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Editor | Martina Riedler

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Fault Lines: InSEA World Congress 2023 Proceedings

Editor | Martina Riedler

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Editor's Preface:
Art Education at the Fault Lines of a World in Upheaval

The theme of the InSEA World Congress 2023 —*Fault Lines* could not have found a more fitting home than in Çanakkale, Türkiye. A captivating coastal town poised geographically, culturally, and symbolically between Europe and Asia, Çanakkale, with its own history of seismic shifts and cultural convergence, provided a poignant backdrop for the critical conversations that unfolded from September 4th to 8th, 2023. Here, the metaphor of the fault line became both literal and figurative for the delegates, evoking not only the geological tremors that shape the land but also the profound social, political, and cultural fissures—of race, class, gender, and ability—that define our contemporary world. The chapters gathered in these proceedings are born from this unique context, collectively embracing the fault line not merely as a site of fracture, but as a space of immense pedagogical potential—a zone of emergence, critical inquiry, and transformative possibility.

This collection of scholarly work from educators, artists, and researchers across the globe serves as a powerful testament to the vital role of art education in navigating, interpreting, and healing a world in constant flux. The papers move beyond simply acknowledging the upheavals; they actively engage with them, offering innovative practices, critical perspectives, and deeply personal narratives that demonstrate how art can build bridges across the very divides that threaten to pull us apart. They explore, as the congress set out to do, how art can be a vivid site for learning, but also how it perpetuates and makes visible concurrent systems of oppression and exclusion.

The congress proceedings are organized into three distinct but interconnected sections, each exploring a different facet of art education's engagement with our world's fault lines.

Section 1: Pedagogies and Practices of Artmaking and Knowing delves into the heart of the art-making process itself as a form of inquiry. Building on foundational work in phenomenological and arts-based inquiry (e.g., Irwin, 2004), the authors in this section challenge us to reconsider the nature of learning, moving away from rigid, predetermined outcomes and toward more holistic, embodied, and emergent forms of pedagogy. Through explorations of aesthetic inquiry, material agency, and the power of play, these chapters argue for an art education that values intuition, embraces uncertainty, and finds profound meaning in the direct, sensory experience of creation. From the meditative act of bread-making to the contemplative practice of walking, these papers illustrate that the deepest learning often occurs in the spaces between—between the artist and their materials, the teacher and the student, the individual and their environment.

Section 2: Designing and Structuring Arts Learning shifts the focus to the frameworks, curricula, and tools that shape the educational experience. This section offers a critical examination of the structures that underpin arts learning, from national curricula to the design of an individual lesson plan. The authors here challenge the status quo; they are actively designing, testing, and reimagining the very architecture of art education. This includes rigorous analyses of historical teaching materials, the development of new assessment models, and a forward-looking engagement with digital technologies. Chapters exploring everything from Twitch streaming and Blockchain to the design of educational toys and visual interfaces reveal a field that is dynamically adapting to the 21st century, seeking new ways to structure learning that is both relevant and revolutionary.

Section 3: Art Education in Social, Cultural, and Community Contexts broadens the lens to consider art education's role in the wider world. Drawing from critical traditions in visual culture studies (Freedman, 2003) and postcolonial theory (Smith, 2021), the chapters in this final section are a powerful reminder that art does not exist in a vacuum. It is a potent force for social commentary, community building, and cultural transformation. The authors tackle some of the most pressing issues of our time: ecological crisis, social justice, decolonization, inclusion for individuals with disabilities, and the mental well-being of both students and teachers. Whether responding to the trauma of an earthquake, fostering cross-cultural dialogue, or revitalizing a rural village, these papers demonstrate a profound commitment to a socially engaged art education (Helguera, 2011) that is ethically aware and deeply compassionate. They show us, unequivocally, what art can do to help us release our imaginations toward a more just future (Greene, 1995).

Taken together, the chapters in this volume offer more than just a snapshot of a field; they offer a collective vision forged in a place of deep historical and geological significance. It is a vision of an art education that is courageous enough to stand at the fault lines, to listen to the tremors, and to find in the ruptures a space for creating a more just, connected, and beautiful world. As we move forward in these uncertain times, the insights contained within these pages will serve as an invaluable map, guiding us not to avoid the fractures, but to see them as the very places where new growth can begin.

Martina Riedler | Editor

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Section I:

Pedagogies and Practices of Artmaking and Knowing

Art as Celebration and/or Resistance: A Rumination

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Abstract

This paper uses the conference theme, Fault Lines, to explore two directions that the arts take, that of celebration and resistance. Some works manage to combine the two. I use these orientations as a basis for fostering Maxime Greene's "wide awakeness" (to our visual, social and cultural worlds) in art courses with graduate and undergraduate pre-service teachers. Hannah Arendt argues that the starting point of children's awakening is one of innocence, which should be cherished and celebrated. A passage from Seamus Heaney's 1995 Nobel Address exemplifies that innocence and emerging awareness of the world beyond the confines of his home. My students, too, need to hone their expressive capacities in their attempts to articulate their interactions with artworks, and ultimately, their worlds. Thus, they are required to move from private perceptions to public reflections. I encourage attempts at experiential (as opposed to evaluative) art criticism, through evocative writing that strives to show, not tell. To that end, we often look to poetry. As an example, this paper examines one of Heaney's well-known poems that, arguably, takes both a celebratory and resistant stance, and in doing so, treads the fault lines of daily life.

Key Words: Celebration, resistance, wide-awakeness, evocative writing

Art as Celebration and/or Resistance: A Rumination

Fault lines, a good theme for art education, one that can accommodate many perspectives. Let me begin by offering what I think of as one key perspective. The arts, all of them, move in two directions—either in celebration or in resistance, sometimes in both at once. An example of celebration would be Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel; that of resistance would be Picasso's Guernica, or, in music, the whole blues genre. The both-at-once mode is rarer. In this paper I offer one example from a poet whose work has long influenced me, together with snippets from a couple other sources. Indeed, my references to visual art education are filtered often through the lens of poetry.

I teach art education, and for the last half of my career, mostly on the topic of aesthetic engagement, in a Faculty of Education at a large urban university, to both graduate and undergraduate students. Particularly at the undergraduate level, my concern has been to draw attention to links between what goes on in the classroom and the world outside the classroom.

I am reminded of a comment made by a young student. I forget where I read it, but it struck a chord. He said, "School is like sitting on a bus watching the world go by, and you can't get off until 3:00."

This sounds like another fault line. If so, our task is to help students get off the bus, to raise awareness of their visual world and the meanings inherent in those visual prompts—in short, to engage with the world. Or in the words of Maxine Greene (1977), my goal has been to foster "wide-awakeness". American novelist, Richard Ford (2011), says it somewhat differently. He says the purpose of the arts is to re-tune human consciousness. Adults do need occasional re-tuning, to re-awaken and surprise themselves. In the practice of phenomenological research, we strive to "make the familiar strange". The purpose of the exercise is to look anew, without assumptions, to counter our tendency to spontaneously categorize objects and events, to see our surroundings with fresh eyes.

But with young children it's not so much a re-tuning as an initial tuning. They need to construct before they can re-construct. That's what art education provides—a construction, a tuning into the world. I like to think that, in some respects at least, even as adults we can turn the dial (an outdated metaphor, no doubt, but more embodied than googling) in anticipation of Greene's wide-awakeness. In his 1995 Nobel Lecture Heaney described his literal tuning in as a young child. Two paragraphs deserve quoting in full.

> In the nineteen forties, when I was the eldest child of an ever-growing family in rural Coderry, we crowded together in the three rooms of a traditional thatched farmstead and lived a kind of den-life which was more or less emotionally and intellectually proofed against the outside world. It was an intimate, physical, creaturely existence in which the night sounds of the

> horse in the stable beyond one bedroom wall mingled with the sounds of adult conversation from the kitchen beyond the other. We took in everything that was going on, of course–rain in the trees, mice on the ceiling, a steam train rumbling along the railway line one field back from the house–but we took it in as if we were in the doze of hibernation. Ahistorical, pre-sexual, in suspension between the archaic and the modern, we were as susceptible and impressionable as the drinking water that stood in a bucket in our scullery: every time a passing train made the earth shake, the surface of that water used to ripple delicately, concentrically, and in utter silence. But it was not only the earth that shook for us: the air around and above us was alive and signalling too. When a wind stirred in the beeches, it also stirred an aerial wire attached to the topmost branch of the chestnut tree. Down it swept, in through a hole bored in the corner of the kitchen window, right on into the innards of our wireless set where a little pandemonium of burbles and squeaks would suddenly give way to the voice of a BBC newsreader speaking out of the unexpected like adeus ex machina.

Heaney's growing awareness of the world beyond his family's three-room cottage was founded in innocence. Surely such innocence should be treasured as a childhood birthright. We need to be careful about what we ask children to address. The world is fraught with challenges, many of which adults have been unable to cope, never mind passing that responsibility onto children. I find my concern to give children time to be children aligns me with some of Hannah Arendt's (1954) well-known statements: "… it seems to me that conservatism, in the sense of conservation, is of the essence of the educational activity, whose task is always to cherish and protect something—the child against the world, the world against the child, the new against the old, the old against the new" (p. 11).

Arendt's use of the phrase "cherish and protect" suggests to me that a substantial part of art education, at least for young children, therefore should be celebrational. And what each child celebrates is an individual discovery, a surprise that widens their grasp of what it means to be human and animates their life. But that grasp does not take place in isolation. Seamus Heaney had a large family with whom he could discuss what he was hearing. As anyone who has walked into an art classroom can attest, such rooms tend to be noisy. This is not (or at least not always) because the students are unruly. Rather, they are excited to share and confirm their discoveries. So, they are exuberant in their move from the private to the public realm. Communication is crucial, whether one is a child or a professional adult artist. As American poet and essayist, Ann Lauterbach, has said

> The crucial job of artists is to find a way to release materials into the animated middle ground between subjects, and so to initiate the difficult but joyful process of human

connection. This is not only the relation of the given self to a given other, but to show how that relation might move further to a consciousness of persons and public beyond our familiar horizons.

(From: Night sky, as quoted by Richard Deming, Poetry, March 2023, p. 501).

In other words, our task as art educators is to prompt students to not be complacent and satisfied with what or who they already know, but to, as Lauterbach says, move beyond familiar horizons, to take chances. In this age of standardization, students find that move to be a difficult challenge. Insofar as we encourage risk taking, ambiguity and wonder, even making mistakes, our teaching, and student learning falls into the resistance category I mentioned a moment ago. Perhaps that is why art education doesn't sit comfortably within the curriculum where acquiescence is more the norm.

Occasionally, celebration and resistance can take place in the same work. I return to Seamus Heaney and his poem, In Memoriam, dedicated to his mother, Mary Kathleen Heaney.

In Memoriam M.K.H. (1911-1984)

When all the others were away at Mass
I was all hers as we peeled potatoes.
They broke the silence, let fall one by one
Like solder weeping off the soldering iron:
Cold comforts set between us, things to share
Gleaming in a bucket of clean water.
And again let fall. Little pleasant splashes
From each other's work would bring us to our senses.

So while the parish priest at her bedside
Went hammer and tongs at the prayers of the dying
And some were responding and some crying
I remembered her head bent towards my head,
Her breath in mine, our fluent dipping knives–
Never closer the whole rest of our lives.
–from *Clearances*

I read Heaney's poem to one of my philosophy classes, which I also teach. Their responses tended toward the simplistic. "It's sad." Perhaps that's because they lack vocabulary, the ability to make distinctions, and I'll come back to that incapacity and how art education can address it. For the moment, I am going to make the case that the first stanza is one of celebration, while the second is one of resistance.

It's not stated in the poem how old Heaney was at the time of this little story, but there are hints that he was quite young—reference to “the whole rest of our lives” in the last stanza suggests that life as he came to understand it was yet to stretch out before him. Seamus was the eldest of nine children. Perhaps that gave him a position of privilege, even of responsibility. It is conceivable that his mother was pregnant and needed someone close by in case difficulties arose. “All the others were away at Mass”. In any case, he was the only one to stay home with his mother, and he treasured that time. “I was all hers” as they shared their humble task. The stanza bespeaks quiet and mutual comfort in each other’s company. For those of you who have never had the pleasure of plumbing tasks, solder is an alloy of tin and lead, usually sold in the form of a coil of wire. When melted, with the hot tip of a soldering iron, the solder fastens the copper pipes together. Inevitably, as you solder one pipe to another, some solder drips off the hot iron and splashes onto the floor, silently, and in patterns like silver snowflakes, arguably, one of the few pretty features of plumbing—little pleasant splashes, potatoes and solder. In the last line of the stanza Heaney explicitly celebrates the senses.

Let us now look at the second stanza. Instead of little pleasant splashes, we have hammer and tongs, a noisy, sweaty contest between man and resistant metal, between priest and mourners. The responding and crying suggest something ragged—the breathing perhaps? And alienating. No partnership here. Then, in the final three lines, Heaney returns to his mother, “never closer the whole rest of our lives.” There is regret in that line. The closeness they once shared could not be maintained, the hammer and tongs of daily life intervened.

Thus, in this poem we have both celebration and resistance, a fine balance. But then, Heaney was an acknowledged master at his craft. So, I’d like to complete this section by celebrating one of my graduate students, Christina. Much as she would like to celebrate herself, this is poem of resistance.

Born to Taiwanese parents and brought up in a South American country and then Canada, she has always felt like an outsider. In what follows, she visits Taiwan, the country of her parents’ births.

I gasp for air
grey air in a grey city with no
maple trees.
Alone in
a sea of faces
I walk, in shock.
This is
my mother’s land

my father's country
not mine.
When will I cross
over
Until then, pretend
to be like them
same eyes, same skin
but they know
I'm the outsider
always on the threshold
ever in-between.

The standard form of communication in education is didactic, expository, a telling. But the arts don't tell; at their best, they are evocative; they show. A few paragraphs ago, I mentioned distinction making. This is an important educational objective—to learn to tease out the complexities and subtleties that contribute to the richness of our lives—to go beyond the bland judgements of statements such as "It's sad". The arts excel at such distinction making. What Christina and Heaney's words, or a painting, dance or music provide for us is a singular showing—of a truth spoken after the creators' own fashions. That truth has a large agenda, as I think a few lines from Haki Madhubuti's (2023) poem, Remembering Gwendolyn Brooks, sums up:

art has its own language, name, and questions,
has clear talk, justice, and motivation
…to move all of us into the yes community of
life-centred people

Madhubuti's reference to life-centred people is a not-too-subtle directive that our involvement in art education may be said to be a treading along the fault lines of daily life, being careful to acknowledge that which deserves celebration while also confronting that which deserves to be resisted. I began this paper by mentioning my focus—for the past fifty-three years—on working with pre-service teachers, mostly in various facets of art education. But of course, many others have influenced my viewpoints and life directions, both in celebration and resistance. As both artists and art educators we are implicated in the lives of others, and vice versa. All contribute to that community of life-centred people. In early September, the InSEA World Congress 2023 in Çanakkale, Türkiye brought us together to celebrate

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Immergence and Experience of Art

Wilfried Swoboda | University College of Teacher Education Vienna (Austria)

Abstract

The following investigation focuses on the relationship between the Theory of Immergence and the experience of art encompassing the creation of art as well as the perception of art. Theory of Immergence as a pedagogical concept brings the approach of the learning subject back into the educational discourse. Focused attention is the prerequisite for an experience as immersion of mind, a form of being involved that becomes a quasi-physical experience. The author defined therefor the term *immergence* in his basic pedagogical research work as mental movement into a state of immersed conscious thought. Immergent learning emphasises non-measurable parts of the cognitive, contingency of the subjective as ambiguity and plurality, and engagement with the present. In arts education, immergence requires an opportunity within space and time de-limitations: the creation of zones of immergence in everyday school life.

Keywords: theory of immergence, immersion, aesthetic experience

Author note

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Immergence and Experience of Art

In the photographic work series “Standpunkte” (viewpoints), the author is artistically engaged since 2018 with the connection between art and the theory of immergence. The Standpunkte series consists of a hundred photos, all of which have the same image structure. In this way, the author’s smartphone camera and his point of view accompanied everywhere, so there are memento shots that show an individual, unique point of view. A visited location or a special event as well as everyday situations recall this point of view. Thus, it is not the subject of the remembrance that is of importance, but the bottom ground of its photographic capture. The direction of the angle of the photo is then rotated by 180° when the picture is printed, turned upside down, so to speak. The observer is the starting point for the composition of the series; in the individual photo, he or she captures the background on which the observer is standing. The perspective is thus directed head downwards at the viewer's own feet or shoes and shows the place where he or she is in the captured moment. Each photo in the series consists of an upper part, which is filled by the lower body and the feet of the person taking the photo, distorted by camera zoom. The lower part covers the ground on which the captured feet are standing. Here, for example, the condition of the floor, a special mark on the floor itself or a special reflection of light are captured. In the act of photographing, the artist had to consider the later image reversal of the final photo to capture the photo subject in its correct direction. The photo prints developed for further processing always have a 10*18 cm wide format with white margins on the upper and lower edges. Finally, the formula $X = [(Koinzidenz)^{Im} * Proposition] + A$ is applied to the lower part of the photo with a black oil marker. Each single work of the “Standpunkte” consists of the capture of a specific human presence, whereby this enters into correspondence with the person watching the picture. Two counterparts opposite each other: one who is taking the photo and one who is looking at.

Figure 1 shows a work from the “Standpunkte” series. “Standpunkt 20201008_151821” (Swoboda, 2021a) reveals a dichotomy of the background subject: the left side could represent an ancient street, which almost symmetrically leads vertically into a street lined with contemporary paving slabs. The duality is also achieved through the legs of the person taking the picture (capturing person), who is wearing well-kept everyday shoes. This person facing us could be taking a walk in the city, the sujet coincides with an urban, historical point of view. The lettering of the formula divides the picture again, this time horizontally into the person taking the photo in the upper part of the picture and the formula in the lower part.

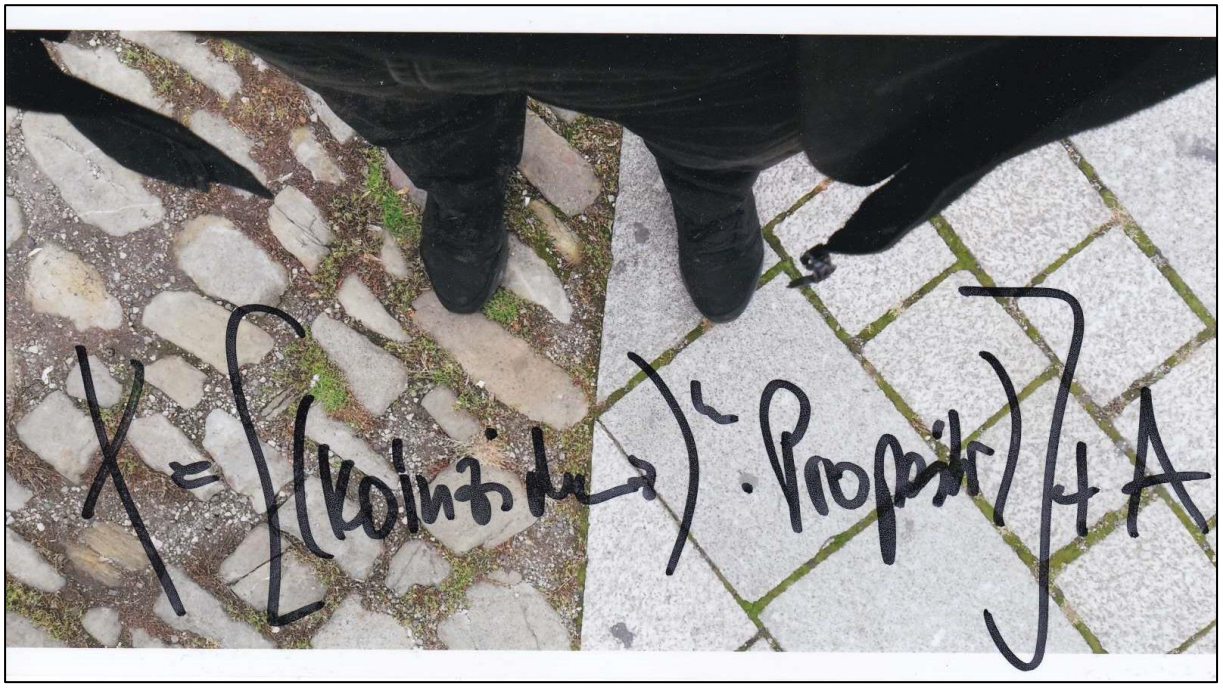


Figure 1 | *Standpunkt 20201008_151821* (Copyright by the author: Swoboda, 2021a)

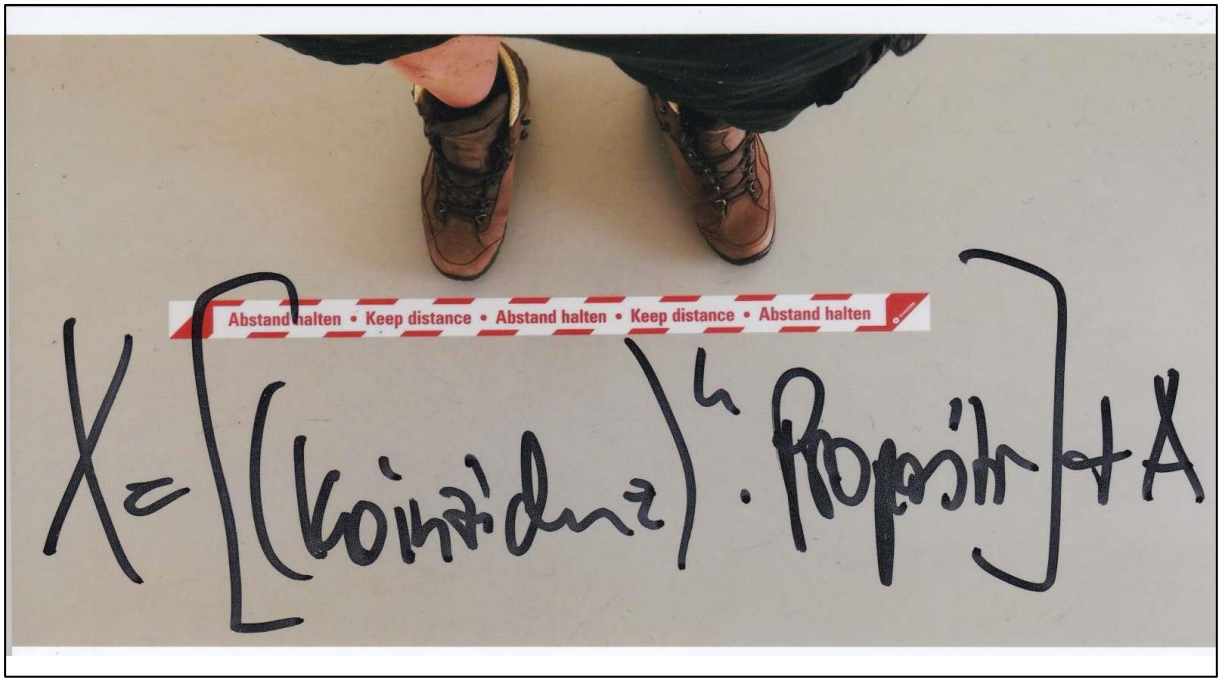


Figure 2 | *Standpunkt 20200815_122928* (Copyright by the author: Swoboda, 2021b)

Figure 2 shows the photography adaptation “Standpoint 20200815_122928” (Swoboda, 2021b) as a further individual work in the series. The coincidence of the point of view capturing and the point of view observing the work is located in an indoor environment. The person capturing the picture is wearing hiking boots and shorts, he could have just come from a hike and is standing in front of a tape with the writing “Keep

distance”. The words on the tape bring back memories of the measures taken during the 2020-2022 Covid pandemic, when people were ordered to keep a minimum distance from each other in order to reduce infection. The tape separates the upper "personal" area from the lower one with the formula and separates the artwork horizontally. In both artworks presented here, the person taking the photograph in the upper part of the picture, the handwritten, sweeping formula and the subject of the floor background form the visual triangle that is found throughout all the artworks in the series.

The following study is intended to highlight the relationship between immergence and the experience of art; an experience of art involves both the creation of art and the perception of art as a comprehensive aesthetic experience (Dewey, 1988). Since the author himself is a creative fine artist, the focus of the discussion of art will always shift strongly towards painting. Nonetheless, the following discussion is intended to cover all art forms and offer a broad spectrum of ways of approaching and dealing with artistic processes.

Aesthetic Experience

The word *art* carries a differentiated meaning in different regions and different languages (Dewey, 1988). According to Bertram (2016), artworks have a material as well as a processual side; they not only work together but also against each other: in the process, the material dissolves. Through aesthetic experience, the structure determined by the artwork is accessed as its language. Both materiality and processuality contain an interrupting aspect of the understanding engagement within the aesthetic experience (Bertram, 2016). This distinction can also be found in Hegel (2004/1819) and Kant (1977/1790), and later in Goodman (2014) and Dewey (1988), via the concepts of *sign* and *experience*. Hegel refers to art as a sign in the work; artworks thus represent a connection between a sensual and a spiritual side, they have the potential to address the recipient subjectively with objective aspects of the world. Interpretation is the primary approach when one sees the work of art as a sign, while aesthetic experience applies with regard to an encounter of the work of art (Bertram, 2016). While painting creates a scenery via visual surfaces, sculpture is a virtual, kinetic volume and architecture its virtual location (Langer, 2018). The structure of musical tensions, in turn, is a temporal one; in the visual arts, this pattern of tensions and resolutions forms an identical symbol–but here in a non-temporal projection (Langer, 2018).

The term aesthetics comes from the Greek term *aisthesis*, meaning perception, so aesthetics is a theory of sensual perception or a specific form, the beautiful. Experiences through aesthetic media and aesthetic procedures are reflected in works of art (Bertram, 2016). According to Gerhardt (2000), aesthetic experience is the dedication to the object and self-abandonment of the individual, whose mirroring in the aesthetic object is selfless and will-less. The efforts of intrinsic learning are based less on the desired goals than on inherent aspects, such as curiosity or the fascinated study of problems. According to Seel (2007),

aesthetic experience is not restricted to art experience at all; it is analogous to aesthetic perception, which happens always and everywhere. However, it cannot be retrieved; the aesthetic perceptual dwelling on the moment increases in aesthetic experience to a view of a moving present (Seel, 2007).

Art and Immergence Theory

The *Theory of Immergence* (Swoboda, 2019) was developed by the author as basic pedagogical research at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena / Germany. The process of immersion in general describes a de-framing procedure for images and views (Sloterdijk, 2006), whose various forms are summarised in the theory of immergence as "immersion of mind" (Swoboda, 2019, 154). This highly focused mental engagement for a certain period of time can be found in examples from philosophy, sociology, psychology, educational sciences, theology, natural sciences and art. The path to this stage of engagement is *immergence* (Swoboda, 2019) and can be seen as the entry stage for further immersed states of consciousness, such as a flow experience (Csíkszentmihályi, 2010), the state of mind-wandering (Smallwood, 2013) or for meditatively oriented awareness (Tellegen & Atkinson, 1974). The term *immersivity* can be used to determine the depth of immersion. The subjective, immerse engagement in situations, in thought demands or in problems implies a meaningful surrender to this moment, creates other world and time dimensions through a shift of actualities. *Immersion* (of mind) means the embedding of experiences as an absorption of consciousness, as a fusion with the respective object of perception (Swoboda, 2019). The way into this immersed stage is defined by immergence, while immersivity determines the depth or quality of immersion.

For the pedagogical determinability of immersion, on the one hand the focus on immergence as the immersive movement is necessary, on the other hand a conceptual delimitation - especially from linguistic immersion to foreign language acquisition (Stebler, 2010) and virtual immersion in learning processes with computer game support (Bopp, 2005)—must be used. The Immersion the mind refers to consciousness-related areas of the understanding that include a syngnostic cognitive capacity. In contrast to *immersion*, which describes the condition, *immergence* stands for movement towards this condition. From a pedagogical point of view, it makes little sense to consider the condition of immersion, since this can represent a being reached as a final condition, but due to its characteristic of *possibility* alone can never be the goal of teaching. This *path into immersion* points firstly to the process of submersion, which can be fixed with the definition of the components and determination of the framework, and secondly creates the possibility of an abstract representation, which can show the relationships of the single components.

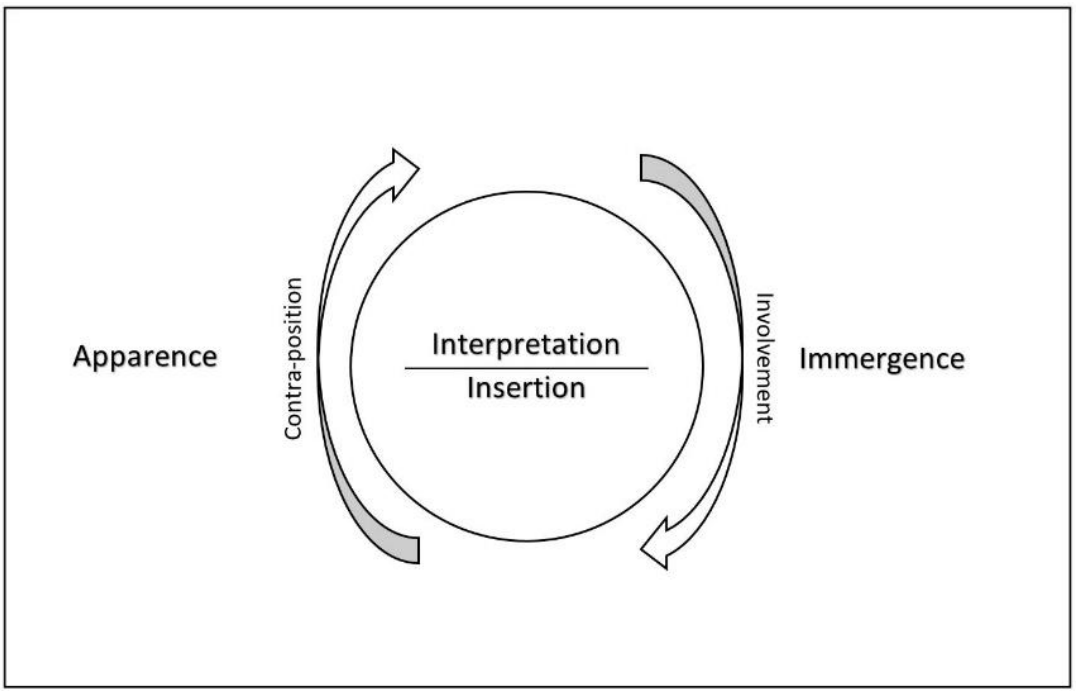


Figure 3 | *Illustration of the connection of immergent motion. Immergence turns into immersion through Involvement and brings with in the Insertion. In apparence, the contra-position creates interpretation* (Copyright by the author)

Immergence describes the *involvement* of the environment and its things; the appearing, the *apparence* takes place in its *contra-position*, in which these things can be seen and observed, shared and evaluated (see figure 3). In apparence things are assigned to visibility, in immergence they become blurred. The visualization becomes an object of *interpretation* and can be regarded as a fact either in a holistic sense or according to reductionist rules. Immergence, through its nature as movement, is always the response of mental diving up and vice versa. Therefore, a holistic-emerged or a reductionist-originated interpretation recurs in the immergent direction as *person-constructed insertion*. In the immergent mode, the insertion merge into a distance-lost mixture, leaving any critical opinion and emotional distance behind. The immergence is independent of the interpretation mode contra-position. It can, however, be influenced by this mode through the insertion and can acquire immergent significance.

Immergent Aspects in Arts Education

The educational dimension of the immergence approach opens up fields on four levels: (1) on the educational level the field of subjectivity, (2) on the institutional level the field of the learning atmosphere, (3) in the classroom the focus on contingency and (4) on the level of learning the field of deep thinking. Perspectivation creates a high reference to one's own, through the immersive movement and the merging of connections a high degree of immergent subjectivity is created. Mental immersion is the focus of the theory of immergence, it constitutes a state of consciousness of being absorbed, immersion is thus the

embedding of experiences or objects of perception via strong mental focussing (Swoboda, 2019). According to Searle (1998), a state of consciousness consists of an *overflowing* as a transition from one experience to the next experienced by human subject. All states of consciousness are subservient to a mood, a tinge (Searle, 1998). It is a fact that human beings perceive and think in a constantly subjectified and historically and culturally differentiated way, influenced by a subjective perspective (Nagel, 2018). In accordance with Merleau-Ponty (1966), perspective is based on an inner-worldly fulfilment of perception with an immanent purposiveness to choose distances and angles of view or to delve into details. Perspective consciousness becomes an awareness of possibilities and spaces for action. Leeten (2019) says that perspectives are not distortions of the world, rather they are the things which open up to the human being from the world precisely in the passage of the perspective. According to Arendt (1992), a common world only exists in the multiplicity of perspectives; if it is only seen from one aspect, it disappears. This pluri-perspectival world emerges through a plural, layered order of worldly things and is characterised by its fragile transience (Arendt, 1992). The brain tries to structure a stimulus input in such a way that a shaped object can be interpreted in it. All perceptual modalities therefore aspire through consciousness towards “coherent wholes” (Searle, 1998, 96). This is based on the aspect of structuring experiences into wholes (Searle, 1998) complemented by the brain's perceiving, a process of selection and discernment to achieve order and normalisation from a mass of chaotic impressions (Cassirer, 2010). The importance of an art symbol, for example, must be grasped through a view of the entire feeling represented; the meaning must be seen or anticipated as a complex whole (Langer, 2018). Being in-between forms the physical encounter zone of the whole, in which the human being makes experiences between thingness and intersubjectivity, between actuality and contingency.

Dewey (1988) speaks of self-sustaining experiences and further distinguishes thinking in strings of ideas from thoughts as used in analytical psychology. Experiences only receive their significance from the relationship between the cognition of action and its consequence. According to this, experience means a merging of what preceded and what succeeds; one part passes freely and seamlessly and without unfilled in-between spaces into what is to follow. Aesthetics does not intrude into the experience from the outside but is part of a holistic experience consisting of purified and condensed qualities (Dewey, 1988).



