, análisis y gestión de eventos musicales preexistentes -festivales, ciclos de conciertos, etc.- con el alumnado de Grado de Gestión Cultural. Por medio de este recurso radiofónico, que favorece el Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos (ABP), el alumnado conoce, examina y experimenta con los repertorios de música académica que forman parte de los contenidos de la asignatura, y descubre cómo éstos son gestionados por parte de instituciones y organismos públicos y privados, aspectos fundamentales en la formación de los futuros profesionales de la gestión cultural. En primer lugar, este trabajo aborda la didáctica de la historia de la música desde una dimensión crítica que contempla tanto aspectos teóricometodológicos como de adaptación curricular a la titulación superior en la que se imparte y se fundamenta la idoneidad del podcast como herramienta del APB en el ámbito de la educación musical. Tras ello, se detallan las características del proyecto planteado, desarrollado en dos fases: fase de análisis y diagnóstico; fase de difusión y promoción. Por último, se evidencia la utilidad didáctica del podcast para el gestor cultural, por un lado, como medio para vivenciar la historia de la música y, por otro, como fin, en tanto herramienta útil para difundir y comunicar aspectos relativos a eventos musicales.

# 1. Music Stories in (with) Text: From the Spanish Educational Curriculum to the Degree in Cultural Management

The subject "History of Music" has a variable presence in different educational stages and types of studies. In Primary and Secondary Education, the subject "Music" addresses content related to the history of Western academic music, although it is in specific itineraries of the Baccalaureate, such as the branch of Performing Arts, Music and Dance or in the Humanities, where there are specific subjects on the discipline. In the so-called Special Regime Teachings for arts and music, that is, conservatories and music schools, "History of Music" appears as a compulsory subject in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> courses of Professional Teachings in Music, while 6<sup>th</sup> year requires "History of Musical Thought."<sup>2</sup> In the case of the Conservatory of Higher Studies, History of Music is found in the study plans of both interpretation specialties and those of pedagogy, composition, conducting, etc., with several core subjects in addition to forming one of the formative pillars of the specialty of Musicology. In the university environment,<sup>3</sup> "History of Music" is a constitutive part of Undergraduate Studies in Music History and Sciences. Additionally, "History of Music" is present intermittently in degrees linked to the branch or macro-area of Arts and Humanities in the form of compulsory subjects, as in the Art History Degree.<sup>4</sup>

History of Music is taught on a compulsory basis in the third year of the Degree in Cultural Management at the University of Córdoba (Spain). The music training offered in the degree is completed thanks to subjects such as *Lenguajes Artísticos: Introducción al lenguaje de la Música y a los lenguajes de la fotografía y el cine*<sup>5</sup> (second year), or *Gestión y Organización de Eventos y Actividades Musicales y Escénicas*<sup>6</sup> (fourth year), both required. The orientation of a subject dedicated to the study of the history of music in this degree requires an approach that prioritizes a critical dimension of the sound event in the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres from Antiquity to the 21st century. This is in line with the postulates undertaken in the 1980s by the so-called New Musicology, as well as by the Cultural History of Music (Fulcher, 2011). However, it is equally necessary for students to know aspects related to composers, works, genres, and repertoires, all of them critically reviewed by said musicological currents, but that are an inseparable part of the programming in musical events.

Ultimately, any process of selecting works and composers that deserve to be named and listed in the classroom is, after all, an exercise of inclusion and non-inclusion that is linked to the construction of a musical canon. This can be evidenced, for example, through anthologies of scores (Bonds, 2011) in the very historical trajectory of the pedagogy of urban popular music, which has tended to new processes of validation of a canon instead of active listening (García-Peinazo, 2017), or through the discursive construction of said canon in educational textbooks in Spain, which involve issues of ideology, gender, and culture, following the very important reference on these issues of Berta Pérez-Caballero Rubio (2017, 2018). Thus, one of the key points indicated by Lisa C. DeLorenzo (2003) about the teaching of music as a democratic practice calls for reflection on whether we use both recognized canon music and alternative music in the classroom.

In our subject, given the orientation toward Western academic music and the aforementioned need to work with concepts of canon, author, and work, we establish two activities—one for initiation and the other for consolidation—which seek to question the immutability of repertoires in the history of music and demonstrate said canon. This is because students must know which

repertoires are the most frequent in the programming; it is also necessary that the future manager be aware of the cultural processes involved in said canon. On the one hand, the initial session of the subject starts with the activity "Golden Record and the history of music," in which, in analogy to the Golden Record sound recording sent together with the Voyager probe in 1977, they are asked to choose a track that they consider more important and representative, from their criteria as managers, to be sent into space; their answers must be based on any type of criteria, be it musical, social, cultural, economic, historical, etc. In this way, the disparity of tracks and rationale for "rescue" to form a "historical-terrestrial heritage" shows that any composition of repertoires in the history of music, including that of the teacher, is exclusive and partial.

On the other hand, the consolidation activity, which is carried out in parallel to the podcast project, consists of preparing a shared list—the multiplatform Spotify or something similar can be used—in which each student selects a work related to academic music and establishes why it must be part of the list of auditions under study for the written test or exam. These two activities are not linked, strictly speaking, to the project of the podcast dedicated to musical events, but they allow us to carry out a reflective brainstorm about the way in which the history of music has been narrated, as in the case of the initial activity. These two activities also facilitate the experimentation of said construction of the repertoire starting from its own selective criteria, as in the consolidation activity.