Figure 4 | *Two students in deep concentration* (Viktorik, 2017; Copyright by the Board of Education, Vienna)

When you contemplate an artwork in a museum intensively, you can plunge into it mentally (Figure 4). You forget the environment and direct your mental focus solely into the artwork. Immersion is the deepened stage of consciousness during contemplation. Immergence, in turn, describes this immersion as a process: the way to immersion and its factors are decisive. Immersivity stands for the potential for immersion in the sense of a gradual determination of absorption, and how absorption makes itself apparent. A person who paints experiences every single brushstroke consciously without realising the direction of the work. At the same time, this person always sees the relationship to the whole, as Dewey (1988) expresses via thinking in one of its most deep-rooted forms. Since the artistic process, like the linguistic process, is a dialogical or dialectical one, not only the artist but also the spectator enters an active role behaviour. If he/ she wants to understand the

artwork, he/she must be able to comprehend its creative process to a certain extension (Cassirer, 2007). This change of perspective dissolves a sharp division between the objective and the subjective (Cassirer, 2007). The *Self* experiences its emancipation as a reformulated concept of subjectivity and detaches itself from the influence of tradition and nature in a new responsibility (Volbers, 2017).

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Controlling the Narrative: How Do Artists Attribute Causation?

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Abstract

In the process of making art there is a tension between the practical need to assume control and a surrendering to the experience and to the materials. Western art education scholarship has increasingly expressed a value for teaching an awareness of material as an agentic influence based on the assumption that it is beneficial for the artist. At the same time, the artists on record who attribute agency to their materials complicate, if not outright defy, much of the existing psychology research that proposes we have a bias to attribute causality to ourselves. In this study, I interviewed 4 artists who work with paint to explore how they attribute agency (to what or whom, and when), and whether a consciousness about material as agentive was present.

Keywords: materials, material agency, material encounters, new materialism, postmodernism

Controlling the Narrative: How Do Artists Attribute Causation?

I experience material actively influencing my fibre art practice, where I am sensitive to *its* preferences and suggestions (Hoyden, 2022). Seeing and feeling fibre in my hands presents possibilities that only emerge through that contact. It is not only an essential part of how I work with wool, but why I choose to do so. Anecdotal evidence reveals that there are other artists who similarly experience their materials as agentic. In an interview, philosopher and artist Etel Adnan described an awareness of material directing her work, explaining, "It collaborates with you. Even the type of paper. So, it's wonderful to be sensitive not only to what you are doing, but what the material *makes* you do" (2015, 3:39-3:56). The artist Anni Albers (1982) has said, "The finer tuned we are to [the material], the closer we come to art," further instructing that "listening" to materials is not only essential for artists, but inseparable from art.

Equally important, and contrasting these experiences, are artists who describe their own actions and decisions as the principal element guiding their work. Joseph Kosuth (1996) states that conceptual artists, like himself, "work with meaning, not with shapes, colours, or materials" (p. 407). Sol LeWitt extracted the process of making art by having his ideas executed by others, creating a physical distance between the artist and the materials. In these instances, it is the idea, coming from the artist, which is understood to be driving the work.

This study grows out of my curiosity around how the experience of materials as a vocal partner emerges (or does not) for artists. I have been at a loss whether to bring my own sense of wool as agentive and influential to students and, if yes, how to do so. For the novice who may feel intimidated, is the suggestion to "hear wool" yet another skill or ability they might feel they lack or cannot master?

There is a long-standing tradition of accepting materials as central to artmaking and inseparable from art education (e.g., Dewey, 1934/2005; Fredriksen, 2012; Hafeli, 2015). Increasingly some educators frame material as influential and agentic (e.g., Dobson, 2013). Some scholars assume that artists are uniquely perceptive to material's influence, echoing and often recruiting philosophies of new materialism (e.g., Fritts, 2019), where theorists such as Jane Bennett (2012) also posit that artists "hear more of the call of things" (p. 247). In their article "'Oohing and ahhing': the power of thin(g)king in art education research," Hood and Lewis (2021) refer to a "particular kind of perception of artists" to material's influence (p. 227).

Art education scholarship has considered bringing a conscious awareness of material as influential and agentive into the classroom (e.g., Fritts, 2019; Garber, 2019; Hood & Kraehe, 2017; Hood & Lewis, 2021), suggesting that perception depends on the educator facilitating such awareness. Kelly Dobson, a professor at Rhode Island School of Design,

describes materials as “agents of action” and identifies an instructor’s responsibility to increase student awareness of them as such. In the book *The Art of Critical Making*, Dobson notes that a student can learn to let the materials “lead” them in the artmaking experience if they are taught to “recognize these properties” of agency (Dobson, 2013, p. 139). Psychology research reflects a similar conclusion – that the attribution of agency resides within the individual (Bandura 2001; Hall et al., 2010; Hall, Johansson, & Strandberg, 2012; Johansson et al., 2005; Weiner, 1985, 2012). Elizabeth Garber (2019) expressly proposes that to recognize the power of the material to inform us requires conscious attention. This emphasis on conscious awareness situates the experience of material agency as an ability held within an individual, which can be fostered, or inhibited, by the teacher (Garber, 2019).

There is an implicit understanding, in the literature promoting it, that students who adopt a consciousness about their materials’ agency benefit from it. Some, however, are more explicit. Hood and Kraehe (2017) speculate it will result in an “attentiveness and wonder” that they underscore is “necessary for developing an artistic practice” (p. 33-34). These propositions, from artists and educators, that artists should listen to materials – in the case of Anni Albers it is an admonition, as she warns, “Not listening to it ends in failure…” (1982) – hold two assumptions: that artists are able to perceive the influence of materials if they hold conscious awareness of material as agentive; and that it is a positive experience. From this position, detecting material as agentive can and should be taught, and conscious awareness is a critical first step.

Research Questions

1) How do artists attribute agency – To themselves? To their materials? – expressly when describing their experience working with the materials that they use to make art?

2) Is a conscious awareness of material as agentive present in an artist who attributes agency to their materials?

Conceptual Framework

We understand the world around us through our experience of it (*See* Jean Piaget, David Hume). How we describe our experience, the words we use, reflects our internal understanding of the world and our role in it. The experience of material as agentive is situated within the individual. Therefore, it is on the individual that this investigation is based.

Attribution of agency is expressed through language.

“Analogies, metaphors, and emblems are the threads by which the mind holds on to the world,” according to Hannah Arendt (1978, p. 109). The explanation of who, or what, has control is created through the combination of experience and language (*See* Kang & Tversky, 2016; Tversky, 2019). In their seminal work, *Metaphors We Live By*, cognitive linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson underscore that attributing causation “emerges directly from our

experience" (1980, p. 75). Rather than providing objective truth about the world, language enables us to share our subjective experiences with one another (Kang & Tversky, 2016; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Semin & Fiedler, 1988; Tenbrink, 2015; Tversky, 2019). An artist that attributes agentic behaviour to the materials that they make art with is expressing how they themselves experienced that interaction.

Significance

The idea that we do not think or work in a vacuum, individually imposing a personal will on the world, but instead participate in a dynamic and complex system with causality distributed across multiple human and non-human actors, has been explored by philosophers and theorists (*See* Karen Barad, Jane Bennett, Howard Gruber, Edwin Hutchins, Bruno Latour, Lambros Malafouris, Tim Ingold, etc.). Identifying where causality occurs in the process of making art is beyond the scope of this study. However, this study is concerned with understanding how the artist experiences their encounter with the materials they use to make art.

Methodology

Using narrative inquiry, I interviewed artists to explore how they described their experiences with their materials and specifically nuances that they might not be conscious of, but which might surface through the re-construction of their experience (Mertova & Webster, 2019). When we describe something, we are telling stories that reveal our understanding of those experiences (Reissman, 2008, Tomasello, 2003). A narrative interview allows the participant to relay their experience as they have interpreted it, highlighting what feels significant to them (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Roberts, 2020).

The overarching analysis of the interviews was foregrounded in a Phronetic Iterative approach which supports drawing on established empirical scholarship and theory to identify and organize the data, while also expanding or refining the relevant theories as the researcher engages with and discover new insights from the data (Tracy, 2019). Following the original research questions – how do artists attribute agency, and do they possess a conscious awareness of material as agentive – should not prevent recognizing valuable observations that emerge from the data.

This study relied on a purposeful sampling of painters to collect information relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Palinkas et al., 2015). The focus on painters is relevant for theoretical and practical purposes. There has been work on material agency that intentionally highlights ceramicists (*See* Brinck & Reddy, 2020; Malafouris, 2008, 2014, 2019; Malafouris & Koukouti, 2022), and while this adds much to the study of material influence, it has the potential, if left unsupported, to derail a larger conversation around material and art making. Working with clay introduces an additional variable of (induced) movement when it is worked on the wheel, leading to an experience of animacy that is not necessarily

applicable to other mediums. Some research has already suggested that it is this perception of coordinated movement which fosters a heightened sense of material agency for those working with clay (Brinck & Reddy, 2020). This pilot study expands the documentation of material influence beyond pottery.

Study Design

Participants. Four individual painters, a mix of men and women (1:3), were identified through friends or local art school web sites and recruited with solicitation emails. No other demographic data was collected. The 4 primary criteria: painters; fluent in English; with an active arts practice spending either 5 or more hours per week, or 20 or more hours per month, engaged in painting; and possessing no in-depth knowledge around my area of research nor the explicit focus of the study. To preserve anonymity, throughout this article they will be referred to as Artists A, E, I, and O.

Data. Semi-structured interviews with artists captured their own nuanced, constructed narrative around their arts practice (Roberts, 2020; Tracy, 2019), and an open-ended single survey question collected their intentional characterization of their materials. I followed an interview protocol to increase the reliability of the descriptions to provide comparable qualitative data (Yin, 2018).

To investigate a conscious awareness of material as agentive, a single written survey question was sent the day after the interview to prompt the artist to cobstruct a general characterization of their materials: “The materials I work with are my…”

Data collection. Individual one-hour interviews over Zoom.us were recorded on an iPhone using the *VoiceMemos* application. The data was taken from the manual transcriptions of these interviews and each artist’s written response to the follow-up question.

Data analysis. According to linguist Noam Chomsky (1964), we represent the actor-action relationship through the subject-verb structure. When a person, fluent in a language, positions material or self as a subject of a sentence, they are making a syntactical choice guided by experience and intuition (Chomsky, 1964; Creswell, 2003). Descriptions of material as agentive are not mistakes or language use errors but rather expressions of how someone has internalized their experience (Tenbrink, 2015). The units of data from the interviews had to be 1) a grammatically complete sentence that 2) referred to art materials. Following my own English fluency and intuition (Selting, 2000; Tenbrink, 2015), I identified grammatically complete sentences based on their “semantic significance” (Chomsky, 1964, p. 94). Because the spoken responses were often not syntactically complete, all grammar had to be inferred from intonation, context, and logical assumptions (Chomsky, 1964; Davis & Johnsrude, 2007; Levis, 1999). Material here was defined as physical matter that the artist could perceive using one or more of their senses. Participants referred to material either through explicit use of a

noun (e.g., paint) or a pronoun (e.g., it). In sentences that referred to materials, I coded for attribution of agency to either the self or the material, based on subject-verb structures. The quantity of sentences was neither collected nor interpreted to have any significance. Many variables contributed to how much was said, including personal talking speeds and the time constraint of one hour.

Coding for agency. I coded the sentences with references to material for *personal agency* when the artist was the subject of the sentence e.g., when Artist A says, "I really love the colour [of paint]." The first-person singular pronoun "I" indicates the artist and is the subject while "love" is the verb (describing a state of being), and the "colour" of their paint is the material object.

I coded the sentences with references to material for *material agency* when the material was the subject of the sentence e.g., when Artist I says, "Colour draws me to painting." "Colour" is the material subject and "draws" is the verb, while the artist refers to themselves in the first-person singular objective pronoun "me."

Characterization of relationship. I analysed the written answers to the follow-up email prompt to assess whether the artist used a metaphor that characterized their materials as agentive or passive tool.

Protection of Participants

Participation was entirely voluntary and involved no personal information or identifiers. I received IRB Exempt approval for this study (IRB ID #23-250). All participants received and signed an Informed Consent Form.

Limitations

The reliance on personal oral narratives, and my comprehension of them, dictated that I use only participants fluent in English. However, it makes it impossible for me to learn to what extent the expression and reflection they offered is culture- and/or language-dependent.

For this study, I was interested in hearing how the artists verbally characterized their relationship with materials in self-produced explanations of past experiences. This makes it impossible for me to learn how their physical interaction might influence or contradict their framing. This study focused on a small number of participants. This makes it impossible for me to learn the full scope of how artists might describe and characterize their relationship with the materials they use to make art, and impossible to generalize. However, the interviews raise new questions and focus my existing ones.

Findings

Attributions of Agency

Sentences identified as referring to materials, either explicitly or with verbal references including pronouns, were analysed for attribution of agency.

Personal agency. Within sentences referring to materials, every participant constructed some sentences in which they attributed agency to themselves. In these sentences, the artist is the subject, and the materials are the objects that the artist does something with or to and, as such, the material could be characterized as tools. Table 1 has examples from each interview when the participant described *themselves* as controlling the materials.

Table 1 | Examples of artists describing themselves as controlling the materials

Artist	
A	"… **I leave** it on there as long as **I need** to and, actually, this time around **I think I put** it down and then **I was**, like, what would happen if **I added** a little, like, white paint."
E	"**I will pull** in dried, in this season, dried leaves from, you know, around my studio, whatever, 'n, you know, **[I] put** paint on them."
I	"**I use** oil pastels on paper, and **I use**, um, artist crayons and like different/**I** really **love** building up textures."
O	"… **I start** with just a very little bit of pigment and not a lot of water, and **I** essentially **sketch** out with the paint brush on the paper."

Material agency. Within sentences referring to materials, every participant constructed some sentences through which they attributed agency to the materials. In these sentences, materials are the subject, and they behave, possess characteristics, or cause action. Table 2 has examples from each interview when the participant attributes agency to the materials. Some sentences contain more than one verb clause.

Table 2 | Examples of artists describing their materials as having agency

Artist	
A	"The **paint was** fluid enough that **it** sort of just **went** everywhere, like, **went** under the grid."
E	"**It didn't behave** the way that I thought it would."
I	"But then sometimes **it** like **takes** me on this journey and I'm like, uh, I don't like this."
O	"When there's a puddle, **it** kind of **pushes** the pigment around differently."

Characterization of Relationship

Every participant completed the survey questions using a metaphor that characterized the materials that they make art with as either agentive (a partner) or passive (a tool they use). For their written responses, see Table 3.

Table 3 | Survey answers

Artist	The materials that I work with are my…	Metaphor type
A	"…organs. They are supposed to work in harmony. And they go unnoticed for the most part, until something goes wrong."	partner
E	"…companion."	partner
I	"…way of expressing a visual language that can't quite express itself in my written words."	tool
O	"…The material that I work with is my conduit. This is not to say it is inconsequential, for the properties of a medium must influence the outcome of the artwork, but ultimately the message of the work passes through the medium to be realized."	tool

Discussion

This pilot study began with two research questions which were intentionally designed to be answerable through surface-level, observable verbal behavior (Reissman, 2008). The goal was to hear each artist's own description of their experiences with their materials and conduct a structural analysis of their narratives.

How do artists attribute agency?

These participants attributed agency, describing an ability to influence and impact circumstances (Bandura, 2001), to both themselves and to their materials. The artists described experiences where they moved or placed material, using it to create a desired effect. The artists *use* or *put* or *layer* their paint. They also used language that described what the material was *doing*. The colours "speak" to them or "draw" them in, and can "effect" the other colours around them; the paint can "dry" or "run" or "puddle" and "push." Artist E explained that "Acrylics are just fast" when describing what they liked about working with the material. In these instances, the material seemed to have its own behaviour.

Context. An interesting observation I made was the shifting context around all descriptions. First there was no clear starting point for who or what initiated action. Sometimes the artists described scenarios where they were starting the interaction, by choosing a colour or making a mark. Sometimes, however, the artists described scenarios where the materials provoked them, leading them to respond to the materials. In this way, I would characterize the engagement as an ongoing dialogue with turn-taking occurring between material and artist. Any conception of power, control, or influence here would have to be viewed as transient rather than static. The artists captured this very clearly in their compound sentences, where in one clause they attributed agency to their materials, and in the other clause, they attributed it to themselves. For example, Artist A said, "Once you put a

colour down, it's gonna keep effecting every subsequent layer." The agency here is entangled, with the "intra-action" between artist and paint as the source of it (Barad, 2007). Every participant generated compound sentences where one action, change, or behaviour facilitated a responding action, change, or behaviour.

A consciousness about material as agentive?

All four artists described material as agentive in some instances; yet evidence of a conscious awareness or attitude toward material as agentive was not expressed by all (*See* Table 3). These findings, taken as they are, would suggest that establishing a conscious awareness of material as agentive is not necessary for an artist to experience material as agentive and influencing their behaviour.

Conclusion

This pilot study detected descriptions of a generative cause and effect between artist and material in the interviews moves me to look at the experience as process- rather than belief-based. I am encouraged in this direction by Barad's (2003) recommendation to investigate specific intra-actions with an onto-epistemological approach, wherein we study our "practices of knowing in being" (p. 829). In the process of making art, there is a tension between the practical need to assume control and a surrendering to the experience and to the materials (Dewey, 1934/2005). The individual enters a genuine dialogue where the artist can listen, as one does in a dialogue which is a process of responding to what is emerging rather than exclusively experiencing control of it (Bohm & Weinberg, 2004). Therefore, rather than a belief or perceptual ability, I suggest that practice-based behaviour facilitates the exchange of generative influence between artist and materials.

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From Disequilibrium to Possibility: Actively Taking up Fault Lines in Preservice Art Education Programs

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Abstract

This paper explores the pedagogical potential in taking up the space of the fault line with pre-service art educators and residing in places of emergence, affect, and intuition over logic and sense-making. It references both previous research that contributes to this thinking, as well as ongoing projects that requires one to embody uncertainty through repeated engagements and unlearn the binary of right and wrong that is deeply engrained in educational systems. It argues for the need to offer learning experience with pre-service students that balance both planning and structure with more fluid and emergent spaces for teaching and learning. Using the fault line as a metaphor for this unknown third space, this paper stresses the importance of planning for the un-plannable and crafting learning opportunities for pre-service students that allow for, and possibly even embrace, disruption and uncertainty.

Keywords: art education, fault lines, signs, emergence, disruptions

From Disequilibrium to Possibility:
Actively Taking up Fault Lines in Preservice Art Education Programs

If thought actually happens in the disharmony of our faculties (Deleuze, 1994), and learning is a result of disruptive encounters, then the creation of fault lines presents unique opportunities for rethinking curriculum based on relational ways of knowing and moving in spaces of the unknown. Fault lines are evidence of forces that disrupt one entity into separate surfaces, and while we can't see those forces, we can know their power through the breaking of one into two—forces that allow for blocks of rock to shift and move in relation to one another, and while this division may be perceived as negative and destructive, it has the potential to create a third space that is undefined and filled with possibilities. The forces acting out in unanticipated ways inadvertently create new spaces for unforeseen movement and responsive adjustments. As Eisner (2008) articulates, tension can be unsettling, but it can also "evoke a sense of vitality" (p. 17). This paper explores what may happen when this sense of vitality and possibility created by fault lines, is taken up as a means to rethink pedagogical practices for oneself and for aspiring art educators. It offers thoughts around the kind of infrastructure that may be needed for teaching and learning from the space between two rocks, as well as considerations on assignments that encourage this kind of work.

In 2019-2020 as my dissertation work, I engaged in a research-creation study where I apprenticed myself to sign encounters asking what signs might do for art education. And while this paper is not on that project, specifically, engaging in that research was my entry and immersion into thinking about the possibilities embedded within disruptions. As part of that work, I actively took up sign encounters and all the uncertainty and unknowabilty that came from the disruption of the sign. In this case I am referring to Deleuze's (1994) description of sign as violent disruptions causing a shift or divide with a before and after the event or sign-encounter. As he states in Proust and Signs (1964/ 2000), "it is the sign that constitutes the object of an encounter and works this violence upon us. It is the accident of the encounter that guarantees the necessity of what is thought" (p. 16). The idea of a fault line, a crack in the earth's surface, is similar to the sign encounter, in that they both create a division (between surfaces or experiences) and generate thought. The sign encounter is a force that disrupts our faculties, the fault line is the result of a force from within. In this way, apprenticing oneself to signs is like being in the space between two weathered rock surfaces. And if we continue to follow this thread, that would mean that learning occurs not only with the sign, as Deleuze (1964/2000) argues, but with the fault line space as well.

As an example, during the study in 2020 my young son broke my camera lens, and it was the main lens I used for documentation purposes of my dissertation (see Figure 1). This was a major disruption and an event that I perceived as a sign. As such, I aimed to hold open

the space of not knowing why this occurred, why the breaking of the lens happened, but following it none the less. In the end, we created a new lens using a cut up aluminium Fanta can and then took some blurry photos, as demonstrated in Figure 2. Those blurry photos were in turn pressed onto felt by a machine and then entered the 2019 exhibition titled *Inhabiting/ Living Practice* This exhibition occurred in Vancouver during the InSEA World Congress 2019 and was organized by Alison Shields and Genevieve Cloutier. In that exhibition, and as part of the theme of emergence, one of the felt pieces was extended even further as other artists actively modified it in unexpected and beautiful ways (see Figure 3). Currently the work hangs in our home in (author's location) and reminds me daily to take risks, stay with uncertain, and continue trusting in the unfolding of our relationality. All this to say, when the camera lens broke, the fault line was created, and while I was incredibly dismayed in the moment, allowing the space of the encounter to be open and to be creatively in the unknown, took the work in a direction I could never have anticipated. The unfolding of that sign encounter, which required being in the space of the fault line ultimately created new connections and more space for relational understanding.



Figure 1 | Broken camera lens, photo 2023 (Copyright by the author)

Fault lines are caused by a stress, a fracture, that is between two blocks of rock. When the fracture happens, this causes the blocks to move in relation to one another, resulting in a crack on the earth's surface. In thinking about this process of the earth in conversation with my experience with signs, and in relation to pedagogical practice, I am pulled to consider how the crack could be seen as a force and a release; it is a space to let go of the tension and yet still be in relation to one another's surfaces (human and more than human alike). With boundaries being formed and/or reformed in the space of the fault line,

where subject object is not held as a distinct duality and where shifting relations are experienced, coming into touch with surfaces that would not be present otherwise. As Donna Haraway (1988) states, “bodies as objects of knowledge are material-semiotic generative nodes. Their boundaries materialize in social interaction. Boundaries are drawn by mapping practices; ‘objects’ do not pre-exist as such.” (p. 594). In the case of my son and the camera lens, I sensed the boundary shifting between myself and the lens, between myself and my son, within my own internal response, and quite frankly a shift towards any movement that flowed from this point of division--this before and after of the lens breaking. The sign encounter became a place for me rethink my response, to reassess my relationship to the lens itself, to take up the encounter in a creative manner that redirected or rather re-purposed the tension around my broken lens into something that extended in amazing, relational, and truly unpredictable ways.



Figure 2 | Unexpected movement, photo 2023 (Copyright by the author)

It is important to note, that in this pursuit of the fault line or the space of the sign encounter, there has to be a commitment to standing in relation to what occurs, actively taking up the fault line and considering how to be in the space wholistically and pedagogically. If one can do that, I believe there is pedagogical possibility in being in that space, the space between two surfaces. The more I continue to dive into this topic in my own work and in my teaching of art education undergraduates, I am convinced there is something within uncertainty that artist-educators can capitalize on to enhance connection, learning, and understanding of one another and our own relationality to-and-in the world. However, to engage in this way, requires a trust in the process and a resistance to closing off the sign encounter, by assigning meaning too soon. It requires a trust in what pure

differences are to become actualized in the doing of, in the being-with-in, and in the following-of those fault lines and in the muddling between two surfaces. As Deleuze states, “Signs are deadly when they are lost in the distance, but also when they strike us full force” (Difference and Repetition, p. 23). I interpret this to mean muddling around in the middle space, between the jarring and disruptive strike of a sign and the evaporation of its impact or even a quick determination of its meaning and a fall back into logic and representation, is where the work of learning occurs. Seen here is not a fault line by the way, but an image from a recent hike I took with my family. This is called split rock and it is believe to have been forced apart my millions of years of ice freezing and melting, creating this crack. While this crack and a fault line are created by a different process, both are subject to natural forces and result in an opening between surfaces.



Figure 3 | Relational happenings, photo on felt, string, found object 2021 (Copyright by the author)

Recently, I have come to realize how being in the fault line, in a space of uncertainty, also requires a kind of compassion, care, and a deeper discussion around intuition for creating and teaching in this in-between space—in the gap created by the fault line and/or the sign encounter. It requires a kind of tending to the space without trying to close or mend the crack, without rushing to assign meaning to the sign, or to move past the experience of being between two edges quickly and find a resolve. To be on the edge of experience that, according to Manning (2016), is an integral part of intuition, means staying attuned to that which is "on its way" (p. 47). Pedagogically speaking, I've come to believe it means having a larger understanding of how to structure a learning experience that makes space for uncertainty and unknowability, allowing for the yet-to-be determined to come through the crafting of curricular structures that can withstand, frame, and encourage the re-thinking of unanticipated encounters. It requires caring for uncertainty and committing to the important rigor of intuitive engagements. Similar to how Sarah Truman (2022) talks about research-creation as having rigor and not being anything goes, assignments that cater to creating space for the unknown could appear in that way upon first glass. However, underneath there is much more swirling about in the encounter-driven, fault-like openings.

Through the previous dissertation work, and current projects, I have come to believe the framing or structuring of such an experience needs to be pliable and permeable, with spaces of openness and fluidity. In Powell and Lajevic's (2015) discussion on emergent curriculum, they note how there is a paradox between structure and planning, with the need to create spaces for unplanned and emergent aspects of teaching, learning, and curriculum design (p. 50). As an instructor of pre-service art education students, I tend to think of it as the unfinished framework of a house, that is intentionally not yet complete. The structuring is like the joists and girders or beams of an unfinished home, providing places to stand and move while being linked together in various ways. The open house becomes a container for learning experiences in a way that a solid wall structure or flooring might not be able to accomplish. The framework provides some stability as a structure to trust or hold onto, but yet it is not fully fixed. There are still pockets for discovery and imagination. In other words, the reliability of the structure allows for a kind of third space of emergence and fluidity to be experienced through a focus on relationality and that which is yet-to be determined. The emergent self is co-constituted through the act of artmaking. (Manning, 2013).

From continuing to engage in this work after graduation and into my current role as an Assistant Professor, I've noticed how assignments with a particular kind of framing encourage students (and myself) to sit and be in a place of disruption more readily—we engage in the in-between, in the crack of the fault line. As Atkinson (2008) explains "real learning," as he calls it, involves a disruption of assumed pedagogical practice and knowledge building (p. 235). Assignments that hold the potential to encourage this kind of

reliance on disruption and that-which-is-unknown, often take a similar shape. They ask students to be in an art making space that is not pre-determined and to do so in a repeated manner. As seen through the progression show in figures 4-6, the doing of the assignment relies on emergence and intuited processes over direct one-to-one translation of thought to image, symbol, and/or representation. Crafting learning experiences in this way, however, is not always easy due to initial resistance from students and the discomfort of not having a pre-determined outcome. Emergence can be very uncomfortable when you've conditioned yourself to produce for someone else's expectations, be it in an art-making environment or otherwise. Given that this initial resistance is predictable and understandable, I make sure to inform students that engagement in this manner with themselves and their materials will not always be easy; it can be uncomfortable at times, jarring, frustrating, and even stressful. A such, students are encouraged to lean into the sensation and stay attuned to what is presenting itself even, and maybe especially during those times of frustration and discomfort. To stay attuned to not only the bodily responses and experience the emotion and affect, but also to the materials and material forces that may be acting upon-and-with them. As Manning (2013) states, "Attunement is a merging with of vitality affects across experiences toward emergent events. Not a feeling of but a feeling with" (p. 7-8). Staying attuned to the more affectual side of the creation-making experience brings for a relational knowing that may not be experienced otherwise.

I've done this kind of assignment for several semesters now, altering it slightly each time as a result of student's feedback and subtle shifts in my thinking. Yet each time I have given these more emergent-based, open ended assignment, there are inevitably a number of students who struggle with it. They struggle with the lack of specificity in expectations and direction. They struggle with the request to creatively respond to their lived experience as they move through the course. They are uncomfortable with the unfinished walls of the house (at least in the beginning of the assignment). And to be quite frank, as an undergraduate I would have had a similar response, because this kind of "being in the fault line" in a way that is compassionate towards the self and art-making process, in a way that requires the curiosity and a reliance on intuition rather than logic and sense making, is typically not practiced on a regular basis and especially not in a classroom environment. As artists one is more apt to embody that less defined creative practice, but as individuals who have moved through an educational system that encourages the binary of right and wrong, as well as the external reward of have I met your expectations (your being the person of power), it can lead to an internal conflict for students who may have a desire to act (and activate) in this way, but have not yet embodied the practice for themselves.



Figure 4-6 | Emergent artwork progression, student A, acrylic paint, chalk, pen, beads 2023 (Author has copyright permission to use these images)

Concluding Thoughts

To be in the space of the fault line, we have to find ways to unlearn the self as centre, as producer of a pre-determined artwork or as knower of fixed knowledge that is often human centred and individualized. Or at the very least craft learning experiences and art-making experiences that hold the potential to move one in this direction if they actively take up the opportunity and begin the process of unlearning. Assignments that allow for a movement away from more human-centred thinking and instead embracing a relational thinking. So that we become more present to our own relationality and the complexity and permeability of it all. For me, in the body, this has felt like a pulled back awareness that is not devoid of emotion, as in a cold objectivity, but rather an expansion of understanding into the existence of the self as part of a larger active, always becoming, world. By assigning and engaging in work that removes the familiar structure of specific goals and outcomes, my hope is that students will feel their bodily engagements with their materials, their creative process, and their worlds differently. And while they cannot physically get out of the self, the body, perhaps it will create a semi-structured space for them to explore their own malleability and connection.

In Stacy Alaimo's (2010) discussion on trans-corporeality, she talks about how "ethical considerations and practices must emerge from a more uncomfortable and perplexing place where the "human" is always already part of an active, often unpredictable, material world" (p. 17). Alaimo (2010) acknowledges that while the term transcorporeal may point back to the human, it is about a larger connected network. I think this applies to

teaching pre-service students and asking them to be engaged in more emergent-based work. While, the students and I cannot get outside of ourselves self entirely, there is the potential to feel our relation to materials and material forces differently by working to be in the space of the fault line. Similarly, as a professor, I cannot get outside of the institutional structures I work within, but I can create pockets of spaces for engaging in a hopefully more boundary blurring art-making manner for both myself and the students—a place where we hold the world in care and curiosity, towards intuited and compassion processes, and with an eye towards that which presents itself.

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Kitemaking as Questioning: Rupture and Reconsideration

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Abstract

This paper revisits an integrated art making experience in an elementary school makerspace conducted by a multidisciplinary team of university researchers to ask questions of disciplinarity in early childhood (art) education and STEM (STEAM) education. Here I consider how foundational questions of art posed during the project and later in my own reflective research might rupture, unmoor, or unsettle instructional or research practices and teach us about the ways that we, adults and university educators, are delimited by our own disciplined/discipline-specific thinking. I consider the various instructional interventions the research team employed and the kinds of learning resulting from each. Taking a progressive, constructivist perspective, I consider which produce deeper educational exploration and allow for child-centeredness, gold standards of reconceptualized early childhood art education. Herein, questions of art and the holistic practices of Reggio are tools to think with and reconsider our epistemologies and practices.

Keywords: early childhood art education, steam makerspace, disciplinarity, rupture

Kitemaking as Questioning: Rupture and Reconsideration

I absolutely hate when adults, and especially when I, am expected to finish or supplement a child's artwork, making it instead an imagined product of adult design. Here I don't mean collaborative artmaking with children—I enjoy that. I mean when adults complete or make most of the children's artwork in order to produce a certain product or image of children's art production, turning it into what they think it should be. Most of the time I am so maddened by this kind of absurd impracticality and visual and educational charlatanism that I won't do it. So, why do I find myself alongside two fellow university researchers, laboriously cutting out photocopies of birds and airplanes and frantically adjusting children's rice paper and watercolour kites so that they will fly? The easy and complicated answer to this is that I asked a question that ruptured the comfort and familiarity of our research practices. Despite calling ourselves progressive early childhood researchers and educators, these questions ultimately led to instructional practices that revealed our discomfort with children's inquiry-based learning in public schools. The long and the short of this is that this is a tale of rupture and constriction, of tensions and pressures. It is a complicated story with many layered strata and many forces acting upon the same set of circumstances. This manuscript shares the story underlying these many layers, the rest is for another time.

Ultimately, I believe that the act of questioning, of asking "What is art?" holds the potential to rupture old ways of thinking and at the least asks us to consider new methods, ideas, and categories of art (Kaplan, 2016, 2018). In this case, asking "Where or what is the art in our STEAM makerspace practices" led to a shift in curriculum which, unfortunately, constricted children's early learning. Despite this unintended negative consequence, the practice of asking, "where or what constitutes art in an early education STEAM classroom" and then returning to the data to uncover the ways in which learning happened or didn't because of my questioning practice, deepened my understanding of our own misgivings, our trespasses against ourselves, the children, and education. So, while the rupture in the story may not seem positive, the process of revisiting the work has allowed me to learn more about the intersections of Art and STEM in schools and to reconsider the difficulty of resisting school and developmental narratives (Thompson, 2022; Trafí-Prats, 2022) of an imagined future science or STEM employee rather than addressing the immediate child present in front of you and their learning.

My Story Begins

The final project before school closed for the summer and our research would end with three kindergarten classes at a local elementary school was a kitemaking project. We had not made plans for the final weeks of school, and I approached the research group wondering what it might be like to lead with art, artmaking, and an exploration of high-quality studio art materials. These musings and wonderings came from an observation of the

ways that we as researchers, and particularly the louder members of the five-person STEAM research team, tended to theorize and discuss our work. We regularly justified what we were doing by naming children's playful activities in all-too-familiar disciplinary and schooled terms like mathematics, science, engineering, and language arts. We used these cherished and unquestioned identifiers to demonstrate out usefulness to the school, to claim our value as producers of knowledge and producers of those "in the know", those knowledgeable, and most importantly, we used them to organise, separate, make sense of, and to ultimately discipline our thinking, our practice, and our students' (and their thinking and practice) (Foucault,1986; Hoskin, 1979). Sensing the emphasis on identifying much of what we were doing as falling within the seemingly job-ready disciplines of science, math, and engineering by my peers while also wondering why what the children were doing was not being as seriously considered for its art making qualities, I began to wonder why progressive educators who looked to the Reggio approach would divide the curriculum and the world of young children in this way. Further, as an artist, I began to wonder what, if anything, would constitute recognizable art curriculum when the student's earlier expressive drawings were being held hostage by the adult imperative for STEM education and a futural narrative of job readiness for kindergarteners. I wondered if leading with materials could disrupt or assert the space of art making. I also wondered if there was something about the ubiquitousness and familiarity of the school art supplies despite Efland's (1976) decry, some fifty years earlier, that glue, tape, gems, popsicle sticks, cardboard, etc. was the stuff of school art that made it difficult for my peers to distinctively claim these works and practices as art. These were indeed the arbiters of school culture and less recognizable as art.

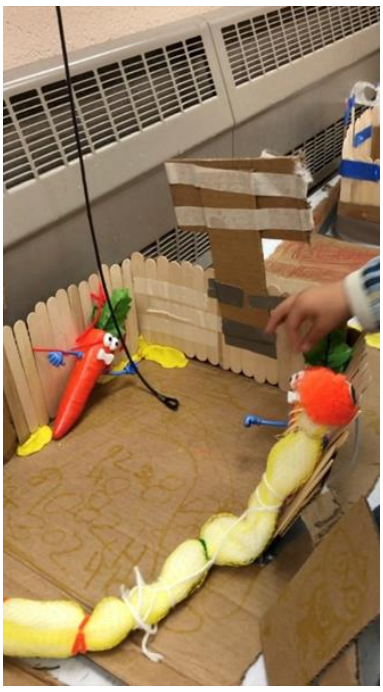


Figure 1 | *Creepy carrots construction* (Copyright by the author)

Creepy Carrots

Up to this point we had used literature as a point of entry for posing problems that the children could symbolically solve. We read the picture book Creepy Carrots, a story about spooky carrots that quite literally creep away from the carrot patch, frightening their would-be consumers, and as an engineering problem we asked the children to "build" imagined contraptions for containing the carrots using cardboard, found recycled materials, and arts and crafts supplies. During these exercises children engaged in practices and processes that looked a lot like art making activities. They drew pictures of their carrot catching contraptions with brightly coloured Crayola markers before piecing together their ideas in diorama-sized cardboard constructions. To create these miniature monuments to imagination they cut bright coloured and different textured fabrics to fashion nets that might ensnare creeping carrots and glued sparkly gems to popsicle sticks with marker drawings to represent search lights and motion detecting lights. As an early childhood art educator and researcher, these works could have easily been valued for their artistic qualities but often were valued as feats of engineering ingenuity.



Figure 2 | *Drawings of children's Creepy Carrot capturing contraptions* (Copyright by the author)

Questions from the Kite Project

Conversely, the kite project began as a question of how one might begin with materials and in particular the rich artistic materials characterising artmaking. Thinking with Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind, and Kocher (2017), I considered the experiential benefits and explorative potential of working with rich materials for young children while also questioning the boundaries of art. I approached the group wondering if we might direct the children towards an exploration of rich art materials. Interestingly, and probably indicative of their status, refinement, and expense, these materials were not treated as STEM inquiry by the researchers like the school art materials were.

We agreed that students should explore liquid watercolour on fine rice paper. I mentioned that rice papers are lightweight and resilient and wondered if there might be a way to consider the material across disciplines. We settled on making kites – I believed this is where our inquiry practice fell apart. Upon further study I realized that this shift was seismic; it was the underlying fault that undid our work as progressive Reggio-inspired teacher-researchers. We became unmoored because we could no longer rely on the comfortable questioning practices that we had used previously that were based on delimiting children's questioning through adult-driven conversations and reliance on literacy. Rather than allow scientific inquiry to flourish through children's guided questioning, we tightened up, turning to even more regimented teacher-centred practices that largely left the children out of the learning process.





Figures 3 & 4 | *Examples of children's expressive explorations with watercolour, rice paper, and oil pastels* (Copyright by the author)

The children's initial interaction with the watercolour and rice paper was largely expressive and explorative. Children were able to consider which materials and what content they would like to express. It was largely after the children explored their own lines of flight through their expressive mark-making practices that we left children out of the process of their education. Rather than involving them in considering what could be done with their works, we had predetermined what their art works would be. This folly echoes our earlier practice of pre-determining or delimiting their work by our imperative that we name it engineering, mathematic, and science. Rather than deciding that children would make kites, we could have asked the children if they wanted to make something else out of the paper art works. We could have led with questions or posed a problem that children might have solved like we did in their previous projects. We were so anxious about determining what was next for their future learning and futures that we stifled them.

When it came to the engineering part of the project, we broke this into separate disciplines. The first involved a discussion of lift followed by a hands-on materials exploration

of paper as it intersected with the force of upward-moving air simulated by a box fan. Here, the children's experimentation was encouraging as they explored various papers and materials through an engineering lens that considered how each of the different materials was suspended or was lifted by the force of the air. Looking at the footage of this playful inquiry, the potential to build deeper understanding of the material through other perspectives and approaches is palpable and encouraging but was largely left unaddressed.

Symmetry

After the children's engineering exploration of lift, the researchers then spent hours cutting out black and white copies of animals (mostly insects and birds) and airplanes in order to illustrate symmetricality as an engineering concept of flight. Here we didactically told children to fold their insects into two parts in order to learn the term symmetrical, which we taught in such a way that they could use the word, that they might even identify the visual aspects of symmetry but not in an explorative way that might connect these concepts to inquiry or practice. In other words, rather than ask children to solve the problem of making paper fly and risk the possibility of failure, we tried instead to illustrate flight for students in ways that did not necessarily translate into deep understanding of the concepts we were trying to teach and that certainly did not translate into the children's ability to engineer a kite through their own problem- solving practices. Looking back, I wonder why we were not able to extend the explorative practices begun during the children's earlier imaginative planning activities, in their explorative expressive mark making with the liquid watercolours and oil pastels, and when they tested the notion of lift.



Figure 5 | *Learning about symmetry* (Copyright by the author)

We were anticipating rather than exploring, naming the problem before we had one. So why didn't we ask children to answer the questions, "Can you make this paper fly?", "How do you make something fly?", or "Can you build something that can fly using XY&Z?" I believe that we tightened up because we were in new territory, and because we had predetermined that we would make kites, thus objectifying knowledge, education, and our practice. Our lead researcher had not done flight before and all the STEAM/STEM activities we had performed were "theoretical" (they didn't really need us to do anything). Children were asked to plan, to create, and to imagine, but they weren't asked to test, to assess, to criticise, or to troubleshoot in an actual space. What is especially interesting is that, in this theoretical space, here too is where the disciplines remain separate, discrete, and neat; they resist the messiness of embodied, educational practices that slip away from our discrete understandings and systems of naming, dividing, and predetermining.

The Sumptuousness of Children's Art and Rich Materials

I also believe that others in the research group noticed the specialness of the students' work. The richness of the materials and the art works begs them not to be wasted and calls attention to their sumptuousness. Certainly, this also could have been palpable and a reason to become precious, cautious, to slip back into the controlled discreteness of teacher-centred control and the mitigation of educational risk.

The rice paper creations the children made were just that, sumptuous. Given the fact that this school was one of many in the region that served students of a certain socio-economic designation, and like many in the region, this school did not have art classes. The children rose to the opportunity to explore and experience the exercise of their expressive languages of brightly coloured liquid watercolours, water soluble oil pastels, soft watercolour paintbrushes, and resilient rice paper, creating varied and considered original works. Despite my concerns over our less-than-ideal and certainly adult-driven notions of knowledge, the children's kites successfully flew and we and the children were rewarded with a beautiful clear spring day with enough wind that the children could test and experience running slightly ahead of their coloured kites and the whisper and tug of wind on the string as their kites took flight.



Figure 6 | *Children flying the kites they made* (Copyright by the author)

Concluding Thoughts

It is easy to draw attention to what is widely known by early childhood educators, or at least those versed in the pedagogies of Reggio Emilia or those like it: that young children don't see the world as discrete, separate disciplines of knowledge. That our work was adult-centred and wrong-headed. That, as teachers and researchers of early childhood, the project was flawed to begin with. It is easy to criticise our mending of these fractured disciplinary separations, but my hesitancy is led by two considerations. The first is that the spirit of inclusion was important to the STEAM research team and that efforts to collaborate and to consider interdisciplinarity are in the spirit of learning from and with others. That these spaces are necessary might tell us something about the impoverishment of the adult world we are so eager to prepare children to enter. Second, despite our knowledge of progressive early education, we were initially blind to the paradox of creating an integrated curriculum for early learners. Initially, I believed that this argument of creating a language to justify what children do in terms of disciplines to be only a part of the school pushdown on early childhood, but later I came to realize that, despite our understanding of children's holistic views, we as researchers hold impartial and highly discrete pockets of knowledge, that we work from a set of practices that are more often than not identified, justified, and given credence within discrete fields and boundaries of knowledge that limit and discipline us.

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Holistic Pedagogy for Uncertain Times

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Abstract

Post pandemic contexts have shown how important social and emotional learning has become for our students. In schools, where interconnectedness is experienced as a sense of belonging, it is evident that a holistic approach to being, to teaching arts and doing arts research can be a powerful healing tool for school communities and our students' lives. In this paper the author narrates her experience teaching a graduate art education arts-based research course with students who also are in-service art teachers in preK-12 schools. The conceptual models of intuitive inquiry, holistic pedagogy, and tenets of transformative education demonstrate how conducting research using a holistic pedagogy through arts has shown to foster inner growth and transformative development in graduate students who recognized also how it illuminated new qualities in their own teaching.

Keywords: holistic pedagogy, transformative education, intuitive inquiry, arts research, interconnectedness

Holistic Pedagogy for Uncertain Times

We live in uncertain times. The sense that we are living in an age of destruction calls for reorienting our human "ways of being here". As an art education professor preparing young artists for the teaching profession, also encountering them as in-service art teachers working towards advanced degrees, I am deeply concerned about the widening distance between what we know and feel is beneficial and soul-expanding for students, and a school system that normalises instrumental rationality, individualism, and competition. We need a paradigmatic shift. In the words of Cain and Nislev (2018), we need "an ideal 'counter-curriculum'; the universe, humanity, and the common good connected via art as a means of transformation" (p. 472). John Baldacchino (2018) suggests that we need to "unlearn what we are forced to grow into, or indeed to become" (p. x).

In a conversation about healing, Vivek Murthy (2023) suggested that "to heal is about making whole" (p. 4), and to feel whole, we must remember that we fundamentally are interconnected social beings. "The ramifications of not being connected could not be more profound. We have evolved to live in connection with one another" (p. 8), and I will add, without a connection with the planet and its life, we cannot survive.

In schools, interconnectedness is experienced as a sense of belonging. Post pandemic contexts have shown how important social and emotional learning has become for our students. To many art teachers, it is evident that a holistic approach to being, to teaching arts and doing arts research can be a powerful healing tool for school communities and our students' lives.

Guided by the question, "what kind of arts research practices and pedagogy would enable us to reflect and respond effectively to the difficulties of our time?", in this paper I narrate my experience teaching a graduate art education arts-based research course with students who also are in-service art teachers. Using the conceptual models of intuitive inquiry, holistic pedagogy, and tenets of transformative education, I briefly identify key aspects of conducting research using a holistic pedagogy through arts and examine how the approaches to inquiry that inspired my work, have shown to foster inner growth and transformative development in students.

As I introduce this research, I include reflections that my colleague and collaborator Catherine Rosamond and I collected after students had graduated and taken some distance from the course. The result of this early survey suggests that students' experience of the inquiry process translates as insights that support their own students' understanding of art's capacity for meaning-making, empathy, connections, and self-knowledge (Bourgault & Rosamond, 2023; Barton & Garvis, 2019).

I designed this team-taught online course in 2019. Early on, we noted several students' emphasis on the heuristic, affective and intuitive dimensions of inquiry in their

approach to project development. It is not that they avoid logical and empirical knowledge, which is how they have been educated to think of research, but allowed to do so, they discover many ways to think otherwise qualitatively. As Saldaña (2015) proposes, one can "think connectively, complexly, symbolically, emotionally, emphatically, intuitively, and artistically" (cited in Klein, 2019, p. 77).

Focusing on intuitive inquiry does not displace rational and conceptual thinking. Sometimes, students struggle with their tendency to think in binaries, having to reconcile hard data with soft intuition, and resisting the discomfort of ambiguity. However, once the rational structure of their research can *dialogue* with their intuitive processes, their artistic inquiry reveals a broader third space of knowing, "a space of uncertainty, but potent with new understandings" (Klein, 2019, p. 79)). More specifically, as explained by McKay and Sappa (2020), arts-based research or artistic inquiry extends access to ways of knowing beyond conceptual or propositional knowledge where felt and experiential knowledge accompanies the symbolised and practical.

Intuitive Inquiry

Intuitive inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011) as a conceptual framework, emerged in the 1970s from transpersonal psychology. As a holistic method, the framework broadens ways of knowing for social sciences students. Intuitive inquiry seeks to "balance structure and flexibility, exterior and interior, reason and emotion, thinking and feeling, discernment and holism" (p. 16).

I discovered intuitive inquiry as I sought to put a name on the phenomenological tendencies that we noticed in the research approaches taken by our graduate students, as they developed their thesis projects. Like Anderson and Braud's (2011) observed before us, we noted a connection with the "four elemental gestures" of phenomenological investigation that came so naturally to our students. These four gestures are described as follow:

a) the gesture of letting go, slowing down, and of interior self-collection.
b) the gesture of connection with a person, object, problem, or situation.
c) the gesture of listening with senses and awareness open and attentive.
d) the intuition itself.

(Petitmengin-Peugeot, 1999; cited in Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 21)

Holistic Pedagogy

In *The Holistic Curriculum*, John Miller (2019) explains how holistic education creates relationships that restore balance. One of them is the necessity of validating intuition, what he sees as direct knowing and of reinstating a balance with our current education's emphasis on linear thinking.

In their paper about holistic pedagogy, Mahmoudi, et al. (2012) reflected on the findings of a UNESCO survey. Their report qualifies and expands on the meaning of what they called the *Four Pillars of Learning* in holistic education. The first pillar, *Learning to Learn*, the authors describe as "empowering the attributes of consciousness to exercise skills such as paying attention, listening, perceiving, and developing curiosity, intuitiveness, and creativity" (p. 182). *Learning to do*, implies "learning to change society through intelligence and responsible action"(p. 182) and *Learning to Live Together* is described as,

> Learning to live responsibly, respecting, and cooperating with other people and, in general, with all the living organisms on the planet. (…) The fundamental principle of this pillar of learning is interdependence, that is, knowledge of the network of life. (p. 182)

In the fourth pillar, *Learning to Be* is an "encounter with the essence of oneself…. It is learning to belong to the whole. It is the discovery of our universal dimension" (p. 182). In our teaching and mentoring, we trust that focusing on the first dimensions of the UNESCO survey will lead at some point in the future to the fourth pillar, the discovery of our belonging.

Students' Experience

Initially, the course was conceived to provide our graduate students/art teachers with the open-ended potential of artistic approaches to qualitative inquiry. We observed how their daily life is preoccupied with standards, assessments, and accountability norms. We noted the need to expand their approaches to research and ways of knowing that would allow for a surfacing of the invisible and the intangible, what Anderson and Braud (2011) describe as "an expansion of the empirical" (p. 3). As I already mentioned, we welcome forms of artistic inquiry that explore embodied, perceptual, intellectual, emotional, intuitive, and spiritual realities. Students start with a question that often focuses on a topic applicable to their teaching practice. As they explore the literature and reflect upon their intellectual discoveries through art making and journaling, the process takes them inward—it becomes reflexive and embodied.

In their research, our students use diverse strategies such as autobiographical and autoethnographic inquiry, poetry, phenomenological approaches, a/r/tography, and multimodal forms of artistic expression. With time, we became curious about the way that the holistic values of these processes could transfer from our in-service teachers to their young school students whose needs for social justice, for an awareness of their "inter-being, togetherness, compassion, and a cooperative future" (Comparative & International Education Society, 2023), have never been greater.

We gathered insights from revisiting our past students' research, particularly the research journals they share with us on a weekly basis and considered our emerging

longitudinal data by contacting alumni with whom we have kept in touch, asking them simply in what ways their learning experience in the research capstone course might "show up" *in their teaching practice* after they had completed the course.

When reading through the results of our alumni's answers we identified two strong threads. The first thread showed that they recognized that the experience of committing to an arts-based and holistic approach to research contributed to personal internal change and transformation, sometimes identified as better self-confidence, a sense of being more in touch with oneself, of a greater understanding of the modalities of expression, and a deeper sense of presence and beingness.

For example, Paige wrote:

> My awareness and confidence in how I see and connect thoughts and ideas have been awakened, enlightened, and enhanced …. Because of this, I am in constant access to the space [I created] within the course: in my own work, the ways in which I connect with students, and also pedagogically speaking. I am more in touch with myself. I can anchor my artist self to my teacher self. There is a necessary oneness. (P. Valente, personal communication, January 2023)

In McKay and Sappa's (2020) work, the authors observed that "arts lead teachers to see, think and act differently from conventional thought and practice as well as from the way an individual is used to seeing, thinking and acting" (p. 33).

From the statements our alumni have shared with us, we observe that,

> The embodied nature of the artistic reflective experiences and the activation of different neural pathways to include emotional as well as cognitive responses … allowed [them] to explore, reflect, understand, synthesise, and then re-present their teaching philosophies. (Grushka & Goodlad, 2013, cited in McKay & Sappa, 2020, p. 33).

More specifically, we were happy to see that these inner transformations translated to a change in our students' teaching and pedagogy which was the second thread. Their responses spoke of a greater ability to help their students become self-aware and trust their inner voices. One respondent says: "I am able to guide my students on a path of discovery and support independent thinking to generate awareness, connectedness, and ideas" (P. Valente, personal communication, January 2023).

Another student mentioned how she had grown more attentive to different learners and their needs. By supporting each student's emotional and social needs she also provided support for healing and coping. Her research had included a mindfulness practice as she studied the topic of "trauma and its connection to artists and art making as well as the concept of art as therapy" (K. McKenna, personal communication, January 2023).

Kayla wrote:

> Since my research experience, I have been struck with many moments where [it] has come into play in my teaching. I have also seen the art room become a necessary place for students who often struggle in other areas of school and then come to life in this space - differentiating the instruction for the individual has allowed students to see where art fits into their life and how it can be beneficial for their healing and coping strategies. (K. McKenna, personal communication, January 2023).

Art therapy strategies were also on Joanna Dumond's mind when she reflected on the impact the course and her research process had on her teaching.

> My research in this course has inspired me to seek out more of the psychological aspects in art making and how art therapy techniques can be employed in an art classroom without being intrusive. It has also inspired me to seek more information on storytelling and performance. (J. Dumond, personal communication, June 2023).

Through her artistic investigations, Joanna imagined possibilities for a holistic approach to arts integration in her school. In her research project, which involved the study of Acadian historical myths and legends, the land on which she grew up and still lives, she fabricated objects connected to these legends. She wrote a fictional story entangled with her memories and in which she revisited her childhood through a meditative play-performance. She had noticed that when "playing at making a wish come true…the visualisation creates a new reality in which healing can occur" (J. Dumond, personal communication, June 2023). Joanna concluded that her research project had been a healing process. "It makes me a better teacher" (J. Dumond, personal communication, June 2023).

Some of the pedagogical strategies employed by our former students in their research project provided them with fresh approaches to create community in their own classroom. Leah spoke of hive-minded efforts, teaching students to help each other.

> Students all spend time with each other's topics and help to build up one another's resource banks with large-scale brainstorms in the beginning of the year and periodically revisit topics in order to prevent burnout and expand conversations and make connections. (L. Ellert, personal communication, January 2023).

It is an early stage for this research, and the survey was only sent to a selective group of past students whom we thought were fully committed to artistic research. While we were not expecting anything specific in their responses, we were aware of the internal transformations that were taking place when these students were enrolled in our course. What we did not know was that after a few years completing their research projects, the process of transformation initiated in arts-based research continued to simmer internally, and expanded, inspiring their teaching practices in unexpected ways.

What we have started to uncover further confirms that any meaningful learning that *stays* with the learner is indeed holistic.

Conclusion: Longing for connections

The question at the root of my current research focused on how the knowledge that arts inquiry and artistic pedagogies can become a bridge to re-learn, to reflect and respond effectively to the difficulties of our time.

The idea that connections are essential to our wellbeing is not new. Feeling the depth of our loss, it seems that deep down, parents, educators, artists, all know that we have lost sight of something elemental. Some call it soul. In 2007, Rita Irwin wrote,

> For those who are longing for something more, moving from our roles to our souls means giving attention to our need for connections within ourselves, and with others, and especially with something higher within the universe. (p. 1401)

It takes bravery to talk about the soul in academia. We use terms like holism and interconnectedness, and we mean spirit and soul. For scholars of contemplative pedagogy, connection and inclusion are fundamental principles. Garbutt and Roenpagel (2018) suggest that transformation results from "an education of inner significance as well as one of outer concerns" (Hart, 2009, cited in Garbutt, M. & Roenpagel, 2018, p. 4). This transformation will come as a "direct experience of the interrelatedness of people, environment and the universe that will help develop a 'commitment to the whole" (Anthony, 2008, cited in Garbutt & Roenpagel, 2018, p. 4). This foresight must become the embodiment of what we teach and how we live.

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Empathy and Awareness for Yellow: An Aesthetic Inquiry Approach

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Abstract

The author discusses the pedagogical divide between standards-based fixed curriculum and emergent arts-based inquiries in New Mexico, USA public preschools. Illustrated through an in-depth study, a collaborative, emergent inquiry of a single colour, yellow, promotes empathy and caring in the everyday lives of young children. To structure the study, the dynamic phases of a reflective planning cycle were employed: observation, documentation, collaborative reflection, planning, and relaunching. Heightened observations through visual arts experiences called attention to yellow's unique qualities, identity, and connections to our world. The children and educators developed a sense of empathy toward yellow as a colour representing change and transformation. A more complex image of the curriculum is reimagined in early childhood settings.

Keywords: early childhood art education, aesthetic inquiry

Empathy and Awareness for Yellow: An Aesthetic Inquiry Approach

Bauhaus artist and colour theorist Josef Albers often spoke of the elements of art – in particular, colours and materials as living beings in relationship with each other. “They should know about each other,” “should pay attention to each other, “should not exist for themselves,” they should learn to “cooperate,” “should integrate,” “should get along,” “they should help each other.” One of my favourite quotes from Albers has influenced my own thinking regarding colours and relationships: “Respect the other material, or colour—or your neighbour. Respect the one you weren’t paying attention to” (Horowitz, 2011). My presentation is a reflecting back and filling in the gaps of a story that was shared for an InSEA publication (Coutts, 2022), *Learning through the Arts: International Pictures of Practice,* regarding an emergent study of relationships, empathy, and awareness through yellow with 4-5-year-old children in a New Mexico public school. Albers' philosophy for studying colours and materials is remarkably like our pedagogical approach that utilizes “reciprocal relationships,” the terminology used by educators from Reggio Emilia to describe collaboration among all participants – children and educators (Rinaldi, 2021). Through reciprocal relationships, there is a back-and-forth between individual and group thinking and the concept that one learns about oneself and the world as an interactive process.

An Aesthetic Inquiry Approach: The Living Curriculum

The project, *A Study of Awareness and Empathy: Where Did All the Yellow Go* (Yu & Bliss, 2022), shared with you today represents a different time in the New Mexico public schools preschool program, a time when young children and educators were given the freedom to construct arts-based inquiries, a time before a commercially prescribed curriculum was purchased and imposed as mandated in classrooms, and a time when the visual art teacher, meaning myself, had an integral role in the collaborative emergent curriculum processes of the school. Preschool children, 4–to 5-year-olds, were relatively new to being housed in New Mexico elementary schools, a state-funded program that began in 2010 (Yu, 2021). This presentation reflects on a time when play and exploration were valued as learning. Every year since, the gap between play and academic learning has narrowed, and school for 4–5-year-olds looks more and more like school for 10-year-olds.

New Mexico is consistently designated as in last place, 50th in the U.S. regarding Child well-being (Annie Casey, 2023). In response, the state government has placed the burden on young children and educators to catch up to the rest of the country- to fill the metaphorical gap by imposing mandated prescribed commercially produced curricula that claim to be research-based. According to Moss & Urban (2021), this global trend is an emphasis on the economic benefits of early childhood education, where additional funding places value on standardization and monitoring ‘quality’ through what is referred to as evidence-based outcomes that view learning through the lens of children's development in

individualistic, linear, and seemingly predictable ways. The U.S. favoured particularly poorly in an international study *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's International Early Learning and Child Well-being Study* (OECD). "Despite being a rich country and producing copious research and publications on early childhood education and care, which the OECD reports rely on heavily, early childhood policy and provision in the USA and the conditions of young children in that country are poor" (Moss & Urban, 2020, p.166). In my area, state politicians have created longer school days, even for young children, so there is more time for standard-based and academic skills, such as reading and math. The inadequacies stemming from poverty, homelessness, and lack of affordable healthcare equate to less creativity in curricula.

I share this story with you today as I often do, through presentations and publications as documentation of a lived curriculum, as what is possible through a pedagogical approach that values reciprocal relationships, where visual art teachers, children, and educators learn about themselves through and with each other. I refer to the arts-based approach co-constructed alongside children and teachers as an aesthetic inquiry that values questions, uncertainty, divergent pathways, and messiness over product-driven individualistic artmaking (Macintyre Latta & Baer, 2010; Vecchi, 2010). This feminine art pedagogical approach leans into solidarity, empathy, and grace, which my co-teachers and I take inspiration from the Reggio Emilia *atelierista* Vea Vecchi and the other women educators of Reggio Emilia, Italy (Vecchi, 2010).

We did not set out the school year, intending to study colours. However, within the first few weeks of the 2017 school year, Mary, the preschool classroom teacher, noticed that the children's paintings were absent of yellow. In addition, the yellow watercolour and tempera paints seemed to have disappeared. Yellow seemed to be used the most compared to the other colours or was mixed in with other colours, losing its identity in the process. Mary brought this to my attention. What could easily have been overlooked as a common occurrence in early childhood classrooms became a line of inquiry, a divergent pathway that inspired further investigation.



Figure 1 | *The absence of yellow* (Copyright by the author)

As the school district's only early childhood visual arts teacher, I visited over ten preschool classrooms weekly for short sessions. The role of the early childhood visual art teacher is often seen as frivolous, non-existent, or, in my situation, limited interactions through once-a-week visitations. My weekly visits to the classroom were hardly enough to support the immersive art experiences that young children deserve. I also wasn't interested in supporting an image of the artist as an expert and that artmaking could only occur when I was in the room (Yu, 2021). Instead, as an act of solidarity and trust, the classroom teachers and I co-constructed an emergent curriculum in phases represented as a reflective planning cycle: **observation, documentation, collaborative reflection, planning, and relaunching**.

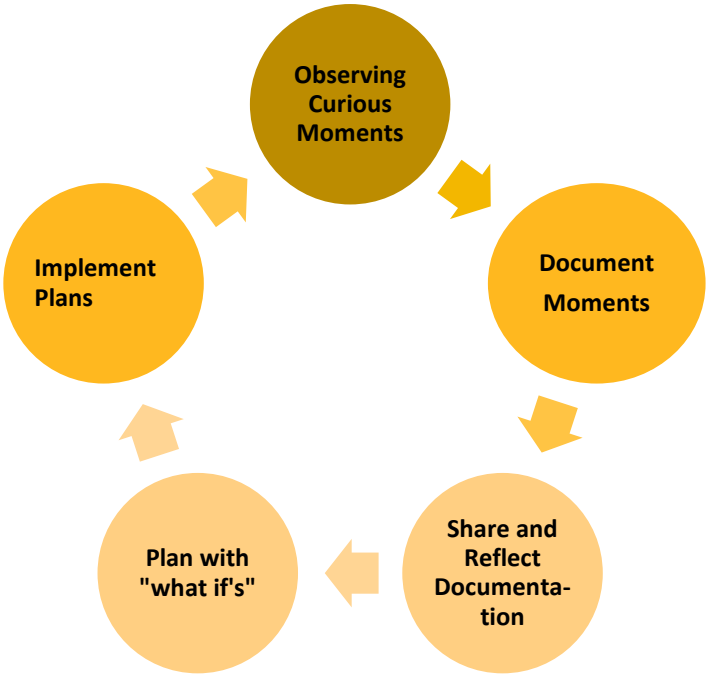


Figure 2 | *Reflective process and planning with what if's* (Copyright by the author)

The cycle reflects the aesthetic inquiry process, a process of "what if's," and embracing uncertainty. Mary and I worked together to reflect on documentation collected from the classroom in person at the end of the school day, sometimes through email communications or phone calls – as a way of listening to children – which then allowed us to create suggestions, possibilities, and encounters with materials and ideas that could keep an interest in motion, when I was not in the classroom. These initial choices were not fixed determinations of what would happen. Rather, the children's unique responses informed the next steps.

Pausing and reflecting on the possibilities of the next steps, Mary and I wondered if studying the identity of yellow would lead to a deeper understanding of its contributions to the world. As such, the first steps involved stepping outside the classroom to search for all the places yellow existed within the school environment. In this search, we saw that yellow is essential to providing direction through lines and signs but is also found in the natural world.

Next, the children searched within the classroom for yellow objects. Compositions were created of found yellow objects. While placing yellow objects next to objects of other colours, the identity of each became more visible. It is common in early childhood artmaking experiences that the element of colour is isolated and disconnected from relational and symbolic meanings. Colour becomes reduced to isolated activities like eating snacks the colour of yellow, everyone wearing yellow clothing, etc. etc However, *atelierista* Vea Vecchi (2010) states, "It is different to let colours express their different identities in complex, subjective relationships with children," (p. 30). We wondered how we could draw attention to the complexities of yellow as represented through different material explorations. During my visits, Mary and I often broke the children into smaller groups to allow for divergence of experiences. Learning groups promote reciprocal relationships, where unique identities contribute to co-constructed meaning-making.

The children and I explored a range of mark-making materials in the art studio, including oils, pastels, coloured pencils, chalk, and watercolours. As children encountered the materials, they began to create their own understanding of yellow's unique qualities and potential.

Lily: The chalk is fuzzy. It makes a lot of yellow. It is foggy. This one is so light.

Devin: It gets all over my hand. The chalk is light. The oil pastel is dark.

Andrew: If you paint over the makers, it turns yellow. You should try this!



Figure 3 | *Comparing and contrasting different yellow materials* (Copyright by the author)

Each material highlighted yellow's distinct attributes. Comparing and contrasting allowed us to discover that no two yellows were alike, just as no two children are alike.

Collaboration: Reciprocity with Two Colours

Mary organised a small group experience, inviting the children to paint with yellow tempera paint and a large piece of paper. The children began by working alongside each other, yet individually. Each child developed a relationship with the colour yellow. Yellow brought to life the children's individuality and imaginations through representation of their favorite subject matters.

Ana: I made Minnie Mouse.

Chloe: I'm making a rainbow.

Ronald: It's a dinosaur.

Hannah: It's a person.

Jay: I make yellow.

Caught up in the moment, Mary quickly decided to introduce another colour. What would happen if orange joined yellow on the paper? As a surprise, Mary introduced another colour to the children's work. **Ana:** Yellow and orange and white. It turned into a very pretty colour. It turns to orange now. It is back to orange. Ice cream cone yellow. It is smooth.



Figure 4. | *Yellow changes orange. Orange changes yellow* (Copyright by the author)

Soon, the whole paper was covered. The children worked side by side, collaboratively, to fill all the spaces with the new colour combination. As the children mixed the paint, they discovered that yellow changed orange and orange changed yellow. Together, the colours worked together to create something new.

Relaunching a new idea: Yellow in transformation - aesthetic inquiry

An emergent aesthetic inquiry approach is organic in nature. I consider this like what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) referred to as a rupturing in the rhizome, which occurs when "lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is always part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another" (p. 9). It grows and then hibernates and grows again. As educators, we can plan experiences for young children, but what happens when these plans are shared with children for their response? Sometimes, a study might pause, always existing beneath the surface, and then emerge in a new way.

The investigation of yellow took a break while children became interested in other areas. However, as the colours of the leaves started changing to bright yellows outside, the children noticed the transformative properties of yellow in nature, "the leaves are changing," they would often shout while on the playground. For our next encounter with yellow, I brought a small group of children outside to gather and investigate natural yellow materials from the environment. There were lots of leaves that had fallen to the ground as the seasons were changing. Yellow is not confined to manufactured colours that lack the sensory qualities found in nature. I had no specific direction for the outside exploration. I brought outside a large piece of paper, metates, and glue. Using their hands, the children explored the textures of yellow. They tore, crushed, and manipulated the materials on a large sheet of paper, allowing us to notice the subtle and striking differences in the textures and colour variations. This memory is fixed in my brain as an embodied and relational experience – messy, at times uncomfortable, while also joyful laughter, relating to the full body, all the senses – smell, touch, and sound.