## 2. Music Events, Podcasts, and Project Based Learning (PBL)

The podcast has been used as the backbone of experiences focused on Project-Based Learning (PBL) oriented to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs):

The PBL must be one of the fundamental tools for the development of competences (creativity, problem solving, ability to investigate, work collaboratively, motivation and use of social networks, among others) that will be promoted in educational systems of the XXI century...the use of the podcast through the PBL methodology in the university environment...facilitates the autonomous learning of the student, at their own pace, as well as encourages active participation and learning. (Ausín et al. 2016, p. 32)

The use of the podcast as a tool to favor the teaching and learning process in the university environment has been confirmed by works such as that of Ramos García and Caurcel Cara (2011). It is also evident how it favors democratization processes, "free and horizontal edition of information" in the educational field (Solano Fernández & Sánchez Vera, 2010). In the case of music education, didactic experiences such as the one presented by Ignacio Climent at CEFIRE in Xàtiva (Valencia) show that the podcast allows for a differential approach to content of the music subject, favoring "transversal and competency work with our students" (Climent, 2018, p. 39). Significant didactic proposals can also be articulated from the professional management of festivals and concert cycles, as shown by the works of Javier Marín López and Virginia Sánchez López (2009) regarding the didactic concerts of the Úbeda and Baeza Ancient Music Festival. See also the works of Miguel Ángel Marín and Isabel Domínguez (2015) in relation to the didactic concerts of the Juan March Foundation.

Following Kerstetter (2009), the podcast is an easy-to-implement resource in the music classroom, presenting a flexibility that facilitates the possibility of achieving many objectives. The suitability of a tool such as the podcast in the subject "History of Music" of the Degree in Cultural Management lies in its possibilities of understanding, analysis, organization, and management of musical events. The podcast becomes, on the one hand, a means to know the most programmed repertoires in the framework of musical events currently organized in Spain. On the other hand, in the hands of the students, future professionals of cultural management, it becomes a target. Through the radio archive that they prepare, they learn to disseminate and promote events from the media's point of view, internalizing, at the same time, content related to music in Western Academics from Antiquity to the 21st Century. In this way, it addresses both transversal skills that promote teamwork, autonomous knowledge, and the creative dimension in the preparation of radio content as well as professional skills in the field of cultural management.

# 3. A la Parrilla Suena Mejor [Grilled Sounds Better]: Objectives and Phases of the Project

Below is a description of the project *A la parrilla suena mejor* [Grilled sounds better], which was proposed for the third-year students of the Degree in Cultural Management (University of Córdoba, Spain) during the 2017/2018 academic year, and whose main objective was the study, analysis, diagnosis, and promotion of existing musical events in Spain through the cooperative elaboration of a podcast. Through this, the students gain practical experience with the contents related to the different periods in the history of Western academic music and also discover and critically examine some of the festivals, concert series, and other medium or large format events that are carried out in the country.

The project is presented the first week of class and is developed throughout the semester, in which various theoretical-practical sessions are allocated (from the analysis of musical repertoires to the explanation of the technical rudiments of the Audacity software), as well as tutorials groups, in addition to autonomous group work. Although the project could be considered in terms of a history of musical events in Spain through the comparative study of different seasons, it is suggested that students focus their analysis on those events that took place in the season immediately prior to that of the academic year in which project is carried out. After dividing the class into groups of between three and five people, the project is structured in two main phases: first, an analysis and diagnosis phase, and second, a dissemination and promotion phase.

#### **Analysis and Diagnosis Phase**

In its first phase, the project requires the analysis and diagnosis of a pre-existing event developed in Spain related to some of the periods in the history of Western music discussed in class from the point of view of cultural management. Said event must necessarily refer to "academic music" (a term not without controversy, but more "de-ideologized," "neutral," and "precise" than that of cultured, historical, or classical music) from Antiquity to the 21st century. The fundamental objective of the work in this phase is to know the way in which the history of Western music is managed from cultural policies, institutions, and public and private organizations, as well as to become familiar with the main elements that make up these kinds of festivals. Thus, during this phase, the groups gather information for the selection of a musical event – festival, concert series, etc. – which has taken place in recent years. Each group confirms with the teacher which event they will choose and the reasons for their selection. It is suggested to the students that before they make their choice, they test the access possibilities and the volume of information available on the official web portals of the events themselves, as this will condition the completion of the project. However, the absence of information also allows students significant learning through the establishment of strengths and weaknesses in the dissemination and promotion of events. After their selection, the students have to look for information in posters, programs, hand programs, various institutions' and organizations' official websites, and other web portals, etc., referring to the following points:

1) Analysis of historical-musical elements in relation to the poster / programming: period in the history of Western music in which it is centered; mention of musical instruments; mention of musical styles / genres / forms; information about composers and musical works; Information about musical performers; inclusion of musical repertoire of Spanish composers; relationship with the public / audiences; reference to the sociocultural and political context.

2) Analysis of elements related to the management of the event: summary / description of the project; purposes of the project; organization and music professionals involved; sponsorship; public and / or private financing; market niche / potential audiences; budget / financial report; prices; used spaces; dates (time of year and duration), days and hours; presence in social networks; ways / means of promotion and dissemination; associated record / bibliographic publications.

#### **Dissemination and Promotion Phase**

This second phase of the project *A la parrilla suena mejor* addresses the creation and design of a radio program related to the event analyzed, in which it is disseminated and promoted and subsequently exhibited in class. The fundamental objective of this phase is to develop a creative proposal related to the cultural management of a pre-existing event linked to the history of the Western music, as well as becoming familiar with the main elements that make up festivals of these characteristics and transferring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned in the field of management to the history of music. All this is enriched through group work, the results of which involve the exchange of ideas, discussion, conflict resolution, and cooperative learning.

The groups must first make a written memory of the podcast, in which contextualization and recipients are detailed, and aspects related to the sociocultural context of the city / municipality are included based on when the podcast is dedicated. The groups are told that the potential audience should be university students with degrees in Arts and Humanities. On the other hand, students are requested to collect everything related to the process of preparing the podcast in the "event book,"<sup>7</sup> both their initial planning processes—distribution of tasks, decision-making, resources, spaces, etc.—and the elaboration of it. The students must also prepare a radio script in which both the dialogues and the tracks selected to be incorporated into the podcast are included. The structure of the podcast is left to the choice of the students, who must contemplate both historical-musical aspects related to the programming and characteristics of the management of the event.