Reflection: Bringing the outdoor experience inside

Creating a space for children to listen and respond to each other's thoughts, reflections, and theories is an important aspect of emergent aesthetic-based inquiry. Mary and I projected the images taken outdoors on a large screen so the larger group could revisit the experience together. Working together, Mary and I facilitated a large group conversation that revealed the children's theories regarding the transformational qualities of the natural yellow materials. The origin of the word conversation is *turning with* (Gurteen, 2023), reflecting the dynamic exchange of ideas shared among the children during the 45-minute conversation. One can notice an aesthetic quality to the conversation when read aloud with others, reflecting the relationships, and an "empathy relating the Self to things and things to each other" (Vecchi, 2010, p. 5). I began the conversation by asking, "What do you notice about the different yellows?" while Mary recorded the conversation.



Figure 5 | *Assemblage of yellows* (Copyright by the author)

Carl: Cause they're dying. The brown ones are dying. When they're brown, they die. I learned that in my magazine. When they're brown, they are super dead. Yellow is almost dying.

Maria: They were a different green in the trees before they got red.

Carl: That leaf looks different than on there (pointing from the screen to the paper). It goes darker, darker, darker.

Kami: This one turned light to orange.

Lily: They change colour because of the sun. The sun makes the leaves turn yellow and the wind makes the leaves die at night.

Terry: They grow step by step.

Jane: The leaves are light. Those leaves are dark.

Gigi: How do you think the light changed to dark?

Lily: They changed. That is how God made it in this world.

Ana: They changed colour, but they are the same one.

Tim: Jesus was changing them out of colours.

Maria: Like the lizards change colours.

Roger: Lizards change colours because some of them camouflage.

Tim: All of the colours are mixing. They are getting yellow to yellow to yellow. The leaves are falling into the sky and then they are dying.

Roger: The leaves are falling down and dying. They are going back to heaven and then they have to come back to fix them.

Lily: The leaves are going to turn yellow. I have a ladybug at my house and the leaves turn yellow.

Laura: (turns to Lily), I like what you said.

Vana: The yellow leaves are so beautiful, and I touched them softly.

Dominic: They go to heaven, and they grow new.

The context for studying the complexities of yellow that was co-constructed with the children offers a lived experience of respect and empathy that has great potential to influence their way of being in the world. However, this story does not end there. A turn of events brought our relationship, children, artist, and teacher, to a close. A few months later, the public-school administrator of the early childhood program declared that we needed to fill the gap, and the children needed to catch up with the rest of the country. Presumably, this could only be done through a prepackaged curriculum purchased from a company that proclaims false certainties.

Rather than seeing curriculum as a journey, with reciprocity among teachers, children, and the local place in mind, the curriculum became an object. This view of early childhood curriculum is undoubtedly found throughout the globe. It reflects a disregard for the value of aesthetic inquiry in young children's lives, as Vecchi describes it, as "freedom of thought" (as cited in Cooper, 2012, p. 301). The freedom to experience wonder, sustain curiosity, and to learn from and with each other is increasingly absent. While children should be at the heart of schooling, it is ironic that they are often not visible or heard. How do we encourage politicians and administrators to "Respect the one you weren't paying attention to," as Albers proclaimed?

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A “Way of Seeing”: Constructing the Meaning of Images Through Walking Practices and Visual Diaries

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Abstract

The original idea starts with the idea of J. Berger’s book *Ways of Seeing* where he claimed that “every image embodies a way of seeing; our perception or appreciation of an image depends also upon our own way of seeing.” This paper presents a learning strategy in art education using walking practices and visual diaries as a learning issue or creative task. The popular method of creating visual blogs (creating visual texts, stories, personal drawings, analysing the images and artworks,) develops students’ visual literacy and artistic thinking, allowing them to express their experiences, feelings and thoughts in a visual and creative way. Berger argues, that “we never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relationship between things and ourselves.” According to this, students learn to recognize and interpret the objects, images, and symbols, discover the multiple meanings and express their thoughts. The aim of the walking practices and visual diary methods is to construct meaning and conceptualize the aesthetic and visual experience of everyday life and discover their “way of seeing”.

Keywords: art education, visual literacy, walking practices, visual diaries, meaning-making, experiential learning, visual culture

A "Way of Seeing":

Constructing the Meaning of Images Through Walking Practices and Visual Diaries

John Berger's book, *Ways of Seeing*, written in 1972, discussed how we see and understand art, what is the meaning of the artworks and images around us and how our knowledge and experience change the way we see things are still relevant in today's context. He wrote "...in no other form of society in history has there been such concentration of images, such destiny of visual messages" (p. 129), and "usually it is we who pass the image – walking, travelling, turning a page..." (p. 130).

The development of literature in art education highlights the focus on visual culture, social and cultural contexts, environment, technological issues and presents different approaches to learning about and through the art. The visual culture paradigm turns our attention towards all images, surrounding us in contemporary society and offers different ways of understanding the visual culture (Mirzoeff, 1998, 1999; Mitchell,1994; Roggof, 1998; Howells, Negreiros, 2012; Rose, 2012). According to Mirzoeff (1999), "visual culture directs our attention away from structured, formal viewing settings, like the cinema and art gallery to the centrality of visual experience in everyday life" (p. 7). We often do not record and think about the meanings of images that affect us and what influence they have on our understanding and perception. It is recognized visual literacy is an essential part of today's culture and it is an important part of art education. Visual methods as a research strategy are widely used in social and cultural research, visual ethnographic studies, arts and other disciplines and visual methodologies help us understand today's complex, image-filled world (Emmison & Smith, 2000, Rose, 2001, 2012; Prosser, 2013, Banks, 2007, Pink, 2012).

Applying a critical and philosophical approach to the teaching and learning of visual culture in art education, Tavin (2003) presents three concepts related to art education: *phenomenological, substantial and pedagogical,* which allow us to describe and explain the phenomenon of visual culture, register and focus on different range of images and artefacts and understand it as an interdisciplinary pedagogical project that attempts to interpret the wealth of visual experiences (p. 202). Duncum (2010) describes seven principles (and more) for visual culture education for examining various forms of imagery and they are proposed as a way of thinking about art, experiences and curriculum. Arvedsen and Illeris (2011) present two notions within visual culture: *visual phenomena* and *visual events.* Visual events, that are situated geographically, historically, socially and culturally, "always include a certain interaction or positioning between the viewer, the watched phenomenon, the context and the gaze" and visual events "can be unfolded educationally by employing meta-reflective strategies that challenge students' preconceptions about 'natural' ways of seeing" (p. 45). Therefore, when studying the arts or participating in art education activities as teachers or students, there is a need to focus on our perceptions and appreciation and to discover our

way of seeing. Art and visual culture education help to develop rich meaning through life experience and shape our thinking about the world and leads us to create new knowledge (Freedman, 2003, p. 2).

Debates on these issues are relevant in arts studies and art teacher education where we try to develop innovative learning methods and strategies based on problem-based learning, critical and creative thinking, artistic projects, research and experiential learning, and we seek flexible ways of learning, that are engaging, motivating, creative and joyful. It is always challenging when we have limited curricula and time for arts education, and it is necessary to cover and embody the range of different concepts, skills and other issues related to studying such a complex world of art and visual culture.

In this article, I present the model of learning strategies by combining several practices, that help students discover their "way of seeing", construct meaning, conceptualize the visual experience of everyday life and generate ideas for creative practices. I apply these learning strategies when teaching art-based education courses for students to achieve learning goals, depending on course content and learning objectives. The art education study course is designed as a combination of theory, research and practice of the basis of art education and can be easily adapted for specific art education courses (school teaching, art-based research or creative practice). We draw on cross-cultural research and construct the meaning of visual experiences, applying different visual methodologies that help us understand today's complex visual world.

The aims and structure of this article cover several aspects: 1) the conceptualization of learning strategy that combines several pedagogical practices in art education such as walking, visual diaries and visual thinking to construct meaning for creative work; 2) the art education course "Art and culture" is presented, which outlines the main elements of the learning process; 3) attention is drawn to students' reflections and their learning experiences which were are developed through walking practices, visual diaries, and the artistic processes; 4) in conclusion, is discussed the broader issues of the conditions of ways of seeing and meaning construction in art practices by speculating about the potential of the combination of these methods, which can be useful in developing the experience of art education.

The Model of Learning Strategy "A Way of Seeing"

The purpose of this model is to combine and experience mixed learning methods and cross-disciplinary approaches in art education into one whole, in order to find our own *way of seeing* and discover meanings of visual environment. In the art education study course, we explore art, visual artefacts, natural environment and other images through walking practices, observation, documentation, and visual journaling that help to develop students' visual literacy and artistic thinking.

Following Berger's mind that *"we never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relationship between things and ourselves",* and "*every image embodies a way of seeing, our perception or appreciation of an image depends also upon our own way of seeing"* (p. 10), we start from the discussion: What are our ways of seeing when looking at works of art, visual objects, natural and urban environments and other visual culture images? What do we look at and what do we see? And more: How do we perceive art and visual culture and what we can learn? How do we view art considering our assumptions about culture, beauty, taste, knowledge, form, and status? How do our prior knowledge and experience change the way we see things in different contexts? How do we construct the meaning of images and how does it affect our creative decisions? What is our relationship between things and ourselves?

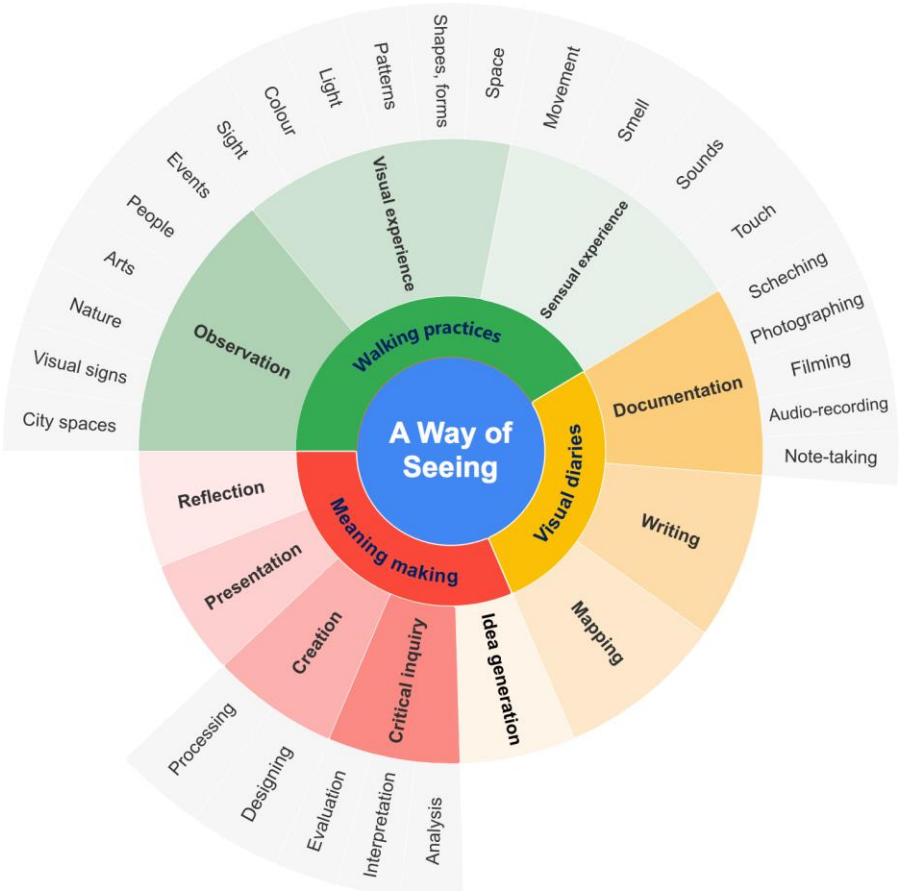


Figure 1 | *Model of learning strategy "A way of seeing"* (Copyright by Edita Musneckienė)

I apply this model of learning in my art education study course "Art and Visual Culture" usually organized for international students' groups. Students are from diverse cultures and different fields of study, and everyone has different approaches to art education. This model is universal and can be applied to mixed student groups who are not specifically art students. Nevertheless, we strive to find our own way, our own point of view and use it in our further studies or research.

Walking Practices

Walking practices are used across a variety of artistic and academic fields such as visual ethnography, geography, visual studies and arts. Artists use walking as part of their creative practice, consider walking as the central process of artistic experience or outcome, or as social practice, storytelling, mapping, or expressive act (e.g. artists Hamish Fulton, Francis Alÿs, Clare Qualmann, Carmen Papalia and others). Examples of walking art have inspired educational and arts-based research (Lasczik, et al., 2021). The concept of walking practices as a strategy of pedagogy was discussed in art and education by many authors offering various alternative ways of thinking, experiencing, experimenting and creating in art studies and education (Irwin, 2006; Pink, Hubbard, O'Neill, Radley, 2010; Horowitz, 2013; Triggs, Irwin, Leggo, 2014; Sinner, 2021; Snepvangers, Davis, Taylor, 2018; Lasczik, et al, 2021). Miles & Libersat (2016) highlight the "artistic and pedagogical potential of observation, exploration, experimental cartography, all of which emerge when critical walking and mapping connect directly with lived experience and embodied knowledge" (p. 342). Walking practices are close to environmental education, nature and human relations with nature: drawing, painting, photographing in nature and walking in nature "become ways to evoke spiritual and aesthetic responses that provoke a deeper understanding of self-creation through an active pedagogy of self" as freedom, transformation, and flow (Irwin, 2006, p. 75). Pink, Hubbard, O'Neill & Radley (2010) argue, that in studying visual forms we need to account for the other senses as well and focus attention on the kinaesthetic, mobile and sensory/felt dimensions of lived experience as well. All this provides a variety of perspectives for exploring the environment and the visual world and inspires people to forge new meanings and alternative forms of creativity.

Based on the insights of the research and the examples of walking practices we include this opportunity in our study courses as an experiential learning method outside the classroom. In our study course "Art and Visual Culture" the walking practices aim to explore art, culture and visual artefacts in the natural environment, social-cultural events and artistic settings as well. Investigation of visual artefacts and images is based on dialogue with the environment and oneself. The aim is to promote students' ability to see, feel, reflect, and understand a visual world that would stimulate creative inspiration. Students learn to look, document, discover and develop their own way of seeing.

Walking practices are organized as weekly meetings with the group, then encouraging them to practice their individual walks. Walks are based on suggested topics of the study course, but it is flexible to change according to student's interests or relevant events. During the walking practices students capture the images making photos, videos, drawings, short notes, conversations, and reflections in a group.

From the students' perspective, they enjoy learning outside the classroom and through walking practices they experience the art of walking as contemporary art practice, learn to focus on sights, objects and environment and relationships with social and cultural context and themselves. At first, it is not easy for to them recognize the "walks" as learning, creative and research practices. When sharing their reflections in a group, f.eg discussing "The image of a day" – why is this important to me? What's the meaning of it? How does it relate to society, culture and the individual? Then, after group reflections, making a plan and realizing the goals of the walk, students find this activity meaningful and interesting.

Visual Diaries

Visual diaries (or visual journals) are also a widely recognized method used in a range of disciplines and individuals. The popular method of creating visual diaries (journals, visual blogs, visual texts, stories, personal drawings), is practised by artists and in other disciplines (ethnography, history, writing). A visual diary is recognized as a method of documentation in visual research, and it is widely used in teaching and learning practices (Rose, 2016; Chaplin, 2004; Adams, 2023; Hash, et al., 2021; Redmond, 2022). The visual diary method aims to construct meaning and conceptualize the aesthetic and visual experience of everyday life.

Visual diary (journaling) could be applied in art education in several ways: for aesthetic inquiry, for research purposes or for developing creative ideas. Hash et al. (2022) in their practice use visual journals as an arts-based method, employing methods of dialogue, discussion, and exchange from expressive arts. Redmond (2022) describes visual journaling as a reflective arts-based inquiry technique, where authors use a "combination of images and words from a variety of media and materials, including paintings, drawings, doodles, magazine elements, newspaper clippings, found materials, and more" (p. 4), but it is not for creating art – visual journal is more a reflective space that authors may use to engage in active meaning-making. Loerts & Belcher (2019) state, that visual journaling "creates unique opportunities for students to be agentive in making meaning through multiple modes of communication" (p. 61). Adams (2023) presents visual journaling as a joyful, self-care practice and reflective art-making experience. It can also be a therapeutic tool, practised personally throughout life.

Exploring the "*Way of seeing*" in our course, we use the visual diary as a documentation of walking practices. The students were offered every day/week to write visual diaries in which they fix visual experiences of the suggested topics of the course throughout all their learning period. We consider a visual diary as a personal document, where students are free to express their minds individually and we do not evaluate them. The type of visual diaries is freely chosen by students – some students used hand-written notes, drawings, collages, or were transferred to digital forms: images were stored on

smartphones and computers, where video and audio materials were used. However, during learning, it is recommended to systematize the diary, supplementing it with drawings, reflective entries, emotions, and describing other sensory feelings. Some students discover the joy of writing and demonstrate excellent creative writing skills, and vice versa, some do not like writing, so they choose the audio-video diary method, some use digital technologies and apps. Our practice has shown that handwriting notes and drawings are used more by art students, for whom a diary is a tool for creative thoughts, sketches, and drawing skills. In any case, students become familiar with visual diaries as a method of art pedagogy, and sometimes even discover a pleasure and personal need to develop them further. The skills of creating visual diaries as a daily practice can be used to investigate and generate ideas, foster self-creativity, it can also be used as a personal document for mind reflection, self-empowerment, and self-awareness.

Critical Inquiry and Constructing the Meanings

By analysing the collected visual material, students learn to explore and interpret visual images critically, focusing on the form (expression), media, the content of the image, the context of representation and social factors. According to Rose (2012), to analyse and interpret visual images it is necessary to use a "critical approach", which means – taking images seriously; thinking about the social conditions and effects of visual objects; considering own way of looking at images (p. 26).

In the middle of our course, we review our visual diaries by "critical approach" and try to discover our ways of seeing. A visual diary consists of a sequence of images for each topic explored, but it is not just a set of images or a source of learning, it is important to find out the meaningful path of visual experience and create meaningful connections between objects, things, feelings and context. Banks (2007) argues that "the meaning of images changes over time as they are viewed by different audiences" and they should always be considered in contexts (p. 33).

Students work on their visual diaries analysing them and choosing one main topic of their interest, which is discovered by sorting, selecting and mapping the material, finding social and personal interactions and meanings. During the lectures, we used different exercises of creative thinking when exploring collected visual material (f.eg. mind mapping, collage, sketching, associative drawing, creative writing, and collaborative work). In the discussions, we raise the following questions: which images do I usually notice, and capture, and why? What is my aesthetic experience during the walking sessions? How does it relate to cultural and social contexts? By answering these questions, students determine the direction of their further research, focusing on one topic and developing ideas in a chosen format and visual representation.

The final phase of the course is creative tasks, when students make decisions about their final result, according to their field of study and self-directed objectives discussed at the beginning of studies. At the end of the study course, we have the final presentation (oral presentation, performative group presentation, educational activity, poster presentation, video, film, etc.). The presentations are followed by individual and group reflections. Students discuss what they learned during the course, what outcomes they reached, what challenges they met during the learning process, and how will they continue and apply their experience in their future studies and practice. As it was mentioned above, the group of students were diverse internationally and in study fields, less or more connected to art education. As a result, each student's way of seeing is different and the final results of the presentation are very varied and interesting. We see how the creative process unfolds, starting with walking and observing, developing ideas and creative discoveries.

Conclusion

The model of learning strategy *"a way of seeing"* includes several popular methods used in art education that form a coherent learning cycle. Walking practices in art education and visual diaries are relevant for learning, research, critical inquiry and creative practices, that can be widely applied at different levels of art education. The advantage of this strategy is that it is universal for different groups of students and can be easily adapted to the different abilities and needs of students. Students will discover their own way of seeing while studying art and visual culture and develop analytic and creative skills in constructing the meaning through different perspectives (cultural, historical, political, ethical, artistic, educational or personal).

Analysing students' attitudes and learning experiences, the important aspects observed during the course help us to adjust and improve the way of learning. In our courses, students liked the walking practices the most, during which they actively constructed their visual experience and participated in the group. They discovered the meaning of a visual diary, which allowed them to go deeper and explore their visual experiences and interests. The more difficult part was critical inquiry and interpretation. It required some skills and theoretical and practical training. Designing self-directive objectives and way to the final result was thus not easy, requiring analytical thinking, discipline and responsibility. It was interesting to note, that students looking at the same things have different perspectives of perception and different "ways of seeing", their critical reflections concern environmental, aesthetical and societal issues, self-identity and representation of cultures.

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The School is Dancing:
Design of Choreographic Method in the Education of Elementary School Students

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Abstract

The *School is Dancing* project is based on the premise that using the moving body as a tool for learning can enhance creativity, imagination and cognitive skills. It seeks to foster a deeper understanding of academic topics including math, physics, grammar, art and history, and responds to current challenges in primary education in the Czech Republic by providing an innovative approach to learning that can benefit both students and teachers. The aim of this project is to enable pupils to develop their creativity and critical thinking skills through movement-based learning. In this way, pupils will connect school subjects to their own experiences and find their way to what they are learning at school. The project takes inspiration from Anna Halprin's creative methodology and the artwork Planetary Dance, which incorporates the idea of a score, which I then apply in various modifications supported by art and music materials based on the topic being discussed. At the end of the project, students will present their work through a public presentation of the results, which will provide an informal space for sharing ideas, suggestions and comments. The project will take the form of case studies in three primary schools in different cities across the country.

Keywords*:* choreography, happening, elementary school education, Planetary Dance, Anna Halprin.

The School is Dancing:
Design of Choreographic Method in the Education of Elementary School Students

In the *School is Dancing* project, the basic premise centres on the idea that incorporating the moving body as a tool for learning has the potential to significantly enrich not only cognitive skills but also creativity and imagination. This innovative approach strives to transcend the traditional boundaries of education, aiming to cultivate a more profound understanding of core subjects such as mathematics, physics, language, art, history and more. One of the project's key objectives is to address contemporary challenges within primary education. By doing so, it introduces a pioneering educational methodology that stands to benefit both students and teachers alike. Unlike conventional physical education, which typically forms part of the standardized school curriculum and often emphasizes measurable performance metrics, this project distinguishes itself by prioritizing movement in a manner that is not only joyful but also profoundly creative. By engaging the body holistically, the initiative goes beyond the mere physical aspect and incorporates emotional elements into the learning process. This holistic approach acknowledges the interconnectedness of body and mind, recognizing that emotional and physical well-being are integral components of effective learning. Furthermore, the focus on joyful and creative movement fosters an environment where students can explore and express themselves freely, contributing to a positive and dynamic educational experience.

The *School is Dancing* project also underscores the importance of cultivating body awareness. By incorporating movement into the learning process, students are encouraged to develop a deeper understanding of their own bodies and how they interact with the surrounding world. This heightened awareness extends to the significance of physical contact, recognizing it as a means of communication and connection.

The *School is Dancing* project is a choreographic method and initiative that seeks to enrich traditional educational paradigms. By harnessing the power of movement, creativity, and emotional engagement, it strives to create a learning environment that not only imparts knowledge but also nurtures holistic development in students and provides a fresh perspective for educators.

The basic concept underlying the project is to enable students to develop their creativity and critical thinking skills by employing movement and dance as a pedagogical framework. Through this approach, children and adults will learn ways of abstract thinking and realise the benefits of the arts for their development. The project is designed to present specific tasks structured in a manner that transcends mere imitation or mime, encouraging participants to explore diverse meanings and interpretations through movement. Integral to the project's methodology are demonstrations, play, and mutual sharing, serving as robust components throughout the educational process. These elements contribute to a dynamic

and interactive learning environment, wherein participants are encouraged to actively engage with the material, promoting a deeper understanding of the subject matter through experiential and collaborative approaches.

The main principle is the interdisciplinary collaboration between the dancer and the teacher. It is imperative to note that the choreographer assumes a supportive role in the learning process rather than supplanting the teacher's responsibilities. Instead, the choreographer contributes novel stimuli and alternative perspectives to comprehend the educational content. At the program's commencement, the teacher delineates the learning objectives while providing an overview of the classroom's social dynamics, as the project also endeavours to cultivate a positive atmosphere and open communication, recognizing that not all students may have harmonious relationships. During the creation of the task, mutual barriers can be relaxed, and a shared experience is created. It can also help pupils to break down comparisons with each other as they will see themselves in different roles in the process than they are used to. It is essential to underscore that the choreographer's role does not entail presenting pre-determined choreography sequences; rather, their involvement centres on fostering discussion and proposing diverse movement tasks. These “movement games” are the carriers of information, it’s the educational material, which is filled by the students themselves and which, in collaboration with the choreographer, gradually becomes a joint performance, a work of art, a happening.

The educational methodology underscores the development of students' acquisition of skills in perceiving and utilizing the "body in motion" as a creative tool for cognitive processes and memory retention. Beyond its impact on intra-student relationships, the implementation of such a creative project within the school context has the potential to strengthen bonds not only among students, teachers, and parents but also between the school and the students' families. A culminating public presentation, integral to the project, provides a platform for informal sharing of opinions, suggestions, and comments, fostering a collaborative and communicative environment within the broader school community.

Planetary Dance: Exploring Movement Education Through the Model Score Concept

The *School is Dancing* project is inspired by the work and approach to choreography and society of American choreographer, artist and pioneer of postmodern dance Anna Halprin (1920-2021), who preferred basic movements to highly stylized ones in her choreographies and often used improvisation. Since the 1970s, Anna Halprin has focused on audience involvement in dance and the impact of dance on everyday life. The Planetary Dance, rooted in these principles, serves as a key influence on movement methodologies within the *School is Dancing* project, which approach is particularly shaped by Halprin’s accent on community engagement, collective collaboration, and the democratization of dance accessibility. Halprin’s work made dance accessible to every individual of all ages and

those without prior dance experience, a principle that aligns with the inclusive character of the School is Dancing project.

Planetary Dance is a ritual bringing people together to “dance for a purpose”. Participants declare a cause to which they are committed and then run, walk or simply stand in a series of concentric circles, creating a moving mandala. When everyone moves in a steady rhythm of musical instruments, they become one collective body (Planetary Philosophy, 2023). Planetary Dance incorporates the idea of a score, which the School is Dancing educational project uses in various modifications depending on the topic being discussed with students in schools.

Practical movement examples inspired by the choreographic artwork Planetary Dance

One of the practical examples that can be used in the first teacher-choreographer-student meetings is a warm-up exercise where the primary purpose of this task may be to relieve shame with a simple movement activity. First, students move to a place in the classroom where they have not yet been during lessons or breaks. Here they then take the least comfortable position and remain in that position for as long as the position is physically tolerable.

The next practical example already works with a specific mathematics lesson in the third to fourth grade of primary school, in which students practice fractions, units and geometry in the form of simple movement tasks.

1. I run to the middle of the class
2. I shrink by 1/3
3. I move 110 cm to the right
4. I turn 360°
5. I crawl on the ground 1/10 of the class
6. I finish with a cheerful jump to the left diagonal

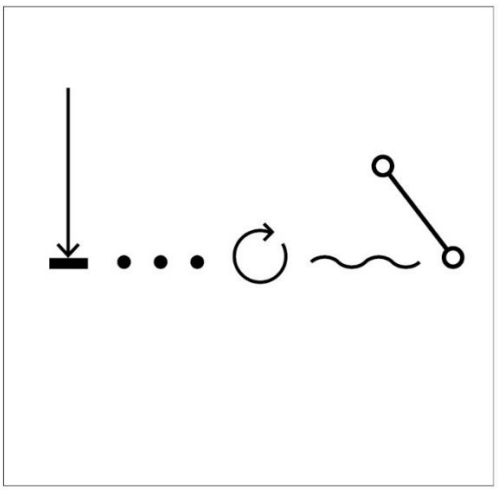


Figure 1 | *From example of graphic score for mathematics [scheme]*, T. Sikorová, 2023b. (Copyright by the author)

We can see that, in fact, a common choreography in space emerges from the individual mathematical-movement assignments. The movement is very visual and even with the graphic representation, the child can realise that the movement is not just momentary inspiration, but by plotting it there is an awareness of the movements and their body. Choreography can thus be seen as writing with movement in space.

The third example is movement exercise in a biology class, specifically anatomy, which centres on the examination of the human body. The teacher's goal is to practice the names of the different muscles, bones, and joints. This practical example is structured around three circles. Each circle has its own expressive character: verbal, physical and sensory. The outer circle is the physical part, in which the students are in pairs. One of the pair touches the other on any four joints on their body. And this means that only these joints have to move and the others remain motionless in a block. The student then freely changes the joints, blocking them or, conversely, setting them in motion. The second one can make completely random movements, but he must follow the rules of the joints. In pairs, they take turns. The middle circle is the verbal part, in which students are again in pairs. One of the pair points to a bone and the other has to name the bone. Again, they then take turns in pairs on a signal from choreographer. The inner circle is a sensory one where the students sit in a circle behind each other. Each has a paper on his back and one of them thinks of a particular part of the human body, draws that part on the back of a classmate, and the classmate, without seeing it but only feeling it on his back, sends the drawing on to the next back again in the form of a drawing. After the circle is closed, the students look together at what has been created, that is, at what has reached the end of the circle. The aim is that the students, within each circle, take turns and try everything out.

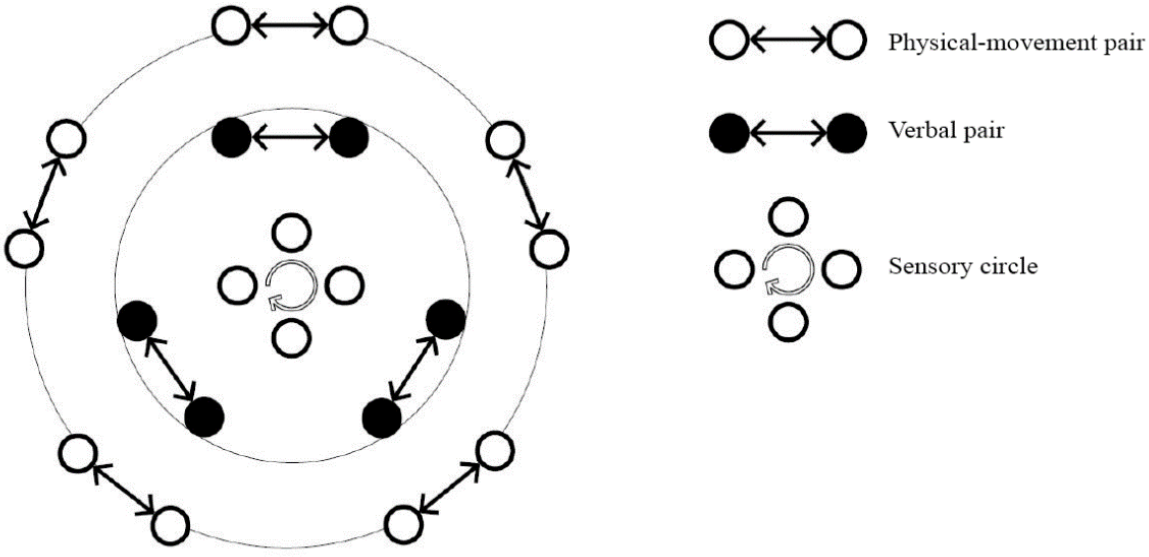


Figure 2 | *From example of graphic score for biology-anatomy [scheme],* T. Sikorová, 2023a. (Copyright by the author)

Final Presentation Format

As mentioned above, the intention of the project is also to create a public common result, a performance, a happening. In the first part of the public presentation the audience (parents, friends and other relatives) participates passively only as spectators. The students present the resulting choreography that they have created together with the choreographer and the teacher on a specific subject discussed at school. In the second part, the audience become a continuous part of the work. Within the collaborative choreography and movement, we are not looking for a goal, but rather an intention. We dance with a common intention that we can share together. The individual participates in the dance by verbally expressing a personal or general wish, and a common choreography is created, which is made up of only basic movements - a step, a moderate run, a fast run. The inner circle consists of several children with musical instruments and a musician. A simple rhythm is set which the children can master, the musician can then develop the rhythm further. The dance ends with sharing, where people are invited to relax by standing with their backs to each other and breathing. They can also verbally share their experience. Anyone can become a part of the outcome.

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Built Environment: Enhancing the Connection between Humans and their Environment

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Abstract

The paper interprets the concept of *Fault Lines* in relation to the built environment, focusing on the relationship between society and architecture. The starting assumption is that cultural changes and broader paradigm shifts can result in a disconnection between the built environment and its users. Today, we witness an increasing number of situations that reveal how living in harmony with our environment contributes significantly to both physical and mental well-being. Built environmental education and through its diverse tools and the principles of art education, can offer solutions to support the achievement of spatial congruence. The paper illustrates the previous statements with examples from various educational programs, involving children, and students in teacher training programs. The case studies presented demonstrate how built environmental education can help to re-establish this connection. The central element of these workshops is always a common building activity, which reflects on the specific spatial problem in its theme and choice of materials. Large-scale constructing activities and the resulting structures create an opportunity for immediate testing of spatial concepts and support the development of teamwork, cooperation, spatial abilities, and conscious use of space. Together, these competencies contribute to the effective processing of *Fault Lines* and spatial traumas.

Keywords: built environmental education, spatial abilities, learning by doing, learning through art

Author note

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Built Environment:
Enhancing the Connection between Humans and their Environment

The aim of built environmental education is to create a sustainable connection between the built environment and its users, responding to the diverse needs of the broad segments of society. Spatial congruence – the alignment between an individual's spatial and psychological needs and their physical environment - can only be realized if people can actively participate and contribute to the physical shaping of their own environment. Therefore, the possession of spatial abilities and spatial shaping skills is essential. By focusing on spatial needs, built environmental education can highlight complex social issues such as social inequality, migration, mixing of cultures, or inclusion. It uses a wide range of tools, from learning through art, learning-by-doing, promenadology, hands-on activities, and building workshops.

Architecture is the elemental connection between humans and the environment. It stems from the urge to find shelter to protect ourselves from the forces of nature. But we have a very special ability that makes building possible, as noted by a Hungarian architectural historian: „Humans are the only creatures among moving beings who are upright. … At the same time, verticality is the command of gravity, the very basic condition of all constructions." (Istvánfi, 2010)

As humans began to build, they created structures with different purposes: protective, defensive and religious functions, or even for the purpose of creating community spaces. Architecture adapted to all types of landscapes, circumstances, cultures and people shaped their constructions to their own image; thus, verticality remained an important factor in architecture.

Architectural history and the constant change of architectural styles offer a specific interpretation of fault lines. In certain situations, a gap can arise in this human-made connection between the space and its users. There are times when nature revolts, shows its strength, and breaks this connection in the form of floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, tornadoes… However, society can also weaken this relationship. In some cases, it is simply a matter of misunderstanding or imprecise formulation of expectations, while in others, it results from broader paradigm shifts. One such cultural rupture was caused by Covid pandemic and the prolonged period of enforced confinement. However, changes in accepted norms and style can produce similar effects.

Resilience has become an important skill nowadays, but due to its materialistic nature, our built environment is less capable of flexibility. Therefore, we need to achieve a more flexible thinking about space in general. Built environmental education is working on strengthening this connection, as understanding our built heritage can be a bridge over fault lines and pave the way for the future.

For centuries, people all over the world built their houses and homes adapted to local possibilities and materials. Through the process of manual construction, they were physically connected to their living environment. The fault line of this strong bond is related to industrialization, as modern people are not involved in building anymore. People - at least in Europe - don't built their own houses anymore.

How can we reconnect? Even the future professionals must be reconnected, like students in architecture, who learn in dedicated building camps about traditional building and constructing. Simple vernacular techniques – like a thatched roof – need to be reintroduced.

It is also common among artists to draw inspiration from the dysfunction of this connection. These artists are often sensitive to their environment and the delicate ecological balance of which humans are also a part. One such example is the Spanish artist Ruth Montiel Arias, who has created various art performances involving nature and land art. In some of her works, she evokes the structures of ancient cultures by building sand menhirs and miniature gravel megalith installations. Seeing these originally monumental elements in miniaturized scale highlights the fragility and impermanence of the human-made environment.

Built environmental education is located at the intersection of the previously described approaches, as it uses a combination of architecture, building and constructing and art education. The most important methodological approaches are learning by doing and learning through art, and all possible ways of actively exploring the built environment. We discover the different structures and techniques of architecture by constructing new spaces together.

Unfortunately, we are increasingly encountering another form of fault line situations: spatial traumas. Sometimes, due to unexpected events, we experience rapid changes in our spatial habits. These often appear to be inevitable shifts toward something significantly worse, and we rarely consider the long-term effects they may have. As it happened during the Covid-19 global pandemic, when we were suddenly required to stay at home for extended periods, without any transition. Numerous problems emerged related to living spaces, as they often failed to meet the newly arising spatial needs.

In the context of traumas, the work of Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger serves as both inspiration and guidance. She wrote about art, "as the transport station of trauma" and introduced the term "artworking" (Ettinger, 2000) as a way to engage directly with trauma itself. This approach aligns with our own aim: to use the act of building as a means of connecting with trauma – specifically spatial trauma. The significance of building also resonates with the ideas of Juhani Pallasmaa: learning by doing, making and manual creation

are fundamental parts of conscious spatial reasoning (Pallasmaa, 2009), and thus spatial healing as well.

The following examples are part of an empirical research series. Our research group is continuously looking for new ways and techniques to implement spatial experimentations. Built environmental education has different levels of activities. The focus of our work is on life-size building activities where the participants can have direct contact with space, as described in Schmarsow' theory about spatial perception, and have primary bodily experiences through the structures they are creating. Searching for new materials that can be used for such activities, that are lightweight, easy to handle, but still have big dimensions to provide this life-size effect is a continuous challenge.

Personal Space–was a project introduced at the beginning of the post-Covid era–which was designed with the intention to reconnect students to their university after the missed periods. Regarding the first-year students, for whom the start of university was almost completely missed. They completed their first year in the form of online learning, without meeting each other and their professors. We organized a building workshop using the hula hoops to create a "safe space" at the university. A personal space bubble, that can provide some privacy during this transitioning period. Exploring the building, finding the best hiding spots for these structures helped a lot for the students to establish a personal bonding with the space and the building itself.

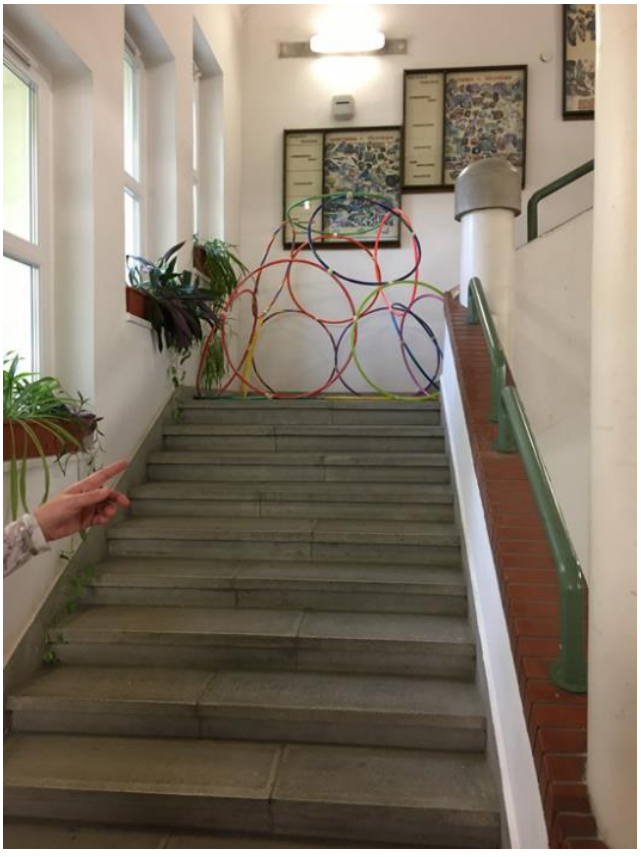


Figure 1 | *During the workshop* (Copyright by the author)

Safety Bubble–project was designed for international students, who arrive to Hungary from various countries, and are experiencing a significant spatial and cultural change as well. They need help to adjust to new circumstances, as their original cultural background may have completely different spatial norms. During the Safety Bubble project, they built their personal wearable safety bubble out of paper–to ensure nobody is disturbing or getting too close unexpectedly or unintentionally.



Figure 2 | *During the workshop* (Copyright by the author)

Minimal Human Space – is an empirical research-series guided by the 3612+VisualSkillsLab at ELTE TÓK University, concerning personal space and its physical depiction. “It aims to bring the concept of personal space into focus within built environmental education and attempts to visualise them through various building and constructing exercises. This is how we would like to contribute to the development of the conscious use of space and the realisation of our needs and opinions about our personal

spaces." (Skaliczki & Pataky, 2021) The premise of one of the recent series was the spatial exploration of university campuses. On big campuses, we often experience that students create a spatial bond almost exclusively with the spaces where their courses are, and they have "blind spots" about the rest of the areas. In these building workshops, using hula hoop structures, we were focusing on discovering new spaces, and engaging in new occupations and activities on the campus site. As a result, the students discovered the spatial quality of the buildings both inside and outside, drawing attention to the fact that the use of the outside space is often limited to the vicinity of the entrances of the buildings.



Figure 3 | *During the workshop* (Copyright by the author)

Personal Minimum – workshop was designed to help the students of a primary school adapt to the new building after their institution moved to a new location. The main goal was to help them discover the spatial possibilities of the new building compared to their usual spatial habits in the old one. By creating structures representing the personal spatial needs of the different children, new spatial norms were established, which also supported the formation of spatial end emotional attachment.

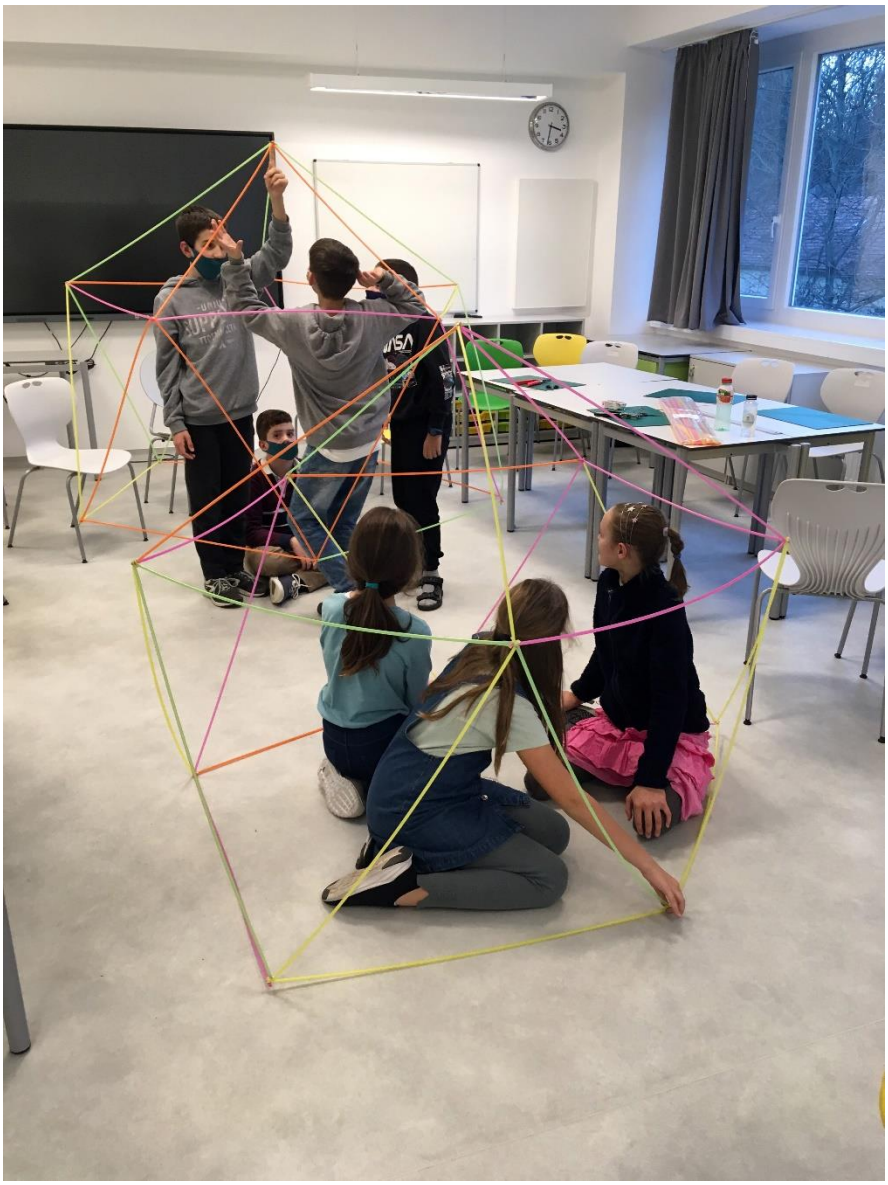


Figure 4 | *During the workshop* (Copyright by the author)

The presented cases illustrate that spatial congruence does not always function properly, and fault lines can emerge between the built environment and its users. The methodology of built environmental education offers an opportunity to develop conscious spatial behaviour and to explore the underlying causes of such problems.

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The Many Forms of a River – Fault Lines as a Disaster, or a New Beginning

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the issue of the interdisciplinary integration and the possibility of integrative teaching. It presents a specific educational project entitled *The Many Forms of a River*, which shows the potential of art education for cultivating interdisciplinarity. The project reflects on the impact human activity has on the form of rivers, and interconnects art education with biology, ecological education, geography and other disciplines. The project is intended for school and extracurricular education, and it consists of a methodical minisite with videos, photographs, original illustrations and educational assignments, which aim to make children and students think about the risks of river regulation and the value of the natural environment shaped by the river. The objective of this project is to bring students to a holistic perception of the ecosystem, and to reflect on the benefits and risks of human intervention in nature. It shows that rivers play an irreplaceable role in the landscape: they are not only a source of water, but also a key element of the ecosystem. Human activity can have a devastating impact on the entire landscape and the life in it. The project is an example of how to convey this topic to children and students and how to lead them to a deeper understanding through interdisciplinary integration.

Keywords: art education, sustainability, interdisciplinary integration, integrative teaching, project method

The Many Forms of a River – Fault Lines as a Disaster, or a New Beginning

The paper focuses on the issue of interdisciplinary integration and the possibility of integrative teaching, which belong to traditional and still current didactic topics. Although the requirement of interdisciplinary integration is commonly found in educational strategies and curriculum documents, the potential of this way of structuring educational content is still not fully applied.

The paper will present a specific interdisciplinary project that shows the potential of art education for interdisciplinary integration. The project is one of the results of a broader research project realised at the Department of Art Education of the Faculty of Education of the Palacky University Olomouc. Within the project, we implement action research and create didactic studies that have the potential to be applied into practice. At the same time, a survey addressed to teachers has been carried out, the aim of which is to use a qualitative approach to reveal the factors influencing interdisciplinary integration directly in practice at schools. Based on the findings, it will be possible to formulate recommendations and further focus both research and methodological support for teachers and their undergraduate training.

Interdisciplinarity and the Issue of Interdisciplinary Integration

We understand interdisciplinarity as mutual connections between individual subjects. (Průcha, Walterová & Mareš, 2008) Awareness of these relationships and their projection into the composition of tasks or content units of teaching helps children and students learn in context and, with appropriate strategies and methods, achieve a deeper understanding of causes and relationships that go beyond the narrow subject framework. Interdisciplinarity is the stimulus and basis of interdisciplinary integration. This can take place both at the curricular level and at the level of the teacher's own work with the content when (1) structuring the curriculum into larger units (school education programs, annual plans, long-term projects), and (2) when creating sub-tasks — especially when identifying objectives, contents and activities presented to students.

Naturally, a high-quality interdisciplinary integration of contents must be preceded by an epistemological analysis (for more, see Štech, 2009, or Dvořák, 2009) and only then the selection of contents, or the process of setting goals takes place in order to avoid mere identification of overlaps but instead work towards real integration of contents. Based on the results of our research so far, it appears that in Czech schools, integration is more natural in the lower primary schools (children aged 7—11) (where commonly one teacher teaches most subjects to their class), whereas in the upper primary school (children aged 12—15), interdisciplinary integration takes place mainly as part of special events and project days. The approach to such interdisciplinarity is focused on the identification of overlaps within the teaching of individual subjects rather than on typical interdisciplinary integration,

which presupposes more demanding preparation and deeper cooperation of teachers, including the systemic support from the school management.

The Benefits and Specifics of Interdisciplinarity

Why is it desirable to support interdisciplinarity and the integration of contents? The simplest answer is that we perceive the world quite naturally in the "interdisciplinary" way—and children come to the class with a similarly formed and structured knowledge—and it is certainly appropriate to work with their preconceptions. The child learns about the world as a whole, and their knowledge is not formed on the basis of a discipline structure, but on the basis of laws, phenomena and relationships of the real world.

Although thematically integrated contents seem natural, the current methods of structuring educational content in schools primarily use the so-called serial content code. In it, the curriculum is based on discipline-specific knowledge. As Štech maintains, its basic characteristic is the separation, distinction and classification of categories as units having relations to other units. (Štech, 2009, p. 10) In this code, knowledge is organized in hierarchical order, is based on the knowledge of scientific disciplines, and we associate it with the so-called positivist models of inquiry and cognition. The integrated content code, on the other hand, is that the curriculum is presented in a less strict and binding framework; where the topics that cross the boundaries of individual disciplines are decisive. Greater freedom is also reflected in the way the curriculum is organized. (Štech, 2009)

Starý & Rusek (2019, p. 11) remind us that in practice, integrated thematic teaching is referred to as project teaching. In the didactic discourse, there are different definitions of project teaching — some authors talk about the project method, others consider the project as a pedagogical strategy. Other authors, in accordance with the tradition of pragmatic pedagogy, consider the extent to which children activities relate to extracurricular, "real" life to be the determining factor. The content and methodological specifics of project-based teaching in art education were extensively covered in the publication entitled *Téma—akce —výpověď* [Theme –Action –Statement] (Šobáňová, 2015, p. 65), which, among other things, clarifies the role of the topic in project-based teaching, which by its nature always involves some degree of interdisciplinarity. At the same time, it is not primarily about facts that would have relevance to the topic, but rather about finding suitable stimuli for the experiment, about finding connections, asking questions (Šobáňová, 2015).

In art projects conceived in this way, children learn during the art activity and its reflection through expressive play and experiment. They acquire practical skills while actively getting to know some fact, form their attitudes, and learn new concepts. It is concepts that allow us to think, grasp facts into meaningful structures and ultimately also give meaning to expressive activities. Only with the help of concepts are we able to generalize, identify relationships or principles of the surrounding phenomena. (Šobáňová, 2015, p. 65) These

phenomena can form the content of any of the educational disciplines — as part of typical art projects in which the organizing element is a theme (forest, river, space, climate grief, relationships between people, the future), there is naturally considerable potential not only for interdisciplinary overlaps, but also for full interdisciplinary integration.

Currently, it does not seem that the integrated mode of content could prevail in schools, even though it is a common way of organizing content in art education. Outside of art education, however, at least in the Czech Republic, it is rather a manifestation of alternative, not ordinary state schools. However desirable we consider expanding this approach, it is appropriate to reflect on the limits of such a way of structuring content. Štech (2009, p. 10), for example, points out that when creating content units based on topics — and adding the current competence focus of curriculum — we risk that the role of content may be underestimated, or emptied altogether. There is also the risk of low-quality work with the content on the part of teachers (failure to master the structuring of the curriculum, poor-quality initial epistemological analysis of the content). According to Štech (2009), 'superficial thematism' cannot be tolerated, to which we can add that it is not desirable to stick only to the traditional "serial" concept, which often leads to amounting findings without connections—and without permanence.

When it comes to content structuring, it may not always be essential whether we prefer serial or integral content code (or a combination thereof). According to Štech (2009), a key role is played by paradigmatic, nodal knowledge. They are related to most concepts in the network of other concepts and at the same time they associate a whole range of specific contexts. These connections and their discovery in the learning process naturally activate children and students—provided we manage to connect the conceptual network, or even the content levels in the sense of conceptual integration (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), as Jan Slavík refers to in the context of art education, e.g. in his text entitled *Tvorba jako způsob poznávání ve výtvarné výchově* [Creation as a Way of Learning in Art Education] (2013).

The conceptual integration is based on the findings of cognitive science and is related to how we think. Fauconnier and Turner (2002) show that the invention of new meanings, discovery and other highly creative activity of the human brain is based on the mental mechanism of conceptual blending, which connects and integrates parts into complex ideas. The authors also point to the role of imagination and other aspects that influence thinking — which are also of fundamental importance for pedagogical theory and practice. In the context of art education, conceptual integration itself is a 'key procedure of metaphorical, or figurative thinking' (Slavík, 2013) and if we as teachers intentionally prepare the ground for it, we rely not only on figurative thinking itself and the symbolic nature of artistic expression, but also on the overlaps of selected topics and their — often unexpected — interdisciplinary connections. (Openly as such and with the potential of

conceptual integration are prepared typical art projects, see e.g. Šobáňová, 2015, Tikalová, 2015, Musilová, 2015)

It can be agreed that the integrated content mode does not necessarily dominate. However, it is advisable to eliminate within school setting the undesirable phenomena caused by the 'dominance' of the serial code and an excessive focus on knowledge. These include formalism, cognition without context, learning for the sake of learning and without real impact and application, boredom, stress, performance focus, the predominance of summative assessment focused only on knowledge verification.

The Many Forms of a River Project as an Example of Integrative Teaching

The project entitled *The Many Forms of a River* is an example of all the above-mentioned approaches: it offers interdisciplinary integration, uses the potential of a broader topics, and strives for conceptual integration in expressive tasks. At the same time, it is a project proposal — which can be developed as desired in accordance with the project-based teaching, for example other thematic series according to the interest of the students and according to the results of their expressive work and research processes may be established. From another point of view, the presented outcome is also a type of teaching materials, a modern equivalent of a 'textbook'. It is a minisite that offers a guide text and explanatory parts (text, images and audio-visual) and cards with activities, or, learning tasks for students. Some of the cards can be referred to as worksheets (the student fills them in with answers, or they are research protocols), others contain motivational texts or images and task assignment (in such cases the card does not need to be printed, and it is not a worksheet).

The whole combines the theme of the river and its role in the ecosystem. This complex topic with sub-content segments (in the integrated content code) is didactically transformed to be suitable for high school students aged 15–18. The educational project aims to reflect the influence of human activity on the form of rivers, while connecting the content of art education with biology, ecological education, geography, literary and communication education, music education, etc.

The aim of the project is to make students think about the risks of river regulation and the value of the natural environment. The project emphasizes global issues such as drought and disappearing biodiversity. It aims at enriching the student's knowledge and conceptual apparatus, but also at shaping their attitudes towards the landscape, the protection of natural streams and valuable biotopes. In the partial tasks and in the way the whole project is structured, the integrity of nature and the relationship between human and nature are emphasized.

The pedagogical strategies and approaches used were decisive in order to fulfil the objectives: to integrate a holistic approach to the acquired content, to apply the project method, experiential education, creative learning or elements of inquiry-based teaching.

Working with digital tools or online resources (databases and visualization options) was also targeted, so the project helped build digital literacy, among other things.

The tasks were designed to support the overall learning and perception of the topic of the river and its ecosystem. Let us name at least some of them: understanding the river continuum through performative art activity; exploring the Bečva river through historical maps, which students compare with the current (regulated) form of the river; examining local waterways using online map data for research of rivers, floodplains and streams; terrain mapping — river bed, bottom and bank survey; riverine habitat research — monitoring life associated with the river and assessing biodiversity; creative writing by the river — creative work with the metaphor of the river, creation of feeling maps — visual capture of how we feel near the river; metamorphoses in nature (using the example of aquatic insects) and their expression through artistic means; creation of an author's book about the river — using non-traditional visual recordings of the river, musical experimentation with recordings of the sounds of the river, training of communication skills and arguments during a rhetorical battle on the topic of ecological problems, creation of a documentary film about the river, etc.

From the brief overview, it is clear that many of the tasks do fit into an interdisciplinary whole, but they can also function on their own as typically disciplinary; their content — although it always has the potential for overlaps — is not directly interdisciplinary. Other tasks are fully interdisciplinary. As far as conceptual integration is concerned, several tasks in the project are focused on it, and characteristically, these are precisely the ones in which the disciplinary contents are mixed. An example can be a task focused on the metamorphoses of natural forms: the evocation already suggests interdisciplinary connections *(... metamorphoses have fascinated humankind since ancient times. We already have undeniable evidence from this period of human history in the writings of Greek and Roman poets and philosophers. The metamorphosis of plants was fascinating for Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and countless scientists of the past and present have devoted themselves to it. Transformations observed in nature, but also fantastic, mythical metamorphoses, during which people become plants or animals...)*, the core of the task is the metamorphoses of insects (complete and incomplete) and its artistic expression, ongoing and final reflection offers a conceptual integration *(However, other animals also go through a fascinating metamorphosis, for example fish or frogs. And what about human development! Have you ever thought about how your own body changes during life? ... After finishing the creative work, think about what you have actually created. And express it in words. The method of the river and its springs will help you to do this. ... Will you reflect the cycle of life and the changeability of nature in your text?)*

A second example of conceptual integration can be the inclusion of a task that builds on students' knowledge from research activities (deals with the disciplines of biology, ecology and geography). Encountering a specific artistic approach encourages conceptual integration: *the sculptor Robert Buček lived near the river in his childhood, and even today, when he lives in a different place, he still has the river in him. He imagines what it would be like if he could have his house next to the river again. He is fascinated by the natural processes associated with the river, catching sticks in the stream, driftwood, sedimentation. He notices what the river does to the landscape, how wet stones smell, what sound the river makes, how coastal clay behaves as it gradually dries out. ... While creating this sculpture, I imagined what it would be like to have a house from which you could jump straight into the water. If I lived in a house like this, I would carry home every day the wood that the river washes ashore. I would gradually fill my house with driftwood until the wood piled up to the roof. And then, when there is no room left for me in the house, I would go outside to sleep. My house would be completely filled with driftwood. I would then have the river even closer to me. And if I'm afraid of the river in the house? Not at all! When I watch the river, I know that unpleasant things will be resolved. The river brings me peace. And dynamic change doesn't necessarily mean something bad either!* (The artist's statement listed in the activity card.)

The artist's statement and the perception of his works 'pull' students out of the discipline towards imagination, personal experience and 'philosophizing'. These parts develop higher level of thinking *(Think about the artist's sculptures and the river. Then fill in the Venn diagram! In the left circle, write how the river is viewed by the natural sciences and what experts notice. In the right circle, note how artists view the river. You can base your answers on all your knowledge and experience. In the intersection of the circles, write what the scientific and artistic view of the world have in common.) and interconnect contents in a way to help form one's own self-concept, identity, personal philosophy. (What do I like myself? What is my relationship to the river and nature? What am I afraid of? What, on the contrary, brings me joy, peace and stability?)*

There are more than two dozen of activities prepared for the presentation of which there is no space here; the project can be branched, meandered or separate beds of the imaginary project river can be created. This is how the proposed procedures are verified and used in practice for the time being — they mainly take the form of smaller units in which teachers use part of the activities or partial tasks, which become the seed of new interdisciplinary projects (a field survey of the river and the subject of metamorphoses resulted, for example, in a separate unit on the theme of aquatic insects, when students got to know the ecosystem of the river and its inhabitants, discovered interesting representatives of insects in the river, made a film about them and in subsequent art

activities created boxes of crustaceans or ant cities in the form of large ceramic objects; in the same project, delicate shell objects resembling wasp nests were created, or students played with insect mimicry and created drawings of insects disappearing into the landscape).

Conclusion

The project and the educational minisite *The Many Forms of a River* is one of the concrete examples of interdisciplinary integration, which shows the potential and possibilities of art education to integrate interdisciplinary topics, and to connect educational content with the content of other educational disciplines. The second feature of the project is the content which is focused on the ecological problems of drought and disappearing diversity. It will not be possible to solve these global problems in any other way than through the cooperation of disciplines. Therefore, it is necessary to teach children and students to search for paths toward sustainability and to motivate them to deal with these urgent issues. The path offered by art and art education in integration with other disciplines brings deeper, holistic knowledge, from which more permanent personal attitudes and sensitivity to nature can be developed. Artistic creation can deepen the reflection of this topic, because it also engages emotions, intuition and initiates a perception of nature and the position of people in it that is not limited by purely disciplinary view.

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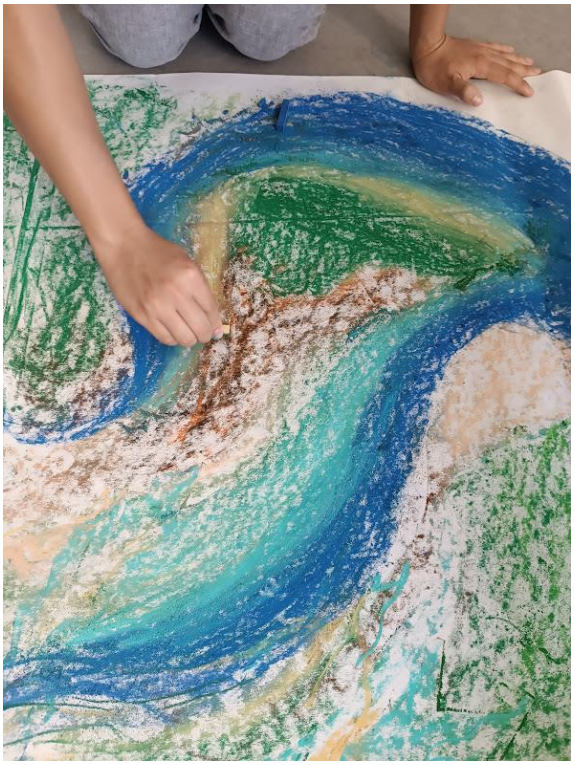


Figure 1 & 2 | *The river is a continuum*; a cooperative art activity focused on the continuum of the river within the project The Many Forms of a River (Photo Copyright by Kateřina Mesdag)



Figure 3 | *Expedition to the river; students while exploring the river biotope (Photo copyright by Petra Šobáňová)*



Figure 4 | *The Many Forms of a River minisite; a preview of the web interface (an activity based on working with historical maps)*

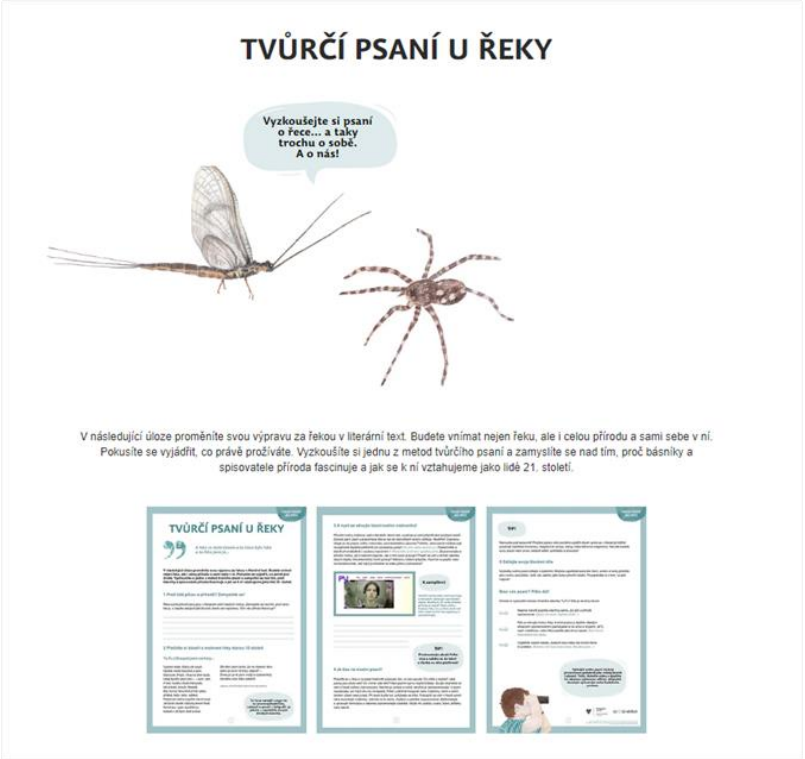


Figure 5 | *The Many Forms of a River minisite; a preview of the web interface (a creative writing activity using the metaphor of a river).*

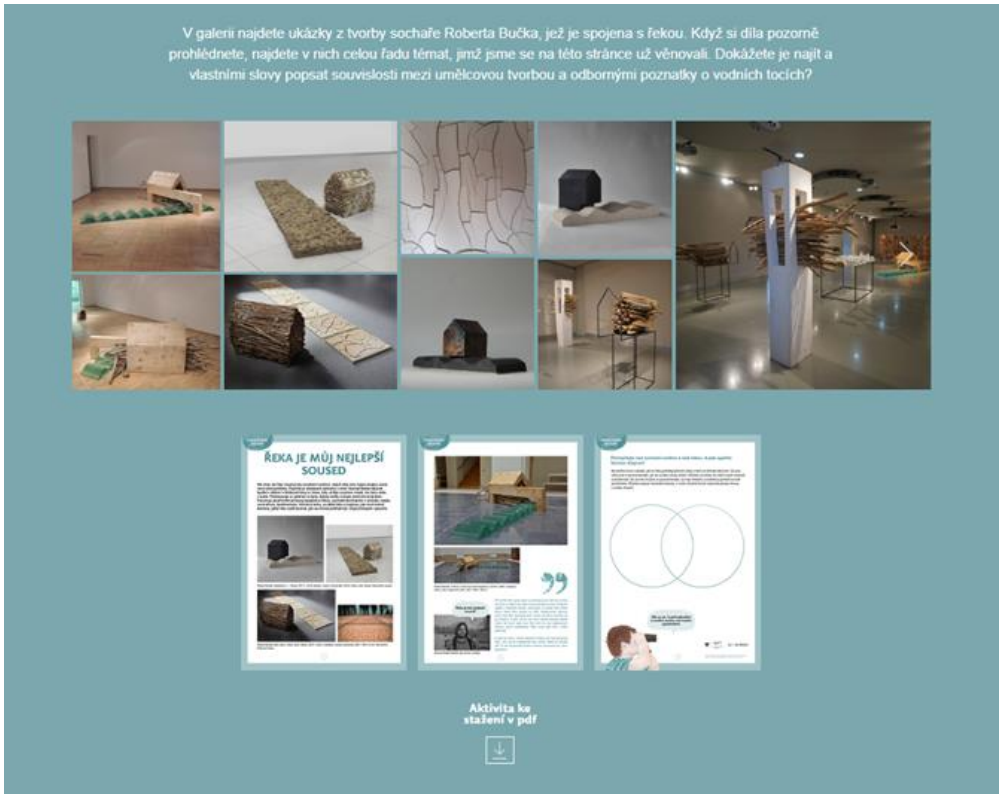


Figure 6 | *The Many Forms of a River minisite; a preview of the web interface (an activity presenting the work of the sculptor Robert Buček, and comparing the scientist-ecologist's point of view with the viewpoint of the artist).*

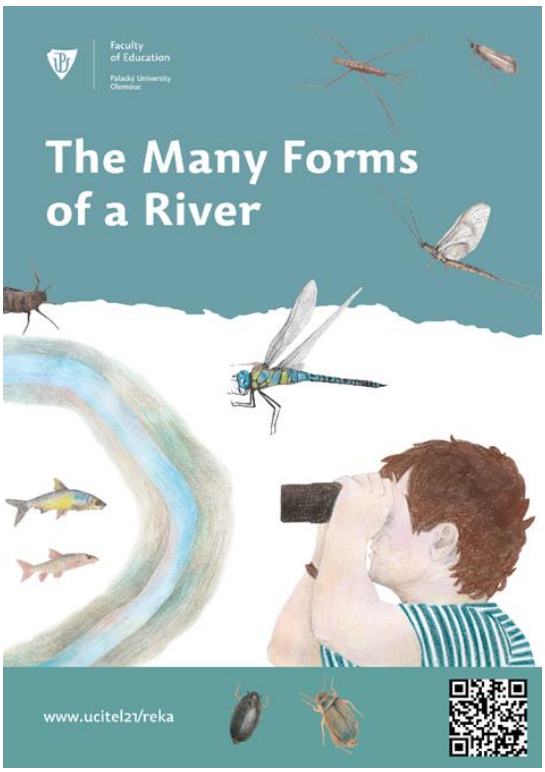


Figure 7 | *A sample of the visual with illustrations by Aneta Pastrňáková, and a QR code linking to the minisite.*

Heirloom Itinerary:
The Journey of my Grandmother's Wedding Ring

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Abstract

Object itineraries are essential tools for art educators to connect to items that hold sentimental significance. Completing an object itinerary of my grandmother's wedding ring had far-reaching effects. This process impacted my self-made schemas regarding identity, value formation, and understanding of multigenerational cultural connections. Knowledge objects with heirloom qualities signify the deep connection between family and the trajectory of the family line via stories and artefacts. Objects hold so much more than their raw materials; this ring was a tangible reminder that we are here for a limited time, but our values and actions can impact and shape future generations. Conducting an object itinerary as an art educator is vital as a vehicle for critical self-reflection and mapping the fault lines in our worldviews, mapping the evolution of my past-present-future stories.