The recording of the podcast, which must have an approximate duration of between 10 and 12 minutes, is carried out with the free software Audacity. Said recording is made, by each group,

after a session in which some of the rudiments in audio editing with this program are explained. As guidelines, students are asked that the amount of recorded music incorporated into the podcast without any spoken intervention – that is, what is not used as background music – does not exceed 4 minutes. For the selection of musical fragments from auditions, the students must incorporate works present in the programming of the events that they have analyzed in the previous phase and that of Spanish musical heritage. This requires that the students work through the auditory selection of fragments that they consider relevant and discover that works of the Spanish musical heritage are not yet recorded; they must resort to using recordings of live performances from platforms such as YouTube. In addition, the work with the selection of musical repertoires puts students in contact with both the notion of composer and performer in academic music, learning to differentiate them as well as to know the cultural industries linked to music, from the record company to advertising.

As mentioned before, each group is asked to insert sound fragments from auditions with spoken parts in their podcasts, in which all members of the group participate. For this reason, some strategies are explained to carry out these aspects with a sound result according to the context of the radio. Among others, the "envelope" tool is used in addition to basic editing like the import and export of audio, the selection and trimming of fragments, equalization, the configuration of the tracks, or the pan of the left or right channels. Thanks to this, the volume of a track can be modified occasionally and in a non-abrupt way to facilitate listening to a spoken voice track. In the same way, the fade in (progressive appearance of the sound) and the fade out (progressive disappearance of the sound) are employed in class, both from the procedural point of view and from a historical dimension, explaining the importance of this technique in the history of radio programming from analog to digital.

To close this last phase, each group shares the main characteristics of the selected musical events in a twenty-minute presentation in front of the rest of the class. This exhibition implies the internalization of a role in which the students become leaders of the management in which ideas are exchanged and strengths and problems are known shared between these small or largeformat musical events. On the same day of the group presentations, a co-evaluation is carried out from different levels, with the whole class evaluating each of the small groups, as well as the individual members of the group evaluating the rest of their teammates. This exercise allows students to experience the importance of effective organization and management among the human resources of a project of this type.

### 4. Conclusion: Manage Music Stories in the Classroom

According to Climent (2018), "the implementation of the podcast in the teaching-learning process requires a process of reflection, justification and adequate planning" (p. 41). In our opinion, the project *A la parrilla suena mejor* [Grilled sounds better], linked to the subject "History of Music" in the third year of the Degree in Cultural Management, gives students transversal and professional competences for the management of a pre-existing musical event through the task of putting together a podcast. Some of the reflections and conclusions of the students exemplify the usefulness of the tool for their training as cultural managers:

The use of the podcast confirms the power of this resource as a process of training and transmission of information, in this case of a pre-existing academic music festival in the Spanish national scene, in addition to positively benefiting the students' learning for subsequent work. (Class G Group, 2018)

The members of the group have made contact with publishing programs of sound. This has been a totally new dissemination medium until now, since, until recently, we only dominated the format of informational flyers, business cards or billboards. On the other hand, we have also entered the world of radio, getting to know the musical programs that are immersed in the academic music station par excellence, Radio Clásica (National channel). (Class D group, 2018)

Likewise, the difficulties and strengths in the development of the podcast through Audacity were assessed:

The preparation of the podcast has been somewhat laborious, since we had never worked with the Audacity program, but since it is a very intuitive program, we have finally been able to work with it without problem (Class B Group, 2018)

It is our first time making contact with radio programs and sound editing. An attempt has been made to make a simple podcast with the sole purpose of reaching the listeners clearly, synthesizing ideas and informing about the different activities and concerts that will take place, as well as the price of tickets, discounts for young people, and the spaces chosen for the realization of the event...it has been simple the development of the script since we previously had the idea of making the podcast as if it were a radio program about music in the form of an interview. (Class A group, 2018)

Finally, the podcast was described in terms of an instrument to know the main characteristics in the management of a musical event, which concerns "the promotion and radio broadcasting" (Class C Group, 2018), although also to record some limitations, due to the complexity of access to the information of some items requested for the Analysis and Diagnosis Phase of the project:

Thanks to the use of the podcast, it has been possible to elucidate the strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions of this festival so eclectic and that even today continues to safeguard topics of great public interest, incorporating innovative tools as they can be instruments of the time or the inclusion of other styles better known among the youth. (Class G group, 2018)

With this project, developed in the third year, the foundations are laid so that, prospectively, in the blocks dedicated to music within the subject *Gestión y Organización de Eventos y Actividades Musicales y Escénicas* [Management and Organization of Musical and Performing Events and Activities] taught in the fourth year, the students can carry out the production and dissemination of a musical event that they design. In this other project, the range of repertoires is not limited to Western academic music, but rather opens up to the multitude of music that encompasses macro labels such as popular music, traditional music, and the aforementioned academic music, developing with students specific methodologies to attend to the cultural and media impact of musical events in the management of the municipality.

In short, the project *A la parrilla suena mejor* aims to place students and future professionals in cultural management at one of the central points of the musical event. If they are an important part of the process of construction of the daily stories of music, as students with daily practices of musical consumption and value judgments about music, they will also be future professionals of culture who will play a prominent role in managing the history of music as programmers of repertoires and specific musical practices.