Keywords*:* object itinerary, visual life writing, new materialism, material culture, art education

Heirloom Itinerary: The Journey of my Grandmother's Wedding Ring

In the last course of my Art Education Ph.D., I crafted an object itinerary centred on my grandmother's wedding ring. This selection stemmed from the belief in the transformative power of life writing, which created a deep sense of meaning for me as an artist, teacher and researcher. "Object itinerary is intended as an alternative to object biography and retaining the parallelism signals" (Joyce, 2015, p. 4). I deconstructed and unpacked the interlocking webs of stories and meanings throughout this paper, stories that do not have a concrete beginning, middle and end. Cortada & Perold (2022) emphasised that "objects and people together comprise components of a broader ecosystem of a company, an industry, or economy" (p. 87). Conducting this itinerary allowed me to see the family as a social structure with intergenerational ripples and long-reaching effects. Before this process, I did not see objects as part of a broader ecosystem beyond the scope of financial or sentimental value. Objects have many uses as they "populate homes, writing desks, personal lives, offices, composing processes, classrooms, family rituals, writing centres, and other university spaces—in short, they fill or constitute every contour of historical, social, cultural, and individual (writing) lives. Along with being a cognitive, social, and cultural practice, writing is a material practice" (Alexis et al., 2022). Heirloom objects contain many facets for analysis: the raw materials, material culture, geographical itineraries, and the stories of the people who passed on. Writing about objects gives an object new life through undergoing continual evolution.

New materialism emerges from this object because the stories connected to the object continue to unfold and are active as the object moves from generation to generation. The implications of conducting this object itinerary are far-reaching, affecting my present and future. Garnet & Sinner (2019) stated that,

> Stories conceived with the "material turn" are arguably more than resource materials or anecdotes. For emerging teachers or researchers, stories offer openings to begin to conceptualise the story as having its living history, where the personal is public, as teachers in relation to the field of education know well. This new material turns privileges the story itself as a knowledge object. (p. 52)

Knowledge objects with heirloom qualities signify the deep connection between family members and the trajectory of the family line through stories and artefacts. Despite heirloom rings being relatively small compared to other forms of legacy, they have the potential to last over generations. Objects hold so much more than their raw materials. This ring contains a unique living history, and writing this paper allowed me the space to share it. Garnet & Sinner (2019) underscore the point that "in the emerging paradigm (new materialism), material "things" can no longer be considered static objects willed to life by

human agents" (p. 59). Objects are the vehicle for active narratives from many different points of view. Turney (2012) suggested that "people construct personal narratives and/or identities through the construction of specific items intended for themselves or others" (p. 303). My grandmother's wedding ring holds a multigenerational story of resilience and connection and symbolises familial strength. It is an emblem of hope to pass on to future generations to embody family values. This ring is a tangible reminder that we are here for a limited time, but our values and actions can impact and shape future generations. The ring is merely a physical artefact of something much more significant.

This heirloom piece contained many stories and lessons, so I elected to speak about this piece over other potential options. The wedding ring I received from my grandmother was gifted to me when she was still alive. It is truly a piece of wearable art. The story surrounding her gifting me the ring feels particularly relevant to its living history, as she changed the traditional narrative in gifting me the ring when she was still alive. She invited me over shortly after she received her dementia diagnosis and felt it was critical to gift the ring to me when she was of sound mind. She wanted to see me wear her ring every day and took pride in seeing me wear it. At the time, I felt like this was a morbid act, but in her way, she subverted the protocol so she could derive more joy from the giving process. She wanted to ensure that there was no question that I would receive the ring. In small ways, this ring was an act of rebellion.

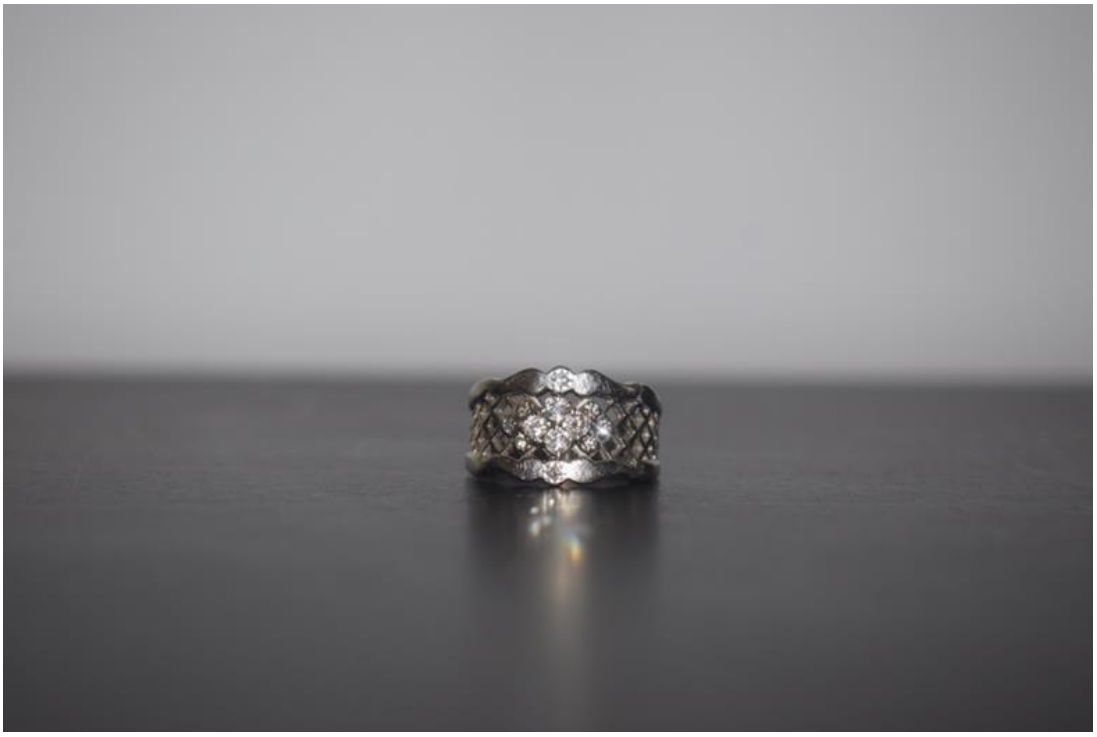


Figure 1 | *Front-facing wedding ring with a black and grey background*



Figure 2 | *Wedding ring inverted against a black and grey background*

The ring itself was not her original engagement/ wedding set. She lovingly compiled many pieces of her late mother's diamonds and gold with her original wedding and engagement ring so that she could memorialise her mother's memory alongside her marriage. A jeweller fashioned a thick white gold band that appeared to be a netting which held all the diamonds in place. Although this was a wedding ring, it transcends marital symbolism – melding together two solitudes to make a new ring and the multitudinous stories it has witnessed and contains. The gold from my great-grandmother's ring was melted together to create this ring. In addition, it consists of four larger diamonds from her original engagement piece and three smaller diamonds on either side from her mother's wedding ring. Two unknown diamonds are embedded within the ring's top and bottom of the white gold band setting. Within the band were two stamps; one reads "14 K" white gold, which was the band's primary material. There was another stamp that reads "SJL". I went to a jeweller my cousin suggested to learn more about the ring. To my surprise, upon arrival, I realised that this jeweller mainly served the Orthodox Jewish population. I instantly felt like an outsider despite being Jewish. The fault lines between my reform Jewish identity and the Orthodox community were palpable. I observed some of the patrons staring at me. I realised in that moment how different I am from my family. However, the object brought me back to my roots and to a place my grandmother undoubtedly would have felt comfortable. Ahmed provides a significant anecdote about questioning otherness. Ahmed (2017) said, "to be questioned, to be questionable, sometimes can feel like a residence: a question becomes something you reside in. To reside in a question can, feel like not being where you are at" (p.

116). The stares made me question the validity of my presence in that space. Still, the object grounded me in the knowledge that I could occupy that space openly.

Some of my initial fears further dissolved when the owner was very warm and took the time to clean the ring and critically examine it with a magnifying glass to extract further information. He immediately acknowledged how this ring could hold immense sentimental value. At that moment, I felt like he recognised the ring's object itinerary, a gesture of human kindness. Who knew that an heirloom object could evoke such an expression? In those moments with the jeweller, I was co-creating new realities for the object and that I am in a constant state of lifelong learning. Collins (1977) said that "Humanising education is pre-eminently dialogical, a constant co-investigation carried out by students who recognise that knowing is a process of never-ending perception, and by educators who recognise that they are themselves students" (p. 15). It was an astonishing moment to realise the journey of this ring is ongoing, but more than that, I can learn so much from this object that I have carried mindlessly for years. I now have an intentionality and openness towards this ring and its ongoing lessons. Intentionality and openness are traits I will carry forward with this object and other objects I engage within both the public and private spheres.

From what the jeweller gleaned from his inquiry, "SJL" was most likely the jewellery maker who made the piece. I sadly could not find any further information about this maker, who was most likely from Winnipeg. The jeweller told me that the smaller diamonds were much older and fashioned differently than the central diamonds. Diamonds at that time had more imperfections due to how they were excavated. They were less perfectly shaped to maximise the diamonds' size. This made me wonder about how quality and value have evolved. All the gold settings that held the diamonds in place flattened somewhat over time due to the piece being worn for decades. This fascinated me because objects, like humans, age over time and change due to being exposed to the elements of daily life. From an aesthetic standpoint, it was evident that the ring was an antique. So many questions emerged after I visited the jewellers that I may never get answers to: how were these diamonds excavated? Were the conditions safe during the excavation process? What are the hidden itineraries that I will never learn? What did the previous iterations of the ring look like? I wish I could ask my grandmother all these questions.

I have come to know essential aspects of the ring's story. My grandmother lost her mother, Clara, when she was eleven and never entirely overcame that loss. She talked about her mother often, and it was evident she was her role model. My great-grandmother Clara attended university and was a voracious reader. My grandmother used to talk about how strong she was because she did not fit societal expectations of the time. She was fiercely independent. After immigrating with my great-grandfather to Canada, she was so worried about her family's safety in Russia that she attempted to return with her young child (my

grandmother's older brother) to save them. She and her son hid in boats and trains on their journey home. However, the trip became too dangerous, and they had to return to Canada without her family. I imagine some diamonds in this ring came along for this memorable journey. It is unfathomable to think of this ring's expansive journey through history. Aspects of this ring had seen wars, pogroms, and otherworldly adventures before my grandmother received it. The characteristics of my great-grandmother that I try to embody today are pride in my identity, an everlasting desire to keep learning and to follow adventure whenever possible in pursuit of growing as a person and being able to serve others. When I wear this ring, I do not only think of my grandmother. I think of my great-grandmother's fierceness, bravery and survival instincts against all odds. Although I have come to a point where it is not always necessary to take the difficult path that requires calling upon all my resilience skills, this ring and my grandmother's story of irrepressibility fuel me forward, even on my darkest days. I can call upon my inner strength if needed. These values feel like part of my birthright and legacy. My duty to them and recognition of my great-grandmother's level of courage and strength propels me forward.

Along with her thirst for knowledge and duty to care for others, she had a thirst for adventure that my grandmother did not have in the same way. However, my grandmother's stories still passed these values on to me. My grandmother wanted me to know how important education and independence were, even if they were aspects of her life she pursued. This makes me like this ring; its unspoken values motivated me to take chances my grandmother did not take. With her active storytelling, I become who I am. Object itineraries are the stories openly shared, and the hidden seeds planted underneath. Despite the fault lines that exist between the generations n my family, some bridges connected us and sustained our bond over time and space.

Intellectualising these stories has allowed me to witness the complexities of life and relationships throughout my family line. Joyce (2015) suggested that,

> One implication of shifting from object biographies to itineraries of objects as things is the acknowledgment that the texts we write are part of the ongoing engagement of things with humans, which undermines the objectivity of objects and replaces it with the relationality of things. (p. 5)

Conducting this object itinerary offers an entry point of compassion and grace, ironically my grandmother's name, to further interrogate and understand her life choices that never resonated with me and the fault lines that inherently existed from our respective worldviews. This endeavour allowed me to examine significant life choices like getting married and having children. When unpacking the impact of my generational story concerning the object in question, I understand there were different tensions in different eras. Prior generations held different values and possibilities. My great-grandmother and

grandmother married during the era of “mandatory marriage”, where the role of wife and mother were paramount, and women derived much of their self-worth from these roles. Today, such roles are much more flexible, and society abides by a much more individualistic framework towards relationships (Cherlin, 2004, p. 851-852). Despite such vital differences in structure, all the choices made in prior generations have helped to make me who I am today and have allowed room for me to celebrate feminine power while simultaneously appreciating the feminine and ornate aesthetics of the ring itself. There is strength in the raw materials of the ring, the stories the ring holds and the construction of the ring itself. This object holds power and agency; it no longer depends on any marriage contract, which feels post-patriarchal.

There is a reimaging of the symbolism of this ring, its importance and whom it is intended for, as I am currently a single, queer person wearing this ring and writing this paper as a PhD student and the first person in my family who has pursued graduate studies. I am continuing my great-grandmother’s educational goals. Over time, the object’s use changed because it moved from a symbol of marriage to a symbol of feminine power and connection. The fact that it is a wedding ring does not feel as elevated compared to the fact that there were diamonds from my great-grandmother. This ring prioritises the connection of maternal lineage and loss's impact on our maternal line. My grandmother received the diamonds from her mother because she passed away when my grandmother was eleven. My mother could not receive this ring from my grandmother because she passed when I was eleven, so there was a disruption within the family line due to loss. This changed the overall story of the ring from its original intent. Although my mother never wore the ring, I recognise the stories she could not experience due to her illness and death. This ring holds stories of lost opportunities and infinite possibilities, a legacy I do not take lightly. Pressure comes from wearing this ring and prompts questions such as, am I fit to wear it? I do not know the criteria, but I do know that although I do not have much maternal family left, I hold a lot of care and respect for everything they have done. I immensely value their stories and legacies and want to make them proud, even if they are not here to see the accomplishments and moments of my life. However, I have realised it needs to be on my terms and come from a place of authenticity.



Figure 3 | *Wearing the ring on my terms: Hand wearing the wedding ring with a cream and green-coloured background*

A dichotomy exists within this ring; one follows authenticity, and the other preserves family integrity and cohesiveness. Through conducting this object itinerary, I discovered these do not need to be conflicting forces. "Itineraries are spatial and temporal, converging with sites and routes singular, multiple, virtual, and real. They have no real beginning other than where we enter them, and no end since things and their extensions continue to move" (Joyce, 2015, p. 3). In essence, my great-grandmother, my grandmother and her relationship with my grandfather were all not traditional. Her relationship with me was not traditional. She treated me like a daughter, especially after my mother's death. She taught me that relationships do not have to fall within the confines of the role.

For this reason, I have created a sense of family with friends, colleagues and others in unconventional ways. This has also allowed me to step into authentic supporting roles as a teacher for my students. I do not have children, but my duty to care extends to future generations within my chosen profession. In the past few years, I have not been teaching because I have been a student, but this journey has taught me that I need to find ways to step back into that role because it feeds me in ways I did not realise. There are many ways to be cared for and to care for others in this world, and I hold much gratitude for the lessons embedded within this ring from my ancestors, my teachers and the individuals I will learn alongside for the rest of my life.

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Printmaking as a Methodological Tool in the Teaching of Art Education

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Abstract

This study, conducted within the Spanish educational system, focuses on Art Education at the Faculty of Humanities of UJI in Castellón. It addresses the lack of recognition and training in art education for primary school teachers (ages 6-12), who often resist new methodologies and cognitive processes due to their preconceived ideas from their own schooling. The study emphasizes the printmaking technique, drawing on artistic references like Nancy Spero, to foster aesthetic experience, sensory engagement, and abstract thinking. Printmaking allows the exploration of concepts such as negatives, moulds, and technical rigor. The methodology employed is visual a/r/t/ography, as proposed by Rita Irwin (2004), intertwining 'knowing,' 'doing,' and 'creating' to merge the roles of artist, researcher, and teacher. This approach provides a reflective examination of identity and practice within an educational context. The study involves hands-on printmaking workshops, allowing students to engage in creative processes, understand artistic methodologies, and produce artistic outcomes. By integrating a/r/t/ographic principles, this research aims to enhance teacher training through aesthetic experiences, bridging the gap between artistic practice and educational application. The findings highlight the importance of aesthetic quality, coherence, and the transformative potential of art-based educational methodologies.

Keywords: educational research based on visual arts, printmaking, art education, a/r/t/ography, trace

Printmaking as a Methodological Tool in the Teaching of Art Education

This research is carried out in the Spanish educational context, specifically at the Faculty of Humanities of UJI, in the city of Castellón. It is proposed as a response to the current situation of Art Education in the Primary stage. Currently, in the Spanish educational system, the specialization of art education is not recognized, and therefore, there is a lack of the rigor and training necessary to turn the classroom into a laboratory where the central focus is the aesthetic experience, the study of artists, and artistic teaching methodologies (MAE) based on the ways art uses ideas, processes, and materials.

Students have a specific characteristic, as they are studying to be teachers of pupils aged between 6 and 12 years old. Therefore, they are undergraduate students during this practice. It is important to understand the educational context in which Art Education takes place because the absence of specialists in the mentioned area and stage leads to certain resistance from our students towards experimentation and methodologies. We are talking about a certain resistance from students to new cognitive processes. It is an educational context in which our students do not have training in the artistic field, and they do have preconceived ideas about what they experienced as students in the educational system. We are talking about repetitive education, without references to the artistic field, where only the outcome is valued, not the process. This practice allows students to delve into the aesthetic experience, gain knowledge of artistic methodologies, and achieve a specific result that has been previously accomplished by the researchers.

This research is carried out with a focus on the printmaking technique and artistic references such as Nancy Spero, among others. This technique enables us to delve into reflective processes, sensory experience, aesthetic experience, and abstract thinking. Printmaking also allows the study of different concepts such as the negative, the mold, and the rigor of the technique or material used. All of this, along with a journal that allows for prior experimentation, adjustment, editing, and reflection on the practice. It helps to understand the difficulties, challenges, and results of the artistic methodology and the creative process.

ITEM	PROS	CONS
Art Education	Sensorial & Aesthetic experience	Prejudices, stereotypes, absence of learning about art
Teacher training (Primary Education)	Widen experience	Lack of Expertise. Limited background in art.
Artistic Methodologies (MAE)	Learning Abstract thinking Opportunity adaptation	Content, Method, Difficulties, Challenges
Printmaking	Art Product/Result. Abstract thinking The creation itself Technique knowledge.	Resistance towards flow

Table 1 | *Art education in printmaking concepts, 2023* (Copyright by the authors)

Methodology

Does visual a/r/t/ography as a research methodology foster the identity roles of teaching and artist researchers? Within arts-based methodologies, the focus rests on visual a/r/t/ography, proposed by Rita Irwin (2004), intertwining 'knowing, 'doing,' and 'creating.' This research methodology enables exploration and expansion of our roles as artists, researchers, and teachers. A/r/t/ography allows a conscious examination of how these roles shape our identity, considering the intricate balance between them, including aspects like being a woman and a mother.

The a/r/t/ographic approach merges the roles of printmaker and teacher in research based on personal creative action. Analysis and reflection encompass actions, interactions with students, artistic production, graphic results, and contributions from relevant artists. Immersing oneself in artistic practice and creating works for teaching has led to an appreciation and acceptance of a/r/t/ographic methodology as the most suitable.

Responding to the research question about how visual a/r/t/ography defines the identity roles of the teacher-researcher and artist brings clarity to the inquiry process. Immersion in artistic practice and creating teaching pieces teaches valuing the methodology. Defining oneself is complex, balancing roles as a master's level art education teacher and artist printmaker, photographer, design specialist, and ceramicist. All these facets of identity contribute to the research due to the particularities of the environment and moment.

As stated by Taguchi and Palmer (2013, p. 675), "we are, as research agents, not pre-existing fully formed subjects but subjects intra-actively co-constituted through material discursive practice." One is part of a knowledge system with various agents performing actions like photographs, research, and personal memories. The presentation includes a

complex selection of interactions with students, one's work, environment, and images for exploring the thesis.

Visual Arts Based Educational Research from an A/r/t/ographic perspective allows for the development of sensitive aesthetic aspects uniquely understood through this approach. The main characteristics of Arts-Based Research, as described by Tom Barone and Elliot Eisner (2012), are:

- Utilizes artistic and aesthetic elements.
- Seeks alternative ways of perceiving and representing experience.
- Aims to unveil with metaphor what is often left unspoken.

Figure 1 | *The ink trail: Visual pair composed by two images, Maria* Avariento-Adsuara, 2023



Note: Left, *dressing to stain*, Adrià Montañés, 2023, photograph
Right, *Ink stain on dry point acetate*, Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2023, photograph

The work of a/r/t/ographers is reflective, considering and utilizing what has happened and what can happen, allowing their practice to unfold in a spiral through the evolution of ideas. It is self-reflective, questioning its own biases, assumptions, and beliefs. It is sensitive, taking ethical responsibility towards participants and colleagues. With these concepts in mind, a/r/t/ography engages in artistic and educational activities as a means of gathering information, analysing ideas, and creating new forms of knowledge (Irwin, 2017). This methodology is developed in four areas:

- In the epistemological foundation of how the arts provide useful knowledge for research in the humanities and social sciences.
- In the exploration of the possibilities offered by various artistic specialties.
- In adaptations according to different academic disciplines.
- In the fusion of artistic specialties and various qualitative strategies.

Figure 2 | *Preparation for printing, Maria Avariento-Adsuara,* 2023



Note: Photo essay composed of three images, Adrià Montañés (2023) photograph

The use of an Arts-Based Methodology implies the systematic use of artistic creation processes in current artistic expressions and in all different forms of the arts as the primary means of understanding and analysing the experience, both for researchers and for those involved in the studies (Roldán & Marín-Viadel, 2012). Researchers propose and reinterpret social and human research techniques to build useful inquiry processes oriented towards action.

Artistic Teaching Methodology (MAE)

This research aims to create a pedagogical strategy using Aesthetic Experiences linked to printmaking and Artistic Teaching-Learning Methodologies (MAE). These methodologies utilize art as both content and a medium, acting as resources and tools to foster a conscious educational and artistic experience. This approach ensures that the entire teaching and learning process is addressed aesthetically, emphasizing its quality and coherence in terms of form, concept, and procedure (Rubio, 2018). Artistic Teaching Methodologies are marked by:

- Proposing direct contact with contemporary artworks. Art is knowledge, and artistic work is an intelligent object from which relevant information for learning can be deduced.
- Designing artistic-pedagogical actions around artworks based on contemporary artistic strategies. These actions may originate from the artist's own practice or from other artists and art movements. It teaches how to create just as visual artists do.
- Learning strategies encompass the poetics employed by contemporary artists.
- Stimulating participants to act as professional artists do, manipulating and transforming materials, connecting disparate ideas, producing artistic outcomes, and inventing poetics. Once the creative game is designed, any participant becomes an artist.
- Preparing, processing, and creatively learning actions are systematically grounded in images. What is unique about Artistic Teaching Methodologies is that content and

method share the same visual language.

- Generating final products that are not school exercises but rather contemporary artworks based on the knowledge acquired from contemporary artists' works and procedures. Visual images are created by studying and responding visually to artworks (Marín-Viadel & Roldán, 2019).
- Approaching the educational process in the same way as creating a work of art involves considering the entire process, from the initial planning of content based on the curriculum, the aesthetic experience in the classroom workshop, to the dissemination through an exhibition project, following the same creative process used by an artist.

Printmaking provides diverse opportunities for promoting visual storytelling, collective creativity, and aesthetic engagement. Nonetheless, within an educational framework, printmaking processes present methodological complexities. This research entails an artistic intervention involving the creation of unique learning scenarios utilizing printmaking in a classroom-workshop model, subsequently applied to students in a primary education degree program.

Figure 3 | *The expressiveness of the print. Visual pair.* Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2019



Note: Top, Experimentation with matter, Maria Avariento-Adsuara (2018) photograph
Bottom, Lifting the paper from the matrix, Maria Avariento-Adsuara (2019) photograph

Printmaking's vast potential for fostering visual storytelling, collective creation, and aesthetic experiences is emphasized. However, its integration within the educational context poses methodological challenges. Conducted from an educational perspective, this research aims to develop a versatile methodological framework adaptable to various situations. The students' primary objective is to learn how to teach. Some students face resistance, often due to a lack of interest in artistic creation or discomfort stemming from limited manual skills and knowledge of art history and artistic references.

From an a/r/t/ographic perspective, educational issues are addressed to elicit visual responses, interpretations, or explanations, promoting creation, analysis, and interpretation within the same activity, assuming the roles of artist, teacher, and researcher in arts-based educational methodologies (Roldan and Marín-Viadel, 2012). Printmaking introduces situations where controllable variables are learned through practice, while an inherent randomness introduces subtle or significant variations, often not immediately comprehensible but potentially meaningful. These variations encourage attempts at replication and understanding, fostering novel insights through experimentation. Printmaking, being a dynamic technique, is influenced by the environment and harnessed through ongoing practice and experimentation.

The possibilities inherent in this technique establish a classroom setting where insights into the classroom-workshop and an artist's processes are acquired, transferable to primary education classrooms. Additionally, printmaking nurtures abstract thinking. It is crucial to learn how to effectively convey the full value derived from artistic practice in classrooms, encompassing aesthetic, technical, and procedural dimensions.

Engaging in the personal workshop, centred on research in printmaking education, has provided an active understanding of student needs and their creative processes. When observed in the workshop during the prelude to the creative session, the initial observation is the attire readied for potential staining: the smock and gloves. Upon subsequent inspection at the session's conclusion, it becomes apparent how the wear and tear, influenced by the quantity of ink, colour, size, and textures employed, distinctly marks the condition of the clothing over time.

Figure 4 | *Workshop diary*, Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2023



Note: Series created from fourteen images dated: 30/8/2018, 27/9/2018, 27/12/2018, 27/8/2019, 3/10/2019, 21/12/2019, 29/2/2020, 7/3/2020, 20/11/2020, 2/1/2021, 13/5/2021, 26/3/2022, 19/9/2022, 7/1/2023. Prints on paper, 35 x 45 cm

The “Workshop Diary” creation (see figure 4) symbolizes the artist's daily regimen, reminiscent of Sisyphus, marked by distinct beginnings and endings. Each day commences with material preparation, matrix selection, paper cutting, moistening, ink application, and printing. Subsequently, the prints find their place in the drying area, with designated time for retrieval, cleaning, and the commencement of a new day. The process of creating the piece is intimately intertwined with the daily workshop routine. This daily practice encourages reflection on the everyday, examination of results, and technical evaluation. The daily creation of a diary piece becomes an introspective and personal process, connected to Nancy Spero's artwork “Sheela-Na-Gig at Home” (2008), where a print is displayed alongside her underwear, showcasing an intimate space in an exhibition setting (figure 5).

Figure 5 | *Creative intimacy,* Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2023



Note: Visual commentary composed by two images, left, visual quote (Spero, 1996) fragment of the work Sheela Na Gig At Home, Prints and underwear on a clothesline
right, Hanging gloves on the drying rack, Adrià Montañés, (2022) delicate photograph.

Printmaking in teacher training offers a wide range of possibilities that encourage visual storytelling, collective creation, and aesthetic experience. However, within the educational context, processes related to printmaking pose a methodological challenge. Working in the personal workshop, focused on research in printmaking education, has allowed for an active insight into the needs of students and their own creative process.

Conclusion

With the proposal, new knowledge has been generated, and significant connections have been established between aesthetic experiences in printmaking, practices in the art education classroom, and the artist's personal workshop. Artistic processes have been reproduced with the aim of replicating and adapting learning, derived from artistic practice applied to education, by designing interventions from a methodological paradigm. In teacher training, a perspective of work in the classroom-workshop context has been offered, culminating in the creation of an artistic artifact as the final result. This proposal advocates the use of artistic references as a tool for teaching visual arts through printmaking techniques.

By using works of art as a trigger for an artistic-educational experience, students have been able to develop a different perspective on artistic creation, which is crucial for understanding why artists seem to perceive things that go unnoticed by others. Implementing this practice in the educational field has opened new perspectives for learning and enhanced students' capacity for observation and aesthetic appreciation.



Figure 6 | *Printing I*. Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2020, photograph

In this research, the artistic event has provided us with various ways to confront expression, experimentation, manipulation, creation, and communication of ideas and emotions through images and artistic objects. Furthermore, it has led us to visually analyse, observe, and interpret the meaning of these artifacts within the context of visual culture, urging us to continue in the cycle of creating, experimenting, and manipulating.

Arts-based educational research has revealed that the images generated by artistic production raise questions and issues that are not addressed in the same way in other forms of research. This approach enriches our understanding of creativity and artistic expression. Visual a/r/t/ography has proven to be a powerful tool by integrating the roles of teacher, researcher, and artist, effectively merging research with teaching. This highlights the need for a practical and experiential approach in art education, allowing exploration of the facets that define our professional and personal identity, shedding light on how each role influences our identity. This underscores the complexity and richness of artistic and educational training. It has been demonstrated that the creation of personal work not only acts as an artistic manifestation but also serves as a compilation of data and analysis that synthesizes the entire research process. This emphasizes the importance of personal reflection in the learning process.



Figure 7 | *Printing I*. Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2020, photograph

The processes inherent in printmaking learning are intricate and require specific, structured actions to achieve successful results. This underscores the importance of methodical and careful teaching in this field. The research has shown that it is possible to reflect on the teaching and learning of printmaking through personal artistic creation, suggesting the need for a more student-centred approach in art education. The study of the creation of personal plastic works has considered the cohesion of elements, skill with materials and tools, the analysis of actions performed along with mental representations, the ability to create new discourses, and the skill to consider space and aesthetic order. This emphasizes the importance of technique and creativity in artistic training. Reflection based on the objectives worked on in each artistic action, using the language specific to printmaking and the concept of trace and repetition, has enriched our understanding of creative and learning processes in this field.

Finally, the connection between the classroom-workshop and the personal workshop has allowed for a deep exploration of printmaking and has contributed to a complex understanding of our own creative process, highlighting the importance of the integration between theory and practice in art education.

What do we contribute to the training of students as future professionals?

- With Arts-Based Educational Research, the images generated by artistic production become questions and issues that are not considered in other forms of research.
- That visual a/r/t/ography positions the roles of teacher, researcher, and artist by integrating research with teaching.
- The processes inherent to printmaking learning are complex, as they require specific, structured actions to achieve a result.
- The creation of personal plastic work has considered space and aesthetic order.
- It is necessary to propose activities that allow for the exploration of the concept of printmaking in connection with contemporary art. Many approaches focus on repetitive technique-based learning with traditional practices, failing to encourage experimentation. This indicates a certain methodological stagnation in the teaching and learning process.
- A coordinated classroom work structure is necessary at any scale. It is a process composed of many parts, with materials and tools that need to be mastered. It cannot be developed in an environment of chaos and disorganization. Even a basic structure helps students internalize processes and engage more effectively in cooperative activities.

Figure 8 | *The process: Photo essay composed by three images,* Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2020, photograph



Note: Left, Ink-stained glove, Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2020, photograph
centre, Hands unveiling the result, Maria Avariento-Adsuara, 2020, photograph
right, Maria in the workshop, Adrià Montañés, 2023, photograph.

In conclusion, our contributions to the training of students as future professionals encompass fostering a unique research perspective through Arts-Based Educational Research, integrating visual artography to shape multifaceted roles, recognizing the complexity of printmaking learning processes, emphasizing the significance of space and aesthetic order in personal artistic work, and advocating for structured classroom work to combat methodological stagnation and promote effective engagement in cooperative activities.

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Educational Toys to Stimulate Learning

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Abstract

Educational toys are play elements and devices, which are designed for children or children's audiences in order to promote and stimulate their learning. Their purpose is the acquisition of a certain competence or skill, as well as specialised content on a specific curricular topic. In this case, we will focus on a systematic study of toys that have made progress in visualising three dimensions in children, constructing new scenarios and real spaces or based on their imagination. The experience was carried out with postgraduate students at the University of La Laguna. We present a brief practical experience and a theoretical framework in relation to educational play associated with didactics and pedagogy, as well as the most significant authors of design in this field. Toys designed for children are those that have an educational purpose, so that a ludic-educational element is conceived to educate, either within manual or physical abilities or to learn to develop a specific skill. Nowadays, historical toys have been redesigned, as well as new ones have been created to improve the teaching and learning process in children.

Keywords: educational toys, instructive toys, Constructionist learning, art education, construction sets

Educational Toys to Stimulate Learning

Educational toys are playful devices designed to promote learning, the purpose of which is the acquisition of a specific competence or the acquisition of knowledge or innovative content on a curricular subject. We analyse games that have led to an improvement in the acquisition of spatial vision for children, to build new scenarios from real (buildings, houses, museums, churches, bridges) to imaginary (from abstract shapes such as building blocks, three-dimensional volumetric shapes are created).