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### Endnotes

- 1 In Spanish, the word "parrilla," grill, has different meanings, among others: the barbecue grill and, in radio and television, the programming box.
- 2 By the Order of October 25, 2007, which develops the Curriculum for Professional Music Education in Andalusia (Annex III, p. 194)
- 3 A state of the art for music teaching internationally is found in Mary Natvig's (2002) *Teaching Music History*. Likewise, it is worth noting important milestones in the discipline, including the existence of scientific journals dedicated to the didactics of music history such as the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* (since 2010), as well as the constitution of the branch of music education linked to the International Musicological Society (IMS) (2018).
- 4 The subject of "Music History" has a relative presence in the Art History Degree of various Spanish universities, even within study manuals, such as that of González Martínez (2015). In relation to the manuals dedicated to the subject of "History of Music" in professional music education, see, for example, the work of Pajares Alonso (2014).
- 5 Artistic Languages: Introduction to the language of Music and the languages of photography and cinema
- 6 Management and Organization of Musical and Performing Events and Activities
- 7 We use the term "event book" here, following the work of Turbau (2011).



# Materiality as a Narrative of the Inner and Outer World

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**Abstract:** This chapter deals with materiality and working with material as a basis of art education, as a mediator of real experience, and as an important and necessary counterpart of experience simulated by the algorithm of new media. Materiality has an active role in the process of artmaking; it actively participates in it, and it comes not only into the process of creation itself, but also into the very idea of the work. Material can put up resistance and creates obstacles; it does not always behave as we expect it to, which many times leads to an original solution, a modification of the design, or to a change of an idea. Material also carries a meaning that we can address, analyze, and explore across cultures and history, and which brings people and objects together while creating imaginary networks of interrelated relationships.

**Abstrakt:** Príspevok sa zaoberá materialitou a prácou s materiálom ako bázou výtvarnej výchovy, ako sprostredkovateľom reálnej skúsenosti, a tiež dôležitým a nevyhnutným protipólom skúsenosti nasimulovanej algoritmom nových médií. Materialita má v procese tvorby aktívnu rolu, aktívne sa zapája a vstupuje nie len do samotného procesu tvorby, ale aj do samotnej idey diela. Materiál kladie odpor, stavia prekážky, nie vždy sa správa tak, ako predpokladáme, čo vedie mnohokrát k originálnemu riešeniu, úprave návrhu až po zmenu idey. Materiál však nesie aj význam. Význam, ktorým sa môžeme zaoberať, analyzovať ho a skúmať naprieč kultúrami a históriou a spájať tak ľudí aj objekty do pomyslených sietí navzájom súvisiacich vzťahov.

#### Introduction

Reflecting on the relationship of the human with materials, we go back to the oldest archaeological finds. We go back to the times when the development of culture went along with human cognition and the whole human body, hand in hand, while the human body and brain were also the results of cultural evolution. When we begin to distinguish between the intentional action of humans of that time—their instincts, impulses, intentions, and symbolic thinking—people deliberately entered the natural environment with their body and work. They began to create various artifacts that had not only a utility function, but also a symbolic one. Our predecessors and their environment, enriched with artifacts created by human hands, are the starting points of our consideration about building the relationship of the human with materials and objects.

This relationship between humans and materials, which has developed over thousands of years, is much discussed in pedagogical discourses not only for the obvious reasons (development of motor activities, hapticity, experiencing and working with the real thing, mastering techniques, discovering the possibilities of materials, and so on), but also because it offers a great opportunity for art teachers to show their students the moments in which the material world and our cognition blend. The material and objects made from it are equal partners to us as creators, pupils and students of art education, and art teachers, as they participate in the process of artmaking, encouraging it and offering rich sources of inspiration and opportunities to further discover and learn about the world around us and ourselves. It is this aspect of the relationship and the importance of including materials and objects into art education that the following text primarily focuses on.

### **Theoretical and Philosophical Framework**

The basis of the following text are the theories that re-evaluate the relationship of the human with materials and artifacts, which we consider an interesting contribution to pedagogical practice. These are theories of material culture, cognitive archaeology, and sociology – *Material Engagement Theory* (hereinafter referred to as MET), network theory, and agency. In arts education, the closest to these theories is *object-based learning*, which in the pedagogical process consciously works with the material product and its relationship to students and the way it is perceived by students, but the object in it serves only as a tool to achieve didactic goals. For this chapter, which describes the work with material and objects and their manipulation, it is important to approach some of the starting points that we have applied to the teaching of spatial art. The later part of this chapter reflects on the educational experience. In it, we apply the viewpoint of objects as an *agency* in the network of relationships into which they are "born."

Over thousands of years, people have enriched the world of nature with many material artifacts. We have created artifacts with a variety of technologies and from a variety of materials. The human has created a hand axe, jewelry, vessels, and other artifacts from the materials that have surrounded them. Often these products, as well as various artifacts in art education, are perceived as products of the author's intention. The material, technique, and everything that enters the process of creation is viewed through the anthropocentric optics as passive and subjected to the intention of the creator. However, what we are today and what our bodies look like is also the result of the environment and the use of various tools, as well as with our own body as the

primary technology. In the words of M. Mauss (1989), what we can call natural today can be interpreted as cultural. However, cognitive archaeologists and anthropologists view material and material artifacts as players that enter the process of thinking and creating and as a prism of the evolution of those who participated in human development. Such a view is very complicated because it encounters philosophical dichotomies and dualisms, for example between the body and mind or between the material and immaterial worlds with which the cognitive sciences deal and to which they make various contributions where the fixed boundaries of two incompatible worlds are replaced by fuzzy boundaries. There is not enough room to discuss this issue further, as we focus instead on a few philosophical starting points and an example from artistic and pedagogical practice, which also documents only a specific part of the described problem.

First, let us imagine that we put objects, mind, and body into dynamic equal relationships, mutually interacting with and creating each other. By realizing and implementing these relationships in art education, we consider them a pedagogical opportunity, a source of inspiration for original work, and a tool for self-knowledge and knowledge of others across time and place, and hence across a place where narratives of the inner and outer world clash.

The objective of returning to the time of hand axes was to point out the richness of the cognitive life of the human of that time before words and language came into existence. Fascinating archaeological examples include Neanderthal jewelry from the Croatian site of Krapina, which are dated 130,000 years B.C.E. The curator of the Croatian Natural History Museum in Zagreb, Davorka Radovčić, together with the co-authors, says that the jewelry in the form of shaped eagle claws show signs of material modification – their polishing, notches, and abrading (Radovčić, Sršen, & Radovčić, 2015). Although we think about artefacts only in a very abstract way, and we can only assume the intentions of such old jewelry, it is interesting to draw attention to the stimulus of the environment, which provided the people of the time with material that could be processed and used. For some reason, the human saw a potential in the eagle's claws, adjusted them, and arranged them in a symbolic form as a body ornament. Similarly, they saw a potential in a cave as a shelter, in clay from which they began to model and create artifacts, in stone, metal, etc.

However, these oldest pieces of jewelry are interesting in that they are not associated with the need to survive; they have a symbolic or decorative function. Both of these functions, as well as other rituals of the people of that time, draw a connection between the material world and the impact it has within a community. Therefore, we are no longer thinking only about a particular relationship between material and an individual. The environment provided us with a large number of materials and natural objects that influenced people in some way, but allowed them to ascribe to them a societal value beyond the mass of the material, and thus became an element of coevolution.

This stimulus of the surrounding environment is best illustrated in Gibson's (1966) notion of *affordance*, which he uses in the book entitled *Learning the Affordances of Objects* to describe the following:

When the constant properties of constant objects are perceived (the shape, size, color, texture, composition, motion, animation, and position relative to other objects), the observer can go on to detect their affordances. I have coined this word

as a substitute for values, a term which carries an old burden of philosophical meaning. I mean simply what things furnish, for good or ill. What they afford the observer, after all, depends on their properties. (Gibson, 1966, p. 285)

This stimulus is a concise contribution to the perception of materials, the properties of which allow the realization of our intention (its whole, part, or not at all) through their processing or their manipulation.

In the case of eagle claws, the human saw a possibility of subsequent manipulation of them. This concept suggests a large number of operations of thought, which are preceded by the manipulation of materials and the richness of cognitive life. An example of this serves the very choice of material and thus the attribution of greater significance from among other materials, the various feelings it arouses in us, ideas, desires, etc. In our mind, however, we can create any object from any material. In their realizations, the material may resist us or set limits for us, which are many times such a significant obstacle that we, as authors, are forced to reconsider our intention or even change it completely. The material properties of eagle claws also enabled their creators to polish and cut them. The jewelry thus created is, in Ingold's (2009) words, "the result of a play of forces, both internal and external to the material that makes it up" (p. 83). However, in our mind, we can go beyond seeing materials only as something that allows or prevents us to do something and perceive them as something that is not only part of our thinking, but also influences and changes our way of thinking.

## **Pedagogical Opportunity**

In the following section, we will talk about a pedagogical opportunity in which we will not distinguish between natural and artificial materials as Tim Ingold (2009) does. We will talk instead about materials in general. As educators, we work with a variety of materials, and as we will suggest later, both natural and synthetic materials can offer a pedagogical opportunity to analyze and monitor the way a material is processed across cultures and over time. Each material provides a different "package" of educational content. MET provides a stimulating basis for such a view on the material and artifacts created from it (Malafouris, 2004, 2013, 2018; Malafouris & Renfrew, 2008, 2010; Renfrew, 2004; Renfrew, Frith, & Malafouris, 2008). In this text, we can find reflections on more than just the resulting artifact, as could be expected from an archaeological theory. Cognitive archaeologists and anthropologists who develop this theory also consider materiality, the process of artmaking, the resulting artifact and its relationship with the human, as well as the effects of objects in interpersonal relationships. The purpose of the theory is to understand the dialectical relationship to the immaterial world - the cognitive world and the products of the mind and the material world, the relationship between culture and nature and between body and mind. It is archeology that is perhaps the closest to what has been built over thousands of years, and to this day it is difficult for us to understand or describe it in words. Despite the fact that this theory is extremely stimulating and has many branches of thought and important concepts that we could approach in depth, we select only some with the ambition to apply them in an educational setting.

The art teacher works with a variety of materials and objects, with ready-mades, but also with new technologies, tablets, computers, cameras, and in the broadest sense also with blackboards, notebooks, pens, chalk, markers, tables and chairs, brushes, drawings, etc. For MET, the entire

material world which surrounds students in the educational process is not something that is isolated from their cognitive life (from the way they think, feel, learn, etc.). MET focuses its attention on the place of their penetration. L. Malafouris (2018) writes about this theory as follows: "Material Engagement Theory suggests a way of looking at, and sets out a possible pathway to approach this middle in-between space where brain, body and culture conflate" (p. 4).

This theory is based on overcoming the boundaries of the human mind and its location. The theory refers to the human feature of metaplasticity (Malafouris 2010, 2014, 2018), or the plastic mind and its connection with the plasticity of culture (Malafouris, 2018). "MET provides such a flexible unit of analysis that allows to view the mind as situated within and constituted by the material world rather than merely being about the world" (Malafouris, 2018, p. 5).

MET blurs the line between what is outside and what is inside. It frees the mind from the boundaries set by the material world—the skin and skull—and it engages relationships and the environment in an originally isolated environment. In the pedagogical discourse, with such a view, the student, curriculum, and educational content would not remain isolated from technology or from objects and the environment, which MET perceives only as a means to achieve a certain goal. In the educational process, the student and the material world are involved as equal elements, which are at the same level of significance and which together form the products of cognition. Malafouris uses the concept of *thinging* to mean "the kind of thinking we do primarily with and through things" (Malafouris, 2018, p. 7) in an effort to articulate cognitive life – thinking and feeling with, through, and about things.