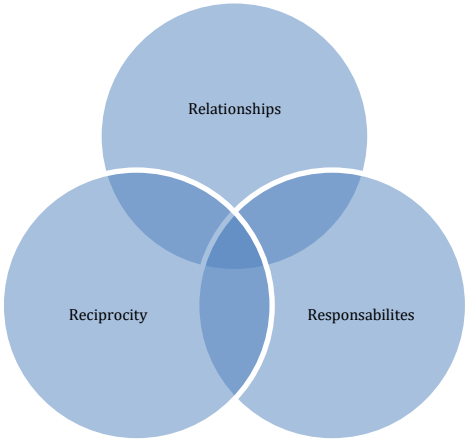
In the field of children's play, research has been conducted on the basis of two types: associated with significant historical periods such as the Romantics and biographical research based on authors who have analysed this idea such as Plato (D'Angour, 2013), Huizinga, Pestalozzi, among others. These approaches in research assume statements that are totalising, i.e. to expose that at a certain historical moment a dominant view was reaffirmed in relation to play (Strandell, 2000). However, views about play are sometimes contradictory and confusing. Ideas about play mechanics and toys are determined by factors such as gender, ethnicity, social class or the cultural context in which they were designed.

Historically, in certain cultures, games, toys or play devices have been conditioned by issues associated with gender, for example, girls imitate domestic activities, while boys' play is associated with physical activities or others related to construction.

In addition, social class defines a determinant effect on play, during the 19th century industrial revolution period, high status children had time to play and could have toys made for them, while children with few resources were working in factories, mines and had few opportunities to have those play resources (Shipley, 2008). These socio-economic factors continue to influence the possibilities and opportunities for families to access children's play. In a highly commercialised and technologized society, toy production and access is limited to those who can afford it. This does not mean that poor families are disadvantaged, but that their experiences are different from those of children in affluent families (Brabazon, 2015).

The following image provides an empowerment graphic of different areas in which the game can be strengthened through the relationships that can be established between responsibilities and reciprocities. The interrogation refers to the person as an individual entity in which these principles converge. It also indicates the need to balance these three areas in order to work from an intercultural practice. It is a matter of the work being approached by its professionals based on reflection in this area. This model of empowerment (see Chart 1) is a starting point to see how to implement it.

Chart 1 | 3 Rs model of empowerment. (Bennet & Moriarty, 2016, p. 92)



*Note. Visual chart on empowerment in different areas in which play can be promoted***.**

State of Art

This section looks at the term play from its beginnings and identifies key exhibitions, publications and authors in the field of play, design, art and education. Play is a voluntary activity that has been defined throughout history, although easily recognisable, its definition is somewhat more complex. The term play is dated in written records as far back as ancient Greece. D'Angour (2013) highlights that the concept of play is written in Greek as 'paizein' and is etymologically associated with 'pais', the Greek word for 'child', and with 'paideia', the Greek word for 'education for training'. However, the idea of play was for the ancient Greeks a central aspect of their culture and was not limited to children's play, but incorporated musical, artistic and sporting activities. Play activities included athletics, improvisation, rhetoric and oratory and were linked to participation in organisations such as the military and government (Wong & Logan, 2016).

The design of educational toys includes exhibitions, publications and authors. Among the exhibitions we can highlight the publication of the catalogue of the exhibition *El juego del arte, Pedagogías, arte y diseño* by Bordes et. al. (2019), held at the Fundación Juan March in Madrid from March 22nd to 23 June 23rd, 2019. In addition to a compendium of the works exhibited, the catalogue includes a study of the existing relationships between the notion of play based on educational devices, objects and materials oriented and designed according to the fields of pedagogy, art and design. As for the authors, we consider the works of Enzo Mari and Bruno Munari to be examples of good practices oriented towards art, design and art education.

Play Devices as an Engine for Learning

Children's play is the process by which children experience the world, practice and acquire new skills and ideas. Experiences include imitation, argumentation, problem solving and symbolic thinking. Educators emphasise the importance of open-ended imaginative play, play activities based on exploration or experimentation, and social engagement.

Among some of the classical pedagogues who approached these playful devices to promote learning in early childhood education using natural materials are Fröbel's gifts, the Montessori manipulative games, inspired by children's construction games and nowadays similar to those of Waldorf pedagogy.

Playful devices enable learning based on constructivism, in terms of the way in which the process of creation takes place. Constructivist learning is a multidimensional learning model in which it is composed based on categories that are intertwined with each other, ranging from general to specific notions. These categories in which constructivist learning is built according to Tan & Ling (2021) are the construction or elaboration of knowledge, the elaboration of meaning and the creation of knowledge statements. In relation to the games created by designers or design schools, we can highlight those of the Bauhaus school and those of the pair of designers and architects Charles and Ray Kaiser Eames.

The work of Charles and Ray Kaiser Eames is essential as they are playful devices for creating new scenarios and improving spatial vision, among these are the works of *The Toy*, 1951, published in Life magazine, *House of Cards: Pattern Deck*, 1952 by Charles Eames and *Solar Do-Nothing Machines*, 1957 by Charles and Ray Eames.

Although there are different types of educational games such as electronic toys, models of real objects, musical instruments and robots; on this occasion we focus on building toys such as toy blocks or building toys and construction toys.

Among the features of play devices, we can highlight that although nowadays the notion of play is mainly related to aspects of childhood, playful dynamics are an essential element throughout our lives: sports, theatre and musical activities, among others. In order to understand the notion of play, we can base ourselves on the features that define it (Rousseau, 2011):

An element associated with play mechanics; the play action itself is considered as the reward for the player. Stimulating and engaging action, in which physical, artistic, verbal or cognitive engagement associated with people, ideas, materials or the context is valued.

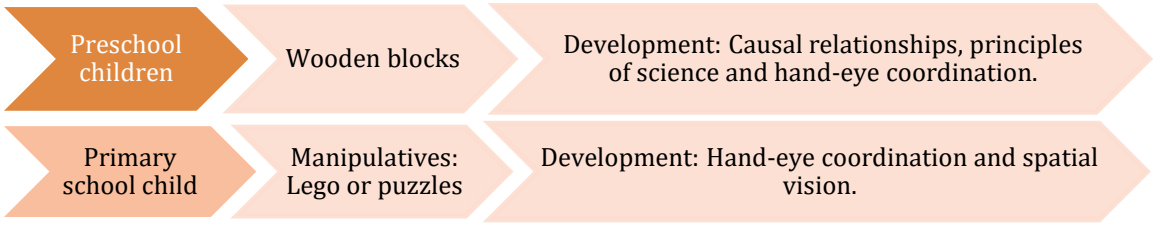
- It is voluntary in nature, as it is freely chosen.
- It is carried out based on autonomy, it is under rules, with a freer format of actions to be carried out or it is under the control of the player.
- It is fun, pleasurable and enjoyable, it is non-literal or symbolic in character, as it is often simulated and answers questions such as what if, and it has an inherent meaning for the player that is often not so evident to those outside the play action.
- Its orientation responds more to the process than to the final product obtained. (cited in Brabazon, 2015, p. 12)

Educational Theories Based on Play

Loris Malaguzzi created the theory of children's play, in which the action of playing is a process of learning from the environment and experience. Play theorist Brian Sutton Smith advocates free play in his research (Sutton, 2008). Toys with a more restricted design are less intuitive for children and require more adult involvement. Many studies on educational toys point out that the effectiveness of a toy is more related to adult involvement or the intellectual level of the child than to the toy itself.

Among one of the most significant paintings on play is Pieter Brueghel the *Elder's Children Games*, 1560, which depicts a wide variety of play formats of the time in an urban context. Educational toys enhance intellectual, social and physical development. They are designed to meet developmental milestones within age groups. The educational value to the child is enhanced when the toy is age-appropriate (see Chart 2).

Chart 2 | *Development of skills in different educational stages on play, 2023 (Developed by the author)*



Note. Visual graph showing the development of play skills in children for preschool and elementary school educational stages.

Cognitive theories indicate that children structure their world and imagination through play. On these theoretical bases, the element of play is a means that enables and promotes cognitive processes, favours the improvement of language, reasoning and the improvement of problem solving. Among the most significant theorists on play are Jean Piaget and Vygotsky, both of whom emphasised the importance of play for cognitive development in childhood.

For Piaget, it was a matter of understanding how each infant internalises his or her world, and his innovative approach was based on observations and analysis of children playing in natural settings. The act of playing for Piaget was constructed in three stages: symbolic play, practice play and games with rules (Piaget, 1962), these stages followed a fixed sequence, but each child passed through them according to his or her own pace of development. These stages have formed the basis of a large body of research on play and are still used today as the basis for observational records of children's play (Vygotsky & Kozulin, 1992).

Vygotsky believed that children internalise their world through play, his educational approach was based on socio-cultural theory which refers to the social context. His ideas indicate that cognitive development is established as a result of a relationship between an individual's biology and their social, cultural and historical contexts and tools such as language and play devices. For Vygotsky, the social-historical context provides what he called a *"zone of proximal development"*, from which one is able to do something with the help of others, until one can perform the task autonomously.

The most significant play pedagogue was Friedrich Wilhelm Fröbel, who expounded his ideas around the concept of the kindergarten, a place where infants would learn through play, guided by an educated teacher. Fröbel claimed that through play, children learn for the rest of their lives. Froebel developed educational toys known as "gifts". These were manipulative materials such as cubes and blocks, which children used to build and experiment in space. Friedrich Fröbel believed that through these games, children would develop more elaborate ways of thinking about mathematical concepts such as size and shape, number and would learn the order and beauty of shapes in nature (Fröbel, 1826). Fröbel also designed "occupations", which were activities designed to encourage "useful", everyday skills such as knitting, weaving and weaving.

Fröbel, like Pestalozzi, encouraged the value of play for children from early childhood, before the kindergarten age of 3-6 years. He advised mothers to play with their children and to devote space and time to them and developed other strategies such as the design and writing of rhymes and songs. At the beginning of the 19th century, his ideas were used by middle-class women who developed and enriched the creation of kindergartens.

Maria Montessori (1870-1952) is an influential figure in play-based pedagogy. She is an author who provided educational strategies and opportunities for children with difficulties in disadvantaged contexts in Rome by observing how they interacted with and played with materials. Her pedagogy was based on playful learning, which encouraged children's development towards autonomy. Montessori's ideas spread rapidly during the 20th century and today there are schools that practice her system. In the Montessori method, classrooms are simple and spacious, with self-correcting educational materials. Lessons are structured, ordered and sequenced. In a Montessori classroom, although children are free to choose, the materials are selected by the teachers. In Montessori schools, play was an essential issue in children's development. The author did not support fantasy or imaginary play, but rather activities directed towards everyday actions or real work.

Nowadays, play is still the essential pedagogical tool in early childhood education centres, play-based learning is a didactic space in which children organise their social world by actively interacting with their peers, objects and the context. The role of the adult and

the teacher in children's play action, the different types of activities to be developed and the degree to which play should be structured and managed are still being questioned.

Playful Devices and Design

As play and design have always gone hand in hand, we highlight the most significant designers as design is an essential part of a playful device. We must highlight the designers Gerrit Rietveld, Marcel Breuer, Charles and Ray Eames and Alvar Aalto. On the other hand, Vitra built games such as the Wooden Dolls, 1963 by Alexander Girard.

Some outstanding books that show objects designed for children include Design for children, Play, ride, learn, eat, create, sit, sleep by Birks (2018), which documents the evolution of design for babies and children of a wide range of objects used in the everyday world of children such as toys, furniture, textiles and household objects.

Objectives

Among the objectives proposed in the experience of designing toys for educational purposes were:

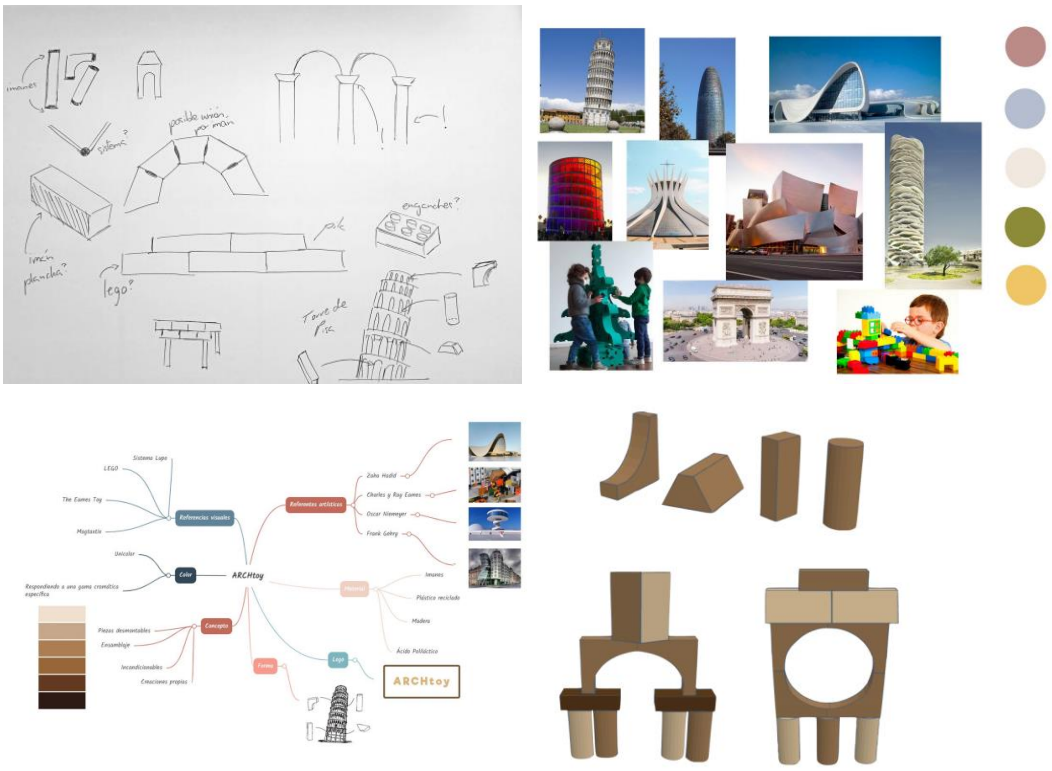
- Appreciation of contemporary art and design to associate it with the creation of educational games.
- Promoting new forms of creation and design for the development of educational toys.

To provide educational play objects and artefacts with which to promote learning based on constructivist learning with which infants can improve their spatial vision and create small scenarios.

Educational Proposal

The educational proposal was carried out by postgraduate students belonging to the Master in Teacher Training of E.S.O., Baccalaureate, Vocational Training and Language Teaching in the speciality of Drawing, Design and Plastic Arts of the University of La Laguna, by 21 students, from which a work of 3 students was selected, from the subject of Teaching Innovation and Educational Research in the Teaching of Drawing, Design and Plastic Arts. The learning situation was based on visual creations from drawings, mood boards or visual schemes from associated elements and finally the 3D reproduction of the piece generated as an educational toy, to promote spatial vision in three dimensions. As a preliminary idea, they used sketches, mood boards and mind maps to define as a group a first idea of what they wanted to represent as a three-dimensional piece (see figures 1-4), and for the creation of the 3D pieces they were suggested the use of various programmes such as: *Blokify*, *3dSlash*, *Vectary*, *OnShape*, *Leo Cad*, *Tinkercad* and *Sketch Up*, although the majority used the last two. The activity was carried out in groups of 4 people in two sessions.

Figures 1 – 4 | Design process for the creation of a 3d toy for educational purposes (Copyright by the author)



Note. Design of a construction game for learning architecture or spatial vision for children: Sketches, Moodboard of colour palette of buildings for the play, visual map and 3d-model, 2022. Anabel Hernández Rodríguez, Alejandro Hernández Pérez, Dolma Torregrosa Rodríguez y Sara Travieso Warneck.

Discussion

Certain authors such as Bordes (2007) in his *La infancia de las vanguardias: Sus profesores desde Rousseau a la Bauhaus*, analyse the relationship between educational material in childhood. From this publication there are certain objects or artefacts that are educational toys. Subsequently this author analysed educational toys in more depth in his *Historia de los juguetes de construcción*, 2012. After the analysis of literature and the exposed practice we were able to verify that it is a tool with an enormous potential for the improvement of spatial vision in children, as well as creating new scenarios in a given space.

Conclusions

In conclusion, play devices promote collaboration, cooperation and constructivist learning. They can be applied to different curricular areas (mathematics, language, natural sciences, among others, or other artistic disciplines (drawing, painting, sculpture, modelling, digital printing, among others). Theories of play, play devices and new teaching and learning scenarios are intertwined and enrich the context exposed in the classroom for the creation of innovative projects.

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Motivation in Art Education: Analysing Strategies to Enhance Students' Motivation to Learn Art

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the factors behind human motivation and learning and connect them to a strategy in art education to assess its effectiveness in motivating students to learn art. To verify the efficacy of this procedure, an analysis of a lesson plan based on *Visual Thinking Strategies* (VTS) was made, and an experiment with a sample of students was conducted. The findings revealed positive effects on students' motivation, suggesting the viability of this procedure as an initial analysis of an art education strategy, helping teachers to choose or develop strategies that can be more effective in boosting students' motivation to learn art. Furthermore, considering art as an essential subject to develop skills for a 21st-century society, such as creativity, communication, and critical thinking, choosing the appropriate strategies in teaching art can promote positive results in the development of individuals and communities.

Keywords: motivation, motivation in learning, art education, visual thinking strategies (VTS)

Author note

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Motivation in Art Education:
Analysing Strategies to Enhance Students' Motivation to Learn Art

Education is essential for the development of any country, playing a fundamental role in personal and social development (Carneiro & Draxler, 2008; Prameswari et al., 2020). In the current historical period, the ideology of education as a tool of social development is prominent, working toward social, cultural, and economic fairness (Iftimi, 2020). In this context, art is essential: as a way of expression, art in education can work on personal development and cultural identification (Barbosa, 2002), and benefit an individual's mental and physical health (Fancourt & Mak, 2020), providing an intellectual, emotional, and psychological balance that benefits both the individuals and the society (Iftimi, 2020).

Being a great human expression of emotions and ideas, and a means of communication, art is closely connected to human development and can contribute to the scientific progress of countries as well since it helps individuals to develop imagination, creativity, and communicative and critical thinking skills (Taşkesen & Uludağ, 2019), abilities, and competencies required for a 21st-century society (UNESCO, 2013).

However, lack of motivation toward academic activities is one of the biggest problems among students nowadays, especially in early adolescence (Guerrette, 2018; Legault et al., 2006). Motivation is subject to personal, social, and contextual influences (Schunk et al., 2014), and the interactions with others and the classroom environment (including intellectual, social, emotional, and physical aspects) can impact student motivation (Nakata et al., 2022). Usually, motivation is viewed as a factor that teachers have no control over, and teachers assume that it is the student's responsibility to make progress in the learning process (Keller, 1987).

> Teachers desire that students be in a state of wanting to learn, but they may not all be; some may be suffering from hunger, loneliness, or stress. Teachers may need to address students' present motivational states and then provide the proper environment for inculcating a motivational state to learn. (Schunk et al., 2014, p. 43)

As for art classes, usually, there is a decline in students' artistic expression when they reach adolescence: they start to lose confidence and thus motivation and may feel uncomfortable studying art (Guerrette, 2018; Ishizaki & Wang, 2015). In addition, art students usually lack motivation and confidence when they anticipate failure (Guerrette, 2018). The interest in art can also be affected by other barriers, such as the capability to engage and opportunity, including demographic and social factors, health factors, anxiety, concentration, living far from places, and not having artistic skills (Fancourt & Mak, 2020). The "talent thing" (Price & Earl, 2017) or the "creativity myths" (Agata & Okada, 2010)—beliefs inconsistent with reality—makes people think that only talented people can do art. It contributes to a sense of resistance to art, one of the reasons why people avoid learning art.

All things considered, in the first place, it's crucial to develop the motivation for making art (Price, 2017), and "unless teachers (or mediators) and pupils find pleasure in the artistic experience, no art education theory can achieve social reconstruction" (Barbosa, 2002, p. 472). This background leads to the main question of this research: "how to choose or analyse strategies in art education to increase students' motivation to learn art?" Considering the importance of motivating students to learn art, the purpose of this study is to provide a practical tool to support teachers in identifying more assertive strategies to improve students' motivation to learn art. By investigating the factors that influence motivation and proposing connections between these factors and respective art education strategies, this study suggests this procedure as a method to analyse the efficiency of a strategy in motivating students to learn art.

Literature Review

Motivation and Learning

Motivation plays a vital role in the learning process, since it can affect students' learning and how well they perform skills (Schunk et al., 2014; Strongman, 2020; Triarisanti & Purnawarman, 2019). In addition, when students are intrinsically motivated, they can engage in an activity for enjoyment, learning, or because of a sense of accomplishment (Strongman, 2022). Motivation is a complex phenomenon and many theories state that individuals are moved to action based on their intrinsic needs or goals, providing energy to act (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Schunk, Meece, and Pintrich (2014) state that "motivation is the process whereby goal-directed activities are instigated and sustained" (p.5), and an "energized internal state that results in goal-directed behaviours" (Schunk et al., 2014, p.5). According to Dörnyei (2001), five common themes in the leading theories on human motivation can be found: feeling of being competent, having autonomy, setting worthwhile goals, getting feedback, and being affirmed by others.

Maslow's theory of motivation presents a hierarchy of needs composed of five categories of basic needs (Maslow, 1987): physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Alderfer's ERG theory states three categories of human needs: existence, relatedness, and growth (Alderfer, 1969). McClelland's acquired-needs theory presents the need for affiliation, power, and achievement (McClelland, 1987). The choice theory, developed by William Glasser, considers the needs for survival, love and belonging, power (competence and achievement), freedom, and fun (Sullo, 2007). Deci and Ryan (1985) developed the Self-determination theory that suggests three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Cook and Artino (2016), Schunk et al. (2014), Dörnyei (2001), and Strongman (2022) present some contemporary theories related to motivation to learn. According to Cook and Artino (2016), there are four common themes in these theories: competence (expectancy of

success, confidence), value (outcome expectations), attributions, and interactions between individuals and the social context. Expectancy-value theories suggest the expectancy of success in a task and the value attached to that task (Dörnyei, 2001; Cook & Artino, 2016). The Attribution theory suggests that people's reactions to an experience can vary depending on the perceived cause of the outcome (Cook & Artino, 2016). Social cognitive theory suggests that people learn through interactions with the environment and observing others (Cook & Artino, 2016). Goal orientation theory sets the mastery goals (focus on learning the content) and the performance goals (focus on demonstrating ability, "looking smart", and "avoiding failure") (Cook & Artino, 2016; Dörnyei, 2001). The Self-determination theory suggests that an individual can be at their highest and most creative and productive achievements when motivated by an intrinsic interest in the task, acting to satisfy curiosity or desire for mastery (Cook & Artino, 2016). John Keller's ARCS, an instructional model created to help teachers identify and solve problems with learning motivation, states four components of motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 1987).

Some other studies present similar factors such as purpose, meaningful learning, enjoyment, positive emotions, and choice: when students perceive a task as valuable and relevant, they are more likely to feel motivated to complete the task because they enjoy it (Strongman, 2022); having a purpose and goals related to the needs of life (Triarisanti & Purnawarman, 2019); curiosity, persistence, performance and "calibration" (if people are as good as they think they are) (Strongman, 2022). The environmental conditions of learners, dynamic elements in learning, and teachers' efforts can affect learning motivation (Triarisanti & Purnawarman, 2019). According to Strongman (2022), affective factors can influence students' motivation (while the enjoyment of learning is positive, boredom and anxiety are negative) and positive emotions (such as happiness, and joy of learning), choice, curiosity, and the teacher's characteristics, such as enthusiasm and caring can also be related to motivation in the classroom. Finally, Sullo (2009) suggests teachers to be enthusiastic, create relevant lesson plans, build positive relationships with students, eliminate fear from the classroom, and teach students how to self-evaluate.

Motivation factors: A summary of factors in motivation to learn

The needs and elements that affect motivation were named "motivation factors" for this research, and the most relevant factors were selected, summarized, and described:

1. Safety (security, stability, dependency, protection): Being safe from harm or danger; freedom from fear and anxiety; being in a trustable place; familiar things.
2. Relatedness (relationship; love and belonging; connection, affiliation): Having significant relationships with other people; sharing; giving and receiving affection; being accepted; feeling of belonging; being loved. It can be enhanced by respect, caring, an inclusive environment, and safety.

3. Esteem (confidence; power): The feeling of competence, strength, independence, the need for appreciation, dignity, status, recognition, and respect.
4. Self-fulfilment (self-actualization, growth): People's desire to become actualized in what they are potentially; to use their abilities to achieve and be everything they possibly can; make creative or productive effects on themselves or the environment; mastery goals.
5. Freedom (autonomy; independence; choice): The right to live in the way a person wants, without being controlled by anyone else; freedom to speak, to express oneself, to investigate and seek information, to defend oneself, to choose.
6. Achievement (goal; purpose; expectancy of success): Achieve a goal; accomplish a task; be successful; competence; performance; results.
7. Positive emotions (fun; enjoyment): Happiness, joy, self-satisfaction.
8. Relevance (value; importance; meaningfulness; usefulness; worthwhile): Importance; the value attached to something; something that is useful or meaningful.

Strategies in Art Education: Contemporary Approaches

Contemporary society requires new competencies and abilities, and education must keep pace with the new needs of the modern world. Collaboration, communication, social and cultural competencies, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving are some competencies presented as 21st-century skills (UNESCO, 2013). The constructivism-based pedagogy considers the active construction of knowledge, encouraging the student's active participation, and proposing learning based on students' experiences and reflections (Tomljenović & Vorkapić, 2020).

Connected with art education, "the constructivist approach to the child's self-development and self-expression has had a great impact on how the teacher and educator think about art, culture, and aesthetics as active learning tools in the classroom" (Chemi & Du, 2018, p. 5). Many methods consider new approaches to art education, such as Project Based Learning (PBL), Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), and STEAM.

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is an inquiry-based teaching method created by Abigail Housen and Philip Yenawine. It uses art to teach visual literacy, thinking, and communication skills (Housen & Yenawine, 2018), helping to improve students' ability to describe, analyse, and interpret imagery and information through observing and discussing visual art.

In a simplified way, to do VTS, a facilitator must show students an artwork and ask them to look carefully at it, and then guide the discussion with three questions (Yenawine, 1999; Housen & Yenawine, 2018; Hailey et al., 2015): "What's going on in this picture?" ;

followed by “What do you see that makes you say that?”, and “What more can we find?”. The goal is to engage all students and build their confidence by validating their opinions. VTS develops social interaction, language, and observation skills and can promote social and emotional growth, impacting social behaviour (Yenawine, 2019).

Research Methodology

In order to answer the research question, this study was based on two procedures: a literature review followed by qualitative research (field research). First, previous studies were explored to have a reasonable understanding of the topic: a narrative literature review was made to understand motivation and identify, summarize, select, and describe the factors related to human motivation (named “motivation factors”) most relevant to this study. Relevant books and papers (articles, thesis, and dissertations) were consulted and compared. As for the data analysis, content analysis was used to identify the motivation factors and group them by similarities. Finally, the most relevant factors for this study were selected and described.

The second part aimed to verify the efficacy of the analysis process of an art education strategy using motivation factors. For this research, VTS was chosen as a strategy to be analysed since it is an effective strategy in developing skills for 21st-century society, and it seemed to fulfil all of the motivation factors selected for this study. In addition, it’s widely used in Japan and little known in Brazil, and efficient in developing relevant skills in art appreciation and art expression. To verify the efficacy of the VTS analysis, the field research seemed appropriate: an experiment was conducted onsite with five 6th-grade students (11 to 12 years old) from a Brazilian school in Joso (Ibaraki, Japan). The 6th-grade students were selected as a sample since, at this age, early adolescence, they start losing interest in learning art. An interview and a VTS lesson were conducted, and the findings were synthesised as a narrative description.

Motivation Factors and Art Education: Analysis of Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)

The analysis of VTS was made as presented in Figure 1. VTS characteristics were connected to the factors. Questions such as “Does it fulfil the safety factor? How?” were made to investigate the connections.

MOTIVATION FACTOR	ART STRATEGY: VTS
Safety	*Students might feel safe and comfortable to be themselves and express their opinions since there are no right/wrong answers or judgments (it can also cause "no anxiety") and people respect their opinions.*
Relatedness	*Students might feel like sharing, connecting, and belonging when interacting with classmates and collaboratively building a meaning or a story.*
Esteem	*Students might feel confident once they can share their thoughts and are heard and respected. The teacher's feedback and consideration can mean recognition, respect, and the feeling that one is competent.*
Self-fulfillment	*Since any comments are valued, students might feel they have the capacity to talk about the artwork and learn with this activity. Learning can be related to the feeling of growing and developing their potential.*
Freedom	*Students might feel free to share their thoughts since they feel respected and free from judgment.*
Achievement	*Students might feel successful when their opinions are valued by the teacher's feedback, showing that they achieved the goal of the activity as well.*
Positive emotions	*It might be a fun activity since it promotes interactions between the students. It also can be seen as a gaming activity, where the students need to "solve a puzzle" by interacting and considering other students' points of view.*
Relevance	*If students feel confidence, freedom, and positive emotions, they can attach value to this activity, and it can become a relevant class for them. Building a relevant discussion, creating connections, and feeling empowered can bring a sense of meaningfulness. It's also possible to use works of art that are related to their lives.*

Figure 1 | *Analysis of visual thinking strategies (VTS) using the motivation factors*

Findings and discussions

For this research, "motivation" was considered "an energized internal state that impulses one's action", and "motivation to learn art" was "the desire to acquire any knowledge or practical skill in art by experiencing, appreciating or making art."

The literature review showed that several factors can influence students' motivation to learn art. It's possible to understand that not fulfilling these factors can make students lack the motivation to study. On the other hand, the teacher's actions and the strategies used by them can affect the students' motivation, paving the way to working on strategies aligned with the motivation factors.

Experiment: Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) and Students' Motivation to Learn Art

Positive results were found in students' motivation in VTS classes, especially when comparing their previous state of motivation. The graphics in Figure 2 illustrate the results related to "high motivation".

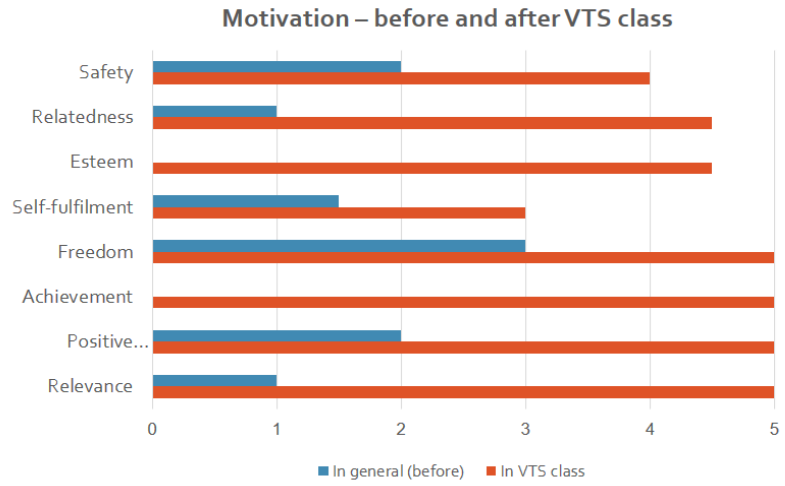


Figure 2 | *Experiment results: Students' motivation in VTS class: Number of students with a "high level" of motivation before and after visual thinking strategies (VTS) class*

The collected data showed that their level of motivation increased after the VTS class. All the students participated in the interviews and the VTS class, answering the interview questions, and making comments and observations about the work of art. With these results, it was possible to consider analysing a strategy based on motivation factors.

However, there were some limitations to the experiment results. The short time for the research required a small sample size and few social contexts. A larger sample and a quantitative survey may be necessary to verify the effectiveness of this analysis. Many variables must also be considered (such as the teacher/interviewer's experience in VTS, and period of research), and further study and different approaches are needed for a deeper investigation of motivation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Analysing an art education strategy based on the motivation factors has many benefits for teachers. This analysis can help teachers to choose or develop more effective strategies to work on students' motivation to learn art. Moreover, fulfilling students' needs is considered a goal for education. In this context, the motivation factors highlighted by this research can be helpful in various applications in education and other areas of knowledge.

This study also raises some reflections on the motivation factors to learn: individuals' needs, desires, and specificities must be considered. It's also important to reflect on the relevance of the environment, the social conditions of students, and especially the teachers' role in motivating students: teachers have a crucial role in students' motivation since their actions can be responsible for both the demotivation and motivation of students. Being positive and kind, building good relationships with the students, and creating a healthy and safe environment are topics to consider helping students believe in their potential to learn and express themselves through art.

This research is just a small step within the possibilities that studies of motivation in learning art can explore. Further studies are needed to complement the present study and deeply examine the connections between motivation and strategies in art education. Furthermore, this study does not propose a profound diagnosis of students' motivation but only an accessible and practical tool to help art teachers choose a strategy or develop a lesson plan. The expectation is that this study can stimulate more profound studies.

Finally, improving the students' motivation to learn art can gradually improve art education and bring positive results in students' and teachers' lives, schools, and communities. Practical tools and methods are needed, especially for teachers who lack resources. Using the motivation factors to analyse strategies in art education can be a helpful guide for teachers who seek to make deeper connections with their students and provide classes where the students can feel motivated to learn art, grow, and be the best they can be.

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Perspectives of Classroom Teacher Candidates on the Contribution of Art Readings to Intellectual Identity Development in Children: A Case Study

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Abstract

This study focuses on the use of “Painting Readings” in the education of young children through art and emphasizes its importance in acquiring intellectual identity. Intellectual identity refers to an individual's sense of self-regarding intellectual pursuits such as knowledge acquisition, critical thinking, and creative expression. While painting reading provides a rich and exciting learning experience for young children, it may also have the potential to foster the development of visual memory and intellectual identity. The case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, is applied in this study to answer these questions.

Key Words: memory, painting readings, intellectual identity, art education

Perspectives of Classroom Teacher Candidates on the Contribution of Art Readings to Intellectual Identity Development in Children: A Case Study

Paintings are full of rich elements that attract children, pique their curiosity and desire to learn, and drive them to explore. In this sense, painting readings have the ability to enhance young children's intellectual identity development while also providing a rich and engaging learning experience. Painting readings can be a valuable resource for developing visual perception and interpretation, analysis, critical thinking, creative ideas, and self-expression skills.

This study emphasizes how Painting Reading activities contribute to children's intellectual identity acquisition. Teachers are the people who will manage this process more effectively in children's intellectual identity development. Therefore, children should be supported in this sense from an early age. The viewpoints of pre-service teachers are significant in this regard. Using the collected data, the study attempted to address the following questions: What are the perspectives of pre-service classroom teachers regarding the use of painting readings? What kind of learning experience do art readings provide to the child in acquiring an intellectual identity through art education? How can picture reading skills be improved?

Today, with post-modernism, identity now must be structured by the individual. From traditional societies to the postmodern period, identity is an important concept that has helped individuals determine their sense of belonging, roles, and place. With post-modernism, identity has become mobile, multiple, individual, self-reflexive, and open to change and innovation (Kellner, 2001, p.195-196). Identity acquisition is related to the individual, social structure and the other. As a matter of fact, to Derrida according to; "All identities can only exist with their 'differences'. There is no identity that is not the 'other' of itself" (Derrida, 1992, p. 129).

The changes and qualities of age have influenced and altered an individual's identity acquisition processes.

> From this perspective, while identity in traditional societies has a holistic, fixed and generally singular quality, especially starting with the modernization process and with the postmodernity discussions, these holistic, fixed and singular identities have increasingly begun to be replaced by fragmented, variable, multiple and flexible identities (Güven, 2015, p. 267)

As a result, to raise individuals suitable for today's circumstances it is vital to prioritize intellectual identity acquisition and development in early childhood education. The individual is confronted with the obstacles of understanding, analyzing, and organizing information in the present day (Berman 2002).

Identity is a complex and multifaceted concept. It can be considered as the way an individual understands and develops her/ his own self and expresses it to others, in which the experiences gained since childhood are effective. In general, identity acquisition is defined in the literature as an individual's response to the most fundamental questions of their existence, such as “Who am I?” and “Where do I belong?” (Atak, 2011, p. 164).

Our childhood years are crucial in developing an intellectual identity. Individuals must develop an intellectual perspective in order to gain insight into the age(era) in which they live, acquire national and international cultural knowledge, and recognize, know, and evaluate themselves. We all know that children are shaped within a cultural structure. “In psychosocial development, the child finds their own life cycle within the social life cycle and culture has a significant impact on the child's development” (Miller, 1993). Painting readings can be a useful resource for acquiring, understanding, and learning this cultural structure. Simultaneously, while reading art, young children will gain new experiences that will help them discover their own potential for intellectual identity exploration and choose their areas of interest. “What it means to be an intellectual is rise above the partial preoccupation of one’s own profession—and engage with the global issues of truth, judgment, and taste of the time” (Bauman, 1996, p. 8).

Young children can analyse the stories through the visuals in the paintings, understand the emotional states of the characters, and attempt to decipher the meanings of visual symbols by examining the works. This process can help children develop their critical thinking skills and thus deepen their intellectual identities. Supporting children’s creativity and aesthetic feelings in their early years is critical for them to develop into creative, productive adults who appreciate the beauty of their surroundings in the future (Feeney & Moravcik, 1987).

Acquiring an intellectual identity enables a person to become both an active and a free subject (Butler, 1997). According to Said, one of the main roles of the intellectual is to oppose and have a critical perspective (Anık & Uysal, 2022). This way, the child will be able to exercise his critical thinking skills while reading paintings. In this context, art readings can be used to assist children develop critical perspective abilities. Thus, the impact of painting reading on children's identity acquisition is linked to classroom teachers' awareness and perception.

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research method, case study design. A case is a phenomenon observed over a certain time period (Gerring, 2007). Case studies are also known as case reports (McMillan, 2000). Case studies are studies in which an occurrence is studied in its real-life context (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). In case studies, focusing on how and why allows researchers to undertake in-depth investigations while seeking to find answers

to their studies (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011; Yin, 2009). Case study is a research method that describes the data gathered by researchers during real-life investigations (Creswell, 2013; Wellington, 2000, Cepni, 2007). Since the case study is based on real-life events, it allows for more diverse, in-depth, and holistic research, as well as the possibility to offer multiple perspectives simultaneously (Merriam, 2013).

Participants

The study group consists of 26 4th grade pre-service teachers enrolled in Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University's classroom teaching program and attending the Visual Art Education course at the time of the study. This course was held by the author of this study. When selecting the sample group, purposeful and convenience sampling were used. Convenience sampling is a form of sampling used to make the best use of limited resources and to select information-rich groups (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). This group was determined to be qualified for this research because of the training they received as part of the "Visual Arts Education" course on the significance of art education with young children, how it should be facilitated, and specifically the methods of painting readings.

Data Collection Tools

Yin (1984) mentions common sources of evidence in the data collection such as archive records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation , and as physical structure resources, technological tools, works of art and different physical evidence. An open-ended survey was employed as a data gathering tool in this study. For the validity of the produced survey questions, two experts were consulted. The survey questions related the teacher candidates' experiences and observations in the Painting Readings they conducted in the classroom context with data collecting.

Data Analysis and Coding

Based on the survey and interview data, evaluations were done using the content analysis method, and the results were interpreted. Content analysis is a way of analysing data that involves grouping, comparing, and making arrangements to derive inferences from the acquired data. (Cohen, 2007). The collected data must first be prepared for analysis. Categories are developed and grouped on the data in content analysis, and the results are analysed (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008; Bogdan & Biklen 2007). For this study, firstly, codes were obtained from statements given by 26 participants to the survey questions, and then these codes were combined and presented under themes in terms of their common features and lastly categories were created. Additionally, the statements of the prospective teachers were used in the text to corroborate the codes in the analysis.

The Classroom Teacher candidates, whose opinions were consulted within the scope of the research, were coded using two letters and a number each. 1st Teacher Candidate: PT1, 2nd Teacher Candidate: PT2.

Results

Below, the findings obtained are presented in line with the research questions and themes of the study.

Table 1 | *Theme 1: The Effect of Picture Readings on Children's Education*

Category		Code	*f*
Contribution to Personal Development		Imagination	5
		Creativity	4
		Interest-curiosity-exploration	33
		Self-confidence-social development	6
		Ability to express	3
		Analyzing	2
Contribution to Acquiring Cognitive and Analytical Thinking Skills		Perception	4
		Link between information	2
		Contribution to the learning experience	8
Contribution to Cultural and Artistic Development	Understanding Visual Language and Expression Development	Visual memory	16
		Visual intelligence	3
		Contribution to visual expression language	6
		Art expression skill	4
		Aesthetic appreciation	5
		Exploring visual language	3
		Picture reading skill	25
		Visual literacy	2
	Cultural and Artistic Accumulation	Meeting art	3
		Interest and love for art	8
		Learning about art	12
		Respect for artistic and cultural values	5

The following are the perspectives of pre-service teachers on the use of painting readings in primary school art education. *Table 1* demonstrates that participants rated the use of painting readings positively. It has been concluded that Painting Reading activities will have a good impact on children if they are employed in early childhood education. Simultaneously, it is thought to have a substantial impact on children's personal development, learning processes, artistic interest, and intellectual development.

According to the teacher candidates' observations during the application, painting reading influences the child's learning and perception processes and evokes a remarkable amount of attention and curiosity. The following are some examples of teacher candidates' perspectives on this subject:

(PT5): *"I introduced Picasso to my students. Therefore, I talked about the Cubism movement. Even though they were first graders, it attracted a lot of attention. They asked questions about the work and examined the samples I brought more than I expected. They even expressed that they wanted to do this activity in every visual arts class. Because it*

attracted their attention, their perspective on the lesson changed and allowed me to explain it more easily. Because they listened to me more carefully and with interest compared to other lessons." (PT7): "*I believe that reading activities will provide a rich and interesting learning experience for children at the primary education level. Here's why: Visual richness: Works of art are full of visual elements such as colours, shapes, patterns, and composition. Children at the primary level are particularly sensitive to visual stimuli and therefore works can be impressive and interesting to them. While works of art activate children's imagination and creativity, they can also attract their attention with their visual richness.* (PT17): *"Children improve their visual perception, recognition skills and visual memory by examining works of art. At the same time, analysing pictures and remembering details strengthens children's visual analytical abilities."* (PT9): *What caught my attention during the process was that when I showed them Sabri Berkel's 'Motifli Kompozisyon', they noticed that the motifs had a pattern. They were surprised when I told them that the artist drew them all by hand."*

In addition, all 26 teacher candidates see "reading pictures" as a skill. They emphasized that this skill can be developed by frequently taking part in art education programs, that children should be exposed to it at an early age based on their developmental characteristics, and that family collaboration is important. (PT7): *"I think it starts with knowledge and evolves into skill. They can learn to make sense of it and how to interpret it at a young age, and they can turn this knowledge into skill at a later age.''* (PT23): *''It can enable children to have a socially and culturally rich personality that shapes the future."* (PT25): *"Art, interpreting art, knowing art, understanding art and many other things stand in clusters and become a subset of the intellectual personality. It allows the child to have their own tastes."*

Table 2 | *Theme 2: The Contribution of Picture Readings to Intellectual Identity Formation*

Category	**Code**	***f***
The Effect of Individual Development and Personal Experiences on Identity	Confidence	4
	Free Expression	6
	Self Discovery	5
	Vision	7
	Discovering Your Abilities	3
	Analytical Thinking	12
	Memory Deepening	14
	Originality	16
	Critical Thinking Skills	12
Cultural and Social Awareness	Cultural Accumulation	27
	Local Cultural Identity	14
	Multicultural Interaction	15
	Empathy	6
	Appreciation	2

According to information provided by pre-service teacher, it is believed that individual developments and personal experiences influence the contribution of art readings to development of intellectual identity, as shown in *Table 2*. Participants believe that reading art aids children in developing self-confidence, which is supported by the following statements: (PT2): *"I observed that children developed the ability and self-confidence to freely present their ideas in front of a crowd."* Participants focused on critical thinking, original expression of thoughts, and analytical thinking skills in the data collected. (PT19): *"I believe that painting reading lessons can be effective in the child's intellectual identity development… Painting reading lessons offer children the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills. Artworks contain a variety of visual elements and symbols. Children learn to use critical thinking skills by examining, interpreting, and analysing these works. This process allows children to evaluate different perspectives and develop their thought processes."* (PT7): *"Picture reading sessions play an important role in multi-cultural education. Examining*

the work of an artist from a different culture and forming an opinion about it, whether he likes it or not, or the feelings he has towards that work, will have an impact on multi-cultural education. The student will analyse several works from America, England, and France, and as a result of these interpretations, he will learn about different cultures and lives. It is critical for the learner to have this qualification especially at such a young age.... For example, with art reading lessons starting in the first grade of primary school, the cultural awareness of the student will increase and at the same time their interest in reading paintings will increase." (PT24): *"It gives children the opportunity to understand and appreciate cultural diversity by introducing them to works of art from different cultures."* Furthermore, participants were asked, "Can painting readings have an impact on young children's perceptions of contemporary art?" 96% of those polled answered this question with yes.

Table 3 | *Theme 3:* Prospective Teachers' Observations *on the Process*

Category	**Code**	***f***
Experiences of Students (Child)	attention span	8
	Learning with fun	9
	desire to learn	3
	active participation	14
	Motivation	22
	not encountered before	13
Experiences of Teachers	Getting information about the child	1
	classroom management	7
	Application process	25

According to the views of pre-service teachers, this experience provided an opportunity for them to better understand the dynamics of the study. These experiences are expected to help pre-service teachers better prepare for their future careers as teachers.

Observation and practice experiences allowed candidate teachers to reflect on their own teaching approaches and interactions. They gained a better understanding of what went well and what needed improvement as a result of the post-application reflections. This is regarded to be an important step for teacher candidates to continually improve themselves.

In the following sample statements, participants conveyed their thoughts about the learning process of painting readings. The survey asked, "Have students encountered this method before?" The response to the question was outstanding. 88.5% of the students said they had never experienced such an experience previously. The following are some of the teacher candidates' perspectives based on the responses they got from pupils. (PT1): *"It was a fun and different lesson because they had never done such an activity before."* PT25: *"Because the students were used to seeing classical works in art classes, they were drawn to these works because they were new to them."* PT2: *"They loved the exercise very much. They asked if we would do it again in future lessons and days. There was a lot of curiosity and desire in that regard."* (PT3): *"The graffiti topic I explained aroused interest. As the children examined the examples, their participation and interest in the lesson increased significantly. In this way, the lesson was productive and interactive."* (PT12): "*During the exercise, I noticed that our students were curious. Their constant questioning caught my attention. This made the lesson more active*." (PT7): *"...rather than a static painting lesson (draw-paint), a lesson in which students share their ideas, see and examine different works, see works made with different materials, and think about why the artist who made those works did this is more active and interesting.*" He emphasized that picture readings create an effective learning environment. (PT8): "*It contributed to creativity and classroom management as they thought about the answers to different questions asked about the work."* (PT12): *"Yes, I enjoyed the application process. What caught my attention was the students' surprise that they could create art with videos. Another thing that caught my attention was that I realized that there were students in the class who I could describe as talented."*

Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the study's findings, participants saw picture readings as an excellent resource in educating young children through art. The following are the key conclusions drawn from the findings:

- Pre-service teachers agree that Painting Reading is a skill that can be improved.
- It is believed that if implemented at a young age, this strategy will aid in the acquisition of intellectual identity.
- The details and visual components (colour, texture, shape) in the works drew children's attention and piqued their interest. It has been stated that reading paintings boosts their attention span, fosters their curiosity and drive to learn and enables more active participation.
- It is also thought that it will have positive effects on areas such as visual language discovery and artistic expression skills.

- Again, the candidates stated that visual elements can strengthen the child's visual memory skills and support their development.
- According to the statements of pre-service teachers, reading pictures can help children especially in understanding the meanings of symbols and images.
- Participants saw that children were able to analyse and deduce meaning from paintings and successfully convey these thoughts. In this regard, they made positive statements that Painting Readings will support achievements such as analytical thinking, language skills, and developing creative ideas.
- Participants also stated that it would increase children's self-confidence and enable them to be more present in social relationships.
- Each painting reading is an opportunity for the child to encounter various works. It is seen as an important opportunity to increase interest in art.
- With each different painting, the participants emphasized the opportunity for children to become interested in and get to know their own culture and other cultures. They stated that this will provide important knowledge that will develop children's intellectual identities.
- Candidates made statements supporting that children will learn to respect art through reading art.
- The participants considered it as an important opportunity for children's multi-cultural education. According to them, this teaches children to value cultural diversity.
- Picture reading activities, according to pre-service teachers, were useful in developing teaching abilities such as classroom management, establishing relationships with students, and effective communication. These activities not only improved their ability to translate theoretical knowledge into reality but also assisted them in better understanding student profiles and regulating their learning processes.
- A more contemporary learning environment that differs from traditional learning approaches and highlights the importance of student-centred learning. It was worth noting that 88.5% of the students had never used a painting reading method before. This demonstrates that picture reading activities provide pupils with an innovative and intriguing learning experience.

These findings are significant in that they reveal that painting readings play a positive role in the formation of intellectual identity and support the all-round development of students. “No matter what profession they choose, individuals who are educated with appropriate art education and have a developed aesthetic appreciation will contribute more to themselves and their society” (Buyurgan & Buyurgan, 2012, p. 5).

In line with the data obtained in this study, the following suggestions can be offered:

- Teacher candidates should be trained in picture reading.
- Picture reading instruction for children should begin at a young age.
- Painting reading activities should be given more room in art education programs.
- Art reading activities with family engagement might be implemented in schools to increase artistic awareness.
- Painting readings can be held outside of the typical classroom setting in museums and galleries. Provide varied learning possibilities to children, and their interest in art and motivation to learn may grow.
- This study is applicable to children of all ages.
- Students should be taught how to recognize and respect different cultures as part of their education. As a result, by utilizing a multicultural education approach, students should be given the opportunity to develop positive attitudes toward different cultures. It can help prepare children to be global citizens.
- In terms of intellectual identity development, "Painting Readings" can also make significant contributions to a sustainable art education.

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A Study Exploring Influence of ‘Art Act’ Workshop on Spectators’ Attitudes toward Contemporary Art

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Abstract

This study asked design and art professionals, art enthusiasts, and individuals from a non-art background whether the experience of action painting, abstract art form, and process of viewing after meditation affected their attitudes towards art. Participants reported a more positive change in their image of ‘abstract works of contemporary art’, interest in ‘contemporary art’, satisfaction with the ‘impression of ‘art creation’ when they could paint. They also paid better ‘attention to themselves’ when they experienced action painting after meditation in a more positive way. Design and art professionals, traditionally considered to be in the same category, showed different results.

Keywords: abstract art appreciation, Experiential art, Impression evaluation

A Study Exploring Influence of 'Art Act' Workshop on Spectators' Attitudes toward Contemporary Art

Art education confronts one's inner self, focusing on 'expressing' it. This educational practice continues to be relevant even today (Yoshikawa et al., 2018). However, people without art experience or untrained spectators (hereinafter non-professionals) believe that it is 'difficult' to 'express' themselves or discover what is important to them internally through 'expression. Aesthetic and emotional value for non-professionals is highest for concrete paintings and lowest for abstract (Pihko et al., 2011).

Professionals rely heavily on intuition and emphasise aspects such as originality (Leder et al., 2012), whereas non-professionals focus on understanding the meaning of a work and resolving ambiguity, and likely assess ambiguous aspects through explicit logical thinking (Cupchik & Laszlo, 1992; Leder et al., 2004). Research has also demonstrated that differences between design and art professionals can be categorised based on intuition, purpose, and approach to creating work. Deleuze and Guattari (1994) articulate that artists utilise artistic intuition, expressing it as hue rather than colour. Arnheim (1954) asserts that artists position pictorial elements within paintings and components within sculptures, while designers and architects pursue appropriate distances between buildings, windows and furniture.

Conventionally, individuals have been classified and compared according to the dichotomy between professionals and non-professionals, with limited examination of how designers respond to art. This study distinguishes between 'design professionals' and 'art professionals', and investigates categories of art professionals, who think in non-logical terms of sensibility, design professionals who can think logically about sensibility and logic-oriented non-professionals.

Nakano and Okada (2017) empirically demonstrated that when observing a 'large glass', with high abstraction and comprehension difficulty, participants could resonate with the artist's emotions through bodily actions during the creation process. This emphasises the efficacy of physicality. Action painting is 'An arena in which to act, As an act rather than an object, As a process rather than a product' (Rosenberg, 1952). These characteristics and bodily creative actions are relatively easy for the general public to engage in. Therefore, it is expected to serve as, what Nakano and Okada refer to as, the 'act and process of creation'. Another reason non-professionals find it difficult to understand art is the uncertainty of self-content expressed. The essence of artistic expression is to create what lies within the human inner self but without form (Bell, 2017).

Even if there is an opportunity, the prompt in the initial experience of action painting that 'the unconscious part of the mind expresses itself' is difficult for participants who usually do not try. Even if they did so, their understanding of art failed to deepen. Agata

and Okada (2010) indicated that students who experience a strong sense of difficulty in art cannot reach the point of 'wanting to create something themselves' unless they experience creation and witness firsthand success. Therefore, it is imperative for non-professionals to be self-conscious before expressing themselves. Thus, the primary focus of this study is to explore how to better facilitate participants to delve into their inner self.

Meditation reportedly facilitates entry into a state of artistic creation. According to Yamamoto (2021), by directing attention to easily noticeable breathing and physical sensation, meditation can reveal mental states that individuals were previously unaware of, thereby promoting artistic creation. This drives four psychological changes: attention control, physical perception, emotional regulation and self-concept (Hölzel et al., 2011; Fujino, 2018). It may help adults seeking to participate in arts-related activities, by potentially alleviating negative thoughts and feelings about their art abilities (Crowder et al., 2020). Meditation not only enhances concentration, but also positively influences creativity regardless of practice duration; and even brief meditation can effectively stimulate creativity (Lebuda et al., 2016). Therefore, by harnessing the power of meditation in workshops, participants may be capable of delving deeper into the inner spirit of work, beyond superficial visual images. Considering that action painting is expected to have a certain degree of efficacy, it is possible that individuals may evaluate it based on how differently they perceive the 'essence of a piece'.

Expressionism values inner emotions rather than imitation of external objects (Yoshimura, 2001). Mohd (2021) points out that the instruction to 'draw with your eyes closed' makes the activity interesting and contributes to the element of 'play'. This study verifies its potential to further enhance the effect of deepening interest in and understanding of art by instructing participants to close their eyes while creating their works.

Purpose of this Study

This study primarily focuses on professionals and non-professionals, and investigates how creative experiences with abstract art and the appreciation process following meditation influence attitudes towards art. Furthermore, the study examines how, by closing one's eyes and not consciously controlling the creation process, the myth of creativity may be reframed, and how it affects attitudes towards art.

Hypothesis

Accordingly, we formulate two hypotheses. *Hypothesis 1*: After meditation, experiencing the act of painting increases interest in art more positively. Specifically, 'Impressions on contemporary abstract expressionist art', 'Assessment of yourself' and 'Impressions on Presented Artwork' change positively.

Hypothesis 2: Compared to the act of painting with your eyes open, closing your eyes may have a more significant effect on interest in art among non-professionals (art enthusiasts and non-art experienced) than among professionals (art and design professionals).

Method

Participants included 60 Chinese people—28 males and 32 females—living in Japan who responded to the recruitment on SNS for the face-to-face experiment. Their average age was 24.23 (SD=2.49). A preliminary survey was conducted to evaluate expertise. As illustrated in the figure, they were classified into two types of professionals (30) and non-professionals (30) each, comprising four categories.

1. Art professionals: Individuals with at least five years of art experience (high school + bachelor's degree, master's degree + practical experience, or doctorate), comprising individuals involved in art, such as art history, sculpture and oil painting.
2. Design professionals: Individuals with at least five years of design experience (high school + bachelor's degree, master's degree + practical experience, or doctorate), comprising individuals involved in design such as product and graphic design.
3. Art enthusiasts: Individuals passionate about art, making regular visits to art museums (at least eight times a year), without formal art education, or currently enrolled (art university students).
4. Non-art experienced people: Individuals with no special knowledge or interest in art (visiting museums up to four times per year).

Questionnaire

There were three categories of questions. The first relates to 'Impressions on contemporary abstract expressionist art', where participants were asked to respond on a 7-point scale ranging from '1. I don't think so at all' to '7. I very much think so'. For ease of understanding, simplified questions listed in parentheses are used（1: Strongly disagree ~ 7: Strongly agree).

1. Do you like modern, abstract art? (Agata & Okada, 2010) (Enjoyment of modern abstract art).
2. When you see modern abstract art in museums or online, do you understand what the artist is trying to express? (Agata & Okada, 2010) 'image of art' (Understanding of artist's intent when viewing abstract art).
3. Do you find it difficult to understand the mindset of modern artists? (Difficulty understanding the mindset of modern artists) (1: Very easy to understand; 7: Difficult to understand)
4. Do you think that the ability of an artwork to entertain people can effectively evaluate its quality? (Entertainment as a criterion for art evaluation).

5. Do you believe that high-level techniques are essential for creating art? (Agata & Okada, 2010) (Necessity of advanced techniques in art creation).
6. Do you feel a sense of movement in action painting? (Perception of movement in action painting).
7. Are you inspired by action paintings to want to express something? (Inspiration from action painting to create).
8. Do you feel a close connection with modern abstract art that evokes interest and affection? (Nakano & Okada, 2012) (Personal connection and interest in modern abstract art). The second category concerned 'Assessment of yourself'
9. Do you believe that you are at least as valuable as an average person? (Maekawa & Koshikawa, 2015) (Self-perceived value).
10. Do you consider yourself as having superior expressive (creative) abilities than those around you? (Ishiguro & Okada, 2017) （Self-perceived creativity).
11. Do you engage in creative activities that you are proud of? (Ishiguro & Okada, 2017) (Pride in one's creative endeavours).
12. Do you feel confident about expressing yourself (language ability) in front of others? (Ishiguro & Okada, 2017) (Confidence in self-expression).
13. Do you often regret or reconsider 'why you did something' in relation to your decisions and actions? (Maekawa & Koshikawa, 2015) (Reconsideration or regret over past decisions).
14. Do you tend to perceive everything positively? (Brown & Ryan, 2003) (Positive outlook on matters). The third category encompasses 'Impressions on Presented Artworks'
15. Do you often want to know more about the artwork you presented? (Miyata et al., 2017) 'Artwork appreciation' (Desire to learn more about the presented artwork).
16. Do you feel inspired to express something after being exposed to a presented work of art? (Miyata et al., 2017). \'Artwork appreciation' (Feeling inspired to create after viewing the artwork).
17. Do new ideas emerge when you look at the artwork that is presented to you? (Miyata et al., 2017）'Artwork appreciation' (Emergence of new ideas after viewing the artwork).
18. Do you derive pleasure from observing the artwork that is presented to you? (Pleasure from viewing the artwork).
19. Do you feel that the artwork is appealing to you? (Appreciation of the artwork's appeal).
20. Do you feel closer to the suggested work and develop interest and attachment? (Ishiguro & Okada, 2017). (Personal connections and interests in the presented artwork).
21. Do you understand the author's feelings during the creation of the work? (Ishiguro & Okada, 2017). (Understanding the artist's feelings during creation).

22. Consider whether the author's thoughts can benefit your own thinking (creativity and language ability) (Ishiguro & Okad, 2017). (Application of the artist's thoughts to thinking or creativity).
23. If you were to purchase the work presented, how much would you pay for it? (Willingness to pay for the artwork (e.g., 1=20,000, 7=140,000)).

The experimental steps are listed in Table 1 (see appendix). Sessions 1–3 are common to both groups; Session 4 sets different experiences for different groups, and the following two sessions are also common.

(1) Explaining the **experiment** flow informed consent for shooting of participation process
First, we orally explained the general workshop process to the participants and obtained their permission for photography. We then showed the participants a self-made video detailing the background and creative process of action painting (approximately five minutes). Watched a YouTube video on how to draw action paintings (approximately two minutes, no sound).

(2) *Visual **Thinking** Strategy* (VTS)
In the second segment, we used VTS for art appreciation and instructed the participants to evaluate the artwork using three questions. The participants were instructed not to talk to each other.
In situations where titles, author names and explanatory texts are not provided:
    a. What do you feel when you look at this picture?
    b. How is this sensation?
    c. I think about what the author may have felt when creating this. The participants were asked to look at the artwork.

Subsequently, the participants completed the first questionnaire.

(3) Action **painting** creation experience with eyes open
For the action-painting creation experience, the participants were instructed to choose three colours from several pigments. Create based on the theme ‘the most memorable time in your life so far’ (about 10 minutes)

(4) Breathing meditation
In this study, we use Tibetan Singing Bowl meditation as employed by Goldsby et al. (2017), a non-invasive intervention that can be performed by beginners and is particularly effective for people who have never meditated.
The meditation was accompanied by the sound of a Tibetan Singing Bowl on YouTube.
    a. ‘Close your eyes, take a deep breath and relax your whole body from head to toe’
    b. ‘Focus your attention on the tip of your nose’

c. ‘If you feel restless, adopt the Taoist method of full-body awareness, try to slowly scan your consciousness from head to feet, then return to the head, and finally concentrate on the tip of your nose’.

Subsequently, we maintained silence and did not intervene with the participants until the 20-minute session was complete.

(5) Action painting creation experience with open and closed eyes

After the meditation, we conducted another creative experience using the same theme. Here, we categorised the participants into groups, having them create with either their eyes closed or open, depending on the group. To allow the participants more time to think, we extended the creation time from 10 to 20 minutes.

(6) Using the VTS method to appreciate and fill out the survey

During the second artwork appreciation session, we posed three questions to the participants using the VTS appreciation method for the first time. An anonymous survey was conducted during the survey completion period.

(7) Brief presentation on experience and impressions of creation

Finally, they briefly introduced their creative experiences and impressions, taking approximately 2–3 minutes per person.

Results

To examine the changes in impressions following the workshop, a three-factor analysis of variance was conducted with each survey item as the dependent variable and participants’ attributes (art and design professionals, art enthusiasts, and non-art experienced people), type of intervention (whether the group closed or opened their eyes), and before and after the intervention as independent variables.

Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported. This study suggests that meditative and physical creation experience of abstract art helped participants become aware of their inner self, triggering psychological changes in emotional regulation and self-concept, having a positive impact on ‘Assessment of yourself’. It also brought them closer to contemporary art, sparked interest and attachment, and to some extent positively changed their interest in ‘Impressions on contemporary abstract expressionist art’, ‘Impressions on Presented Artwork’ and satisfaction with ‘Assessment of yourself’. However, Hypothesis 2 was not supported. It was suggested that the impact of opening and closing the eyes and performing action painting did not vary in effectiveness depending on expertise. The insignificance of entertainment as a criterion for art evaluation is primarily attributed to the divergent judgment criteria between non-professionals (including art enthusiasts and individuals with no art experience) and art and design professionals. This divergence resulted in the absence of a significant main effect in our study. The minimal impact of a short-term single session of meditation combined with art performance on long-established thinking habits suggests a

limited influence on individuals' propensity for reconsideration or regret over past decisions and on fostering a positive outlook.

The lack of significance in Hypothesis 2, which proposes that professionalism differences are invalid under two distinct experiential conditions, can be attributed to findings similar to those reported by Mohd (2021). Specifically, it suggests that closing one's eyes and engaging in action painting may not effectively alter pre-existing perceptions of art creation among adult non-professionals. This is possibly because of their established notions of art creation, which may not be easily influenced by experiential interventions.

Conclusion

The new approach of action painting with eyes open after meditation may address the notion proposed by Leder et al. (2012) that 'as specialization increases, the emotional response to art works is clearly attenuated in art professionals compared to non-professionals'. This new combination of meditation and action painting could allow art professionals to experience a deeper emotional response to artworks, offering a new perspective on art appreciation.

While non-professionals do not reach the same open-ended artwork evaluation as art professionals by creating with their eyes closed, they could change their impressions of the artist's thoughts in a more positive direction by drawing with their eyes open and expressing their inner impulses through a free method of action painting. These insights have significant implications for thinking about the structure of empathy and understanding in art.

Research limitations

Art professionals and non-professionals differ in their attitudes towards art and elements of self-discovery, but the identification and analysis of these specific elements is still in progress. Furthermore, it is challenging to identify the cause of ineffective results observed in the closed-eye creation process, which complicates the interpretation of the research. Additionally, regarding the influence of 'meditation' and 'action painting', it is currently unclear whether these methods have similar effects in the appreciation of works compared to other contemporary art genres.

This study is based on the results of workshop activities conducted at a university. Given that workshops are now also being held in schools, it remains to be seen whether the findings can be applied to such settings. The context in which the workshops were conducted requires further investigation. A diverse group of Chinese residents in Japan participated in this practice; however, there was also a significant number of applications from international students. Therefore, the implications of this study may pertain primarily to Chinese students and professionals residing in Japan. Moving forward, it is essential to consider factors such as participant recruitment and methods of forming groups during workshops.

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Appendix

Table 1 | *Workshop Process Diagram*

(1) Explanation of the experiment flow, informed consent for the shooting of the participation process (2) VTS (Visual Thinking Strategy)	
(3) Action painting creation experience with eyes open	
(4) Breathing meditation	
(5) Action painting creation experience with open and closed eyes	
(6) Using the VTS method to appreciate and fill out the survey (7) Brief presentation on experience and impressions of creation	

Figure 1 | *Changes in impressions of modern art before and after participation*

	Questionnaire	Main effect		Interaction		Average of before and after changes	Standard deviation			
						Group 1 Before After; Group 2 Before After	Group 1 : Create with your eyes closed		Group 2 : Create with your eyes open	
		F-value	P-value	F-value	P-value	2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0 4.5 5.0 5.5 6.0	before	after	before	after
Impressions on Contemporary Abstract Expressionist Art	1 Enjoyment of modern abstract art.	7.48	.001**	2.37	.075+		1.29	1.50	1.45	1.39
	2 Understanding of artist's intent when viewing abstract art.	6.69	.000**	0.61	0.703		1.09	1.18	1.26	1.38
	3 Difficulty understanding the mindset of modern artists	1.04	.003**	3.02	.098+		1.31	0.96	1.51	1.61
	4 Entertainment as a criterion for art evaluation.	3.12	.080+	4.05	.060+		1.31	1.89	1.76	1.80
	5 Necessity of advanced techniques in art creation.	15.51	.000**	0.97	.412		1.73	1.30	0.94	1.46
	6 Perception of movement in action painting	2.56	.000**	0.54	.655		1.56	1.32	1.31	1.11
	7 Inspiration from action painting to create.	15.43	.000**	0.83	.567		1.43	1.39	1.59	1.15
	8 Personal connection and interest in modern abstract art.	14.26	.000**	0.53	.751		1.17	1.32	1.49	0.89
Self-Assessment	9 Self-perceived value compared to others.	9.81	.001**	2.01	.094+		1.63	1.36	1.51	1.02
	10 Self-perceived creativity compared to others.	8.93	.004**	0.56	.339		1.31	1.33	1.51	1.35
	11 Pride in one's creative endeavors.	13.56	.000**	1.52	.215		1.25	1.26	1.33	1.34
	12 Confidence in self-expression.	8.12	.005**	0.17	.915		1.75	1.33	1.64	1.59
	13 Reconsideration or regret over past decisions.	0.29	.747	1.21	.313		1.77	1.57	1.71	2.10
	14 Positive outlook