A cognitive life and the importance of material involvement is so crucial that it cannot be neglected even in pedagogy. It is, however, necessary to equalize the material world – the world of objects and materials – with the human in terms of their mutual influence. Despite all that, even pedagogical texts show an interest in similar thinking and efforts to implement it into the theory of learning and educational reality. Similarly, in the broader pedagogical context of materiality, Estrid Sørensen (2009) in his book *The Materiality of Learning: Technology and Knowledge in Educational Practice* urges us not to place the human

above materials (as the creator or user) but among materials. These materials may be used by humans, but they may also use the humans and influence and change the educational practice, which then is no longer particularly human; instead it is socio-material. (p. 2)

Everyone and everything is in mutual interconnections and interactions. We could also use Latoure's (1987, 1999) notion of a network – the infrastructure of bound socio-material objects. Networks encourage us not to view objects and materials merely as isolated soulless forms that the human manipulates, but rather as elements that enter into these processes. From sociology, we would refer to the material world and objects as *agency*. Objects are part of the thoughts and actions of the human in a dialectical relationship. Such a perception of materials and objects is a pedagogical opportunity in which students can find themselves in the role of anthropologists, ethnographers, etc. Instead of a fixed curriculum, they get to know themselves and the world in which they live by developing and becoming part of relationship networks.

Before we move on to the pedagogical perspective, let us discuss for a moment an example from the world of art, which we will connect to Malafouris's theory during its interpretation.



*Figure 1. Slavomíra Ondrušová:* Untitled, wax, air-dried clay, 2017 – 2017, dimension: 2 cm – 30 cm, photo by: author's archive.



*Figure 2. Slavomíra Ondrušová:* Indiánska dedina [Indian Village], *beeswax, dimension: 2 cm – 30 cm, 2016 – 2017, photo by: Peter Ančic* 

#### Indian Village: "Objects-Drawings"

In art, the work of Slavomíra Ondrušová entitled *Indian Village* seems to be a suitable example of working with ideas from cognitive archeology and the theories it develops. It is a processual cycle of objects which the author has been developing for a long time in various material equivalents. S. Ondrušová's objects are a record, a document that captures the whole process of creation and reasoning – the author subjects her body and material to an analysis. It examines the relationship between the sight, hands, and material. Perceiving the hand as an elongated mind, she asks herself: where is the thought located? In the hand? In the mind? Where and under what circumstances does it arise? What controls the hands? Is it possible to consciously penetrate the flow of energies between the material, the body, and all that is immaterial? What do the material and the environment do? How does the material enter the process of creating objects? Is the movement of the hands always subject only to the intention of the creator? And what is the resulting artifact? Or what does it become?

The author creates simple shapes – sticks and ovaloids – and small objects that consist of the most basic means of expression – lines, surfaces, and circles. In the process of creation by way of introspection, she deals with the source of the idea – she observes where the idea originates and under what circumstances, and tries to describe the interaction between malleable material, fingers, and the movement of hands and body along with the sight and mind. Even in this case, the material is not just a passive element in the process of artmaking. The material is not waiting for what will happen to it. In this case, beeswax is formed in the environment and under the circumstances that the beeswax itself affects. It participates in the creation and self-definition of the volume and the resulting shape of the artifact. Beeswax is not just a submissive substance that is transformed by the movement of the artist into a certain shape, but it influences the movement of the hands. It is a correlative movement – beeswax affects the movement of the artist. The entire environment affects the temperature of the material as well as the duration and intensity with which the author has to process the material. It is a mutual interactive relationship. Not everything is subordinated to the artist's intention, but also to the search for a symbiotic balance between the circumstances that enter the creative process.

Sticks, ovaloids, and *objects-drawings* are the result of the moment when "mind and matter merge together in the activities and experience of the situated bodies that carry forward the process of thinking" (Malafouris, 2018, p. 12). Where are the boundaries of cognitive processes from molded beeswax, which is constantly open to various transformations? The process is like an event in which the individual players – the mind, body, environment – meet and self-define at a certain time. Beeswax sticks become the author's extension – the extension of the mind and body. Mental representations do not arise in the vacuum of the author's mind.

The process of creation is an event – a meeting place of the brain, body, and culture, be it the historical artifacts like original jewelry or the work of Slavomíra Ondrušová. These artifacts can be seen as an action, as in the creation of a stick, an ovaloid, circles, as well as a sign – an index – a handprint, and as an object. These three ontological views are inseparable. "Each one of those ways supports, informs, constrains, causes and complements the other" (Malafouris, 2018, p. 2). The final shape's size is not predetermined by the author, but is formed in the process of creation in dialectical relationships.

These objects document the phenomenon of spatial art. A new term has been coined to refer to the objects of Slavomíra Ondrušová – *objects-drawings*. From the pedagogue's point of view, we were fascinated by the border between what we perceive as drawing and what we already perceive as space. In our opinion, these objects are on the beautiful line of intersection between these two categories. While the objects are spatial, our eye tends to perceive the shapes of empty spaces that the objects define. In addition, there is another peculiarity of these objects, namely the author's attribute – potential jewelry.

Regarding MET, this particular example shows one of the interesting moments of spatial artifacts, which have significant potential especially for teachers. It is the variability of their "reading." Viewing these objects as objects and observing them in real space, their variability occurs (becomes apparent) – their shape and proportions change and the shape is constantly confronted with a changing background. In this case, these objects appear as drawings – a certain type of font. If we observe them in real space, the individual shapes begin to change with our movement in space – the circle changes to an oval, an oval to a line, thanks to foreshortening; the individual lines cross each other, and in front of our eyes, a movement of our body creates some secret language – a constantly changing "text."

We will approach this variability from a pedagogical perspective in the next part of the chapter; here we remain at the level of the interpreter. From the pedagogical point of view, we were intrigued by this move and the fact that the author characterized her piece as potential jewelry. It is because jewelry is also based on a certain movement of artifacts. This time, however, the movement is different. We are not the ones who revolve around the objects as spectators, but those who take one of its units and put it in a different context, from the exhibition area to our chest. The object becomes part of our action. The same object changes its function; it changes its environment or context. An artifact from the category of free art—such as an object that was exhibited on a pedestal—becomes a potential piece of jewelry on the human body.

#### **One and Three Objects**

The last part of this chapter is devoted to educational practice – the application of the presented and indicated ideas in the teaching of spatial media that primarily work with a variety of materials. In this part of the chapter, we present a reflection and analysis of a student's work and assignment, which were part of broader research. However, we will not present the results here. We will briefly present the research which was focused on the development of visual literacy through object-based learning. As one of the research methods of data collection, we used an online work diary. It was a shared online document which was available to every participant in the research and was used to record all ideas in the creative process, to insert all media materials and resources, to communicate with the teacher, etc. In a systematic and regular manner, participants of the research inserted texts, video images, links to websites, and more into the online shared document. It was the diversity of media content that inspired the title of this subchapter, One and Three Objects, making a reference to conceptual artist Joseph Kosuth's work *One and Three Chairs* from 1965. A real chair, a dictionary definition of a chair, and a photograph of a chair capture the moments from reflection, which we will discuss further in the following text.

As part of the subject of Spatial Art taught at the Department of Art Education, students were assigned the topic of "The Story of One Thing." The assignment aimed to bring students to the analysis of artifacts that were to become part of their original artistic work (a sculpture, object, intermedial work, installation, or performance). It was an assignment based on the ideas presented in the previous sections of the chapter. The students did not perceive the objects they selected only as a form, but also naturally as a part of cognitive events – objects were inherited, purchased in specific places, connected with specific persons or life events, etc. It was not given to what extent these objects were to be involved in the resulting art form. For example, one object served as the individual entry into the creative process. No requirements were set for the object; the choice was entirely up to the students. We consider the process of selecting objects as an act of decision-making, an act of assigning more importance to an object, but also as a milestone in the first encounter of students' inner cognitive world – their ideas, memories, experiences, desires, sentiments, and all other feelings that we have with the material world that surrounds us. The assignment required students to answer the questions as accurately as possible: What? Why? How?

Even the initial selection itself began with a description of why the student chose the subject. As an example, Figures 3 & 4 depict the work of a student who initially selected a rough, white linen bed sheet, which she kept as a memory of her grandmother. The selection of objects greatly varied; students chose a variety of objects from various materials of different sizes and ages. The process of selecting objects brought something that we could refer to as the connection of pedagogy with the real world in which we live. In this case, it was a relatively intimate world made up of loved ones and students along with the material environment. At this stage, the analysis was limited only to the students' relationship with the object. The significance of this relationship was also the initial motivation for the project. Searching for answers to the given and additional questions, students gradually delved into the analysis of relationships by way of introspection and analysis of selected objects, and by networking other contexts. Their task was to follow the "story" of one thing; that is, to penetrate a dense tangle of meanings, relationships, and circumstances and begin to create their imaginary network which grew gradually and to which other people and objects were added. The work diaries were the record of these networks. Now we will describe it specifically using the selected student's work.

The final work of the student was an author's book. It is a set of several cloths sewn from the coarse linen sheet, which are starched and stacked on the principle of loose sheets with text. The final form was preceded by an analysis of the material she had selected. The linen sheet referred to her grandmother; the white and starched material is the reference to something festive, but also to the student's memory of her beloved grandmother and her prayer ritual. The result is this author's book, which combines several moments from the "story of one thing." Her emotional involvement and the richness of her cognitive life demonstrate the power of the matter and the possibilities of processing all represented internal motivation for her. This work consciously uses the thought of what can happen to them, what actions can be taken when manipulating with them: how they can be stacked, that they can be washed, what would make the text on the cloths disappear, the possibility of them being hanged wet and left to dry, the chances of them becoming dirty and degraded by use, etc.





Figures 3 & 4. Author's book of a student attending Spatial Art subject, 2014

The object and the possibilities of manipulating it are what we have called mental transformation and variability. The form of the object may or may not change, but in relation to the circumstances or the change of its placement within a context our mental ideas of the object as well as our entire interpretation of the situation and the "reading" of the object are altered. The object acts as a variable sign that we read in relation to the circumstances in which it is embedded. Starched cloths in one pile, placed in a certain location, can be interpreted completely differently than the same pile placed in another space. With a different arrangement or installation, a completely different situation may arise again. We still write about the same object that can evoke completely different emotions in us under different circumstances and which can produce completely different ideas. These can be of an ambivalent nature.

The work diaries were data in the form of text which recorded the reasons for which students selected given objects and how they thought about them. They included records of associations, memories, meanings, procedures, and thus in general, all mental processes as well as dialogues between teacher and students, Internet links to different types of web pages that contained different types of static and moving images, diagrams, and texts. There were also data in the form of images (Internet resources) consisting of a number of photographs documenting inspirational sources as well as photographs documenting certain concepts that students worked on. Other data included students' own photographs documenting the creative process – alterations, the context of the work, and the final results. There were also drawings, drafts, sketches, photographs of drawings, and constructive solutions.

The diversity of this data led to the concept of "one and three," by which we mean that in the pedagogical process of artmaking—despite the fact that we work with material and material objects within the subjects of spatial art—a temporary connection between mental imagination, the material artifact, and our body exist in a dense tangle of relationships with the surrounding material and immaterial world.

In this network, the object appears in the form of a text and therefore as a mental image – a representation presented in a sign – and a material object or a material symbol. This relationality is a pedagogically attractive place – we are an introspection in the field of internal narrative which takes place between the student and the object or material. However, its analysis brings us to global topics. In it, a specific story becomes part of a larger event; other objects and people also become players, as well as place and time. The material world is a pedagogical place for the creation, self-knowledge, and knowledge of other people and cultures.

The educational content appears here in the area of the found or discovered, not dictated by the teacher. The material is not only a means to an end, but also influences the entire creative process and the educational content. The student constantly sorts data, ideas and thoughts that are related to the material and continuously creates and re-evaluates concepts for the objects.

The diaries and the whole process described above offer many pedagogical topics for discussion and description, but we will now return to the main ideas of the text. The student-author of the author's book created textile formats – she used a sewing machine to sew the edges, and she invented a way to transfer biblical texts to textiles. The whole process was physically demanding; copying took place by systematic and lengthy rotation of the original to a relatively coarse texture. Everything that entered the creative process fundamentally influenced the intention, and without any initial preconditions, it stood in the way of various technological obstacles.

Working with the material brings problems that we cannot predict in advance. It is a uniqueness that cannot be replaced by creating a design using a software. The software does not take into account a chance or accident. With software, the textile does not crease in it as in the real manipulation with it; an unintentional dirty spot does not occur; the copied text does not split like it may when there is a lack of physical forces. Using software is another way of creation, but

it is isolated from the environment and its effects. The resulting artifact when working with material cannot be perceived only as an object, but as a set of views on the process and the involvement of the body. It should be perceived as an artifact that is "born" into a variety of meanings and environments.

The analysis that the student performed when examining the matter was not only related to the physical properties of the material. It also reflected on the visual properties and similarities with other objects. It reflected on that what Knappett (2005) analyzes in his methodology through *iconocity, indexicality,* and *symbolism,* through which he creates an associative network. Not only visual properties and their visual similarity with other objects play a role in the network, but also the similarity of tastes, smells, hearing, sound, and touch. Through such networking, it is possible to connect one object or material with other objects and materials from other "categories." However, we can also take into account *contiguity* – the context of other objects and materials that surround the material (in this case, the bed linen). We also consider *factorality,* and thus the context of material-related activities – stretching, washing, hanging, drying, ironing, etc – and *causality,* which is manifested by the relationship between the manufacturer and the material (bed linen), for example, in its commercial form (Knappett, 2005).

Through the Internet, the student had the opportunity to analyze these associative networks – methods of weaving, a variety of textile art, and textile products. She also analyzed the technology, questions of artistic creation, the possibility of processing, dyeing, sewing, etc. In the end, the whole process of creation was more complicated given that we followed the origin and transformation of the artistic intention. The whole analysis provided the student with a very rich source from which her final author's book stemmed. It works with many elements that the student discovered and described, such as sewing, starching, ironing, folding, preserving, and many others.

## **Concluding Remarks**

In the abstract, the chapter promises the context of new technologies, and in the same spirit we can say that technologies are a certain type of material world. If we look at new technologies through the prism of a pedagogical event in which equal players meet – new technologies do not only act as a means to an end and a mediator of educational content, but they also actively participate in the educational process. All software, algorithms, and circumstances affect the author's intention. When painting on a tablet, it is a completely different painting process than classical painting, as well as when creating spatial objects. This is the same in any other activities, not only in the process of artistic creation. The human's relationship to materials and objects remains a serious topic for discussion because understanding these relationships can fundamentally change the view of individual pedagogical categories. In practice, this means thinking of materials as active participants in the process of creation and learning, which are not only passive elements for achieving a certain goal but enter the educational process dialectically.

In such a view, the process of typing on a typewriter will be quite different from handwriting in pencil or ink pen, or even typing on a computer. The typewriter puts in a different resistance and requires a different involvement of our body, while writing is more physically demanding. What is interesting is the way the text is created; it is not writing. It is not possible to simply keep coming back and it is not possible to constantly rewrite individual words or swap paragraphs between

them, etc. The way we think and construct text is different when typing on a computer versus writing by hand. As with handwriting, the type of tools used affect its appearance, but also the strength of our commitment, the refinement of holding the tool, and the possibility of hand movements. All sounds and the environment are part of the work, despite the fact that from the point of view of pedagogy, they are all tools for achieving a certain goal, that is, writing a text. Similarly, artistic material can only be perceived as a tool from which we create a predetermined shape.

In this paper, we have presented a view of material and objects in art education which considers them as a co-author, not only in the sense that it allows us to do something, but also in the sense of being the co-author of our ideas and intentions. Likewise, painting using a software is a different kind activity from painting in a real environment. No matter how much the program can simulate reality, it is a completely different activity that cannot deal with the issues that occur in the real process of painting. It cannot deal with the drying speed of materials or with its various defects; it does not simulate high-quality and low-quality or worn-out paint brushes, dirty paints, and many others things that come into play in a real environment. It does not simulate coincidences and accidents that may be behind the change of intentions and lead students many times to original ways of solving a problem. The problems that arise are not planned for in advance by the teacher or the student. Educational content through this lens is a living, soughtafter, and found component of the educational process.

A reproduction of the work cannot convey to us everything we experience while observing the work live. Seeing a photo of a cathedral is completely different from standing in front of it. The richness of the flow of different feelings and cognitive products cannot be limited to only our mind; it is a manifestation of the whole body. It is these magnificent demonstrations that make us think about what is happening on a small, everyday scale. It is something which cannot be described linearly, but rather by the interweaving of parallel complicated and intertwined phenomena.

MET brings to art education a stimulating view of the material world of which we are a part. It perceives objects and materials in a dialectical relationship with our cognitive world of which they are a part. At the same time, it perceives them as an agency that is part of interpersonal relations and human actions. Through this prism, we have described such moments in which we are able to re-evaluate the static material world in pedagogy and disrupt the perception of it only as a means to achieving certain goals. Using examples of art and pedagogical practice, we have pointed out the stimulating situations that arise from perceiving the material and immaterial world equally, that is, the human mind, body, culture, and the world of materials and objects.

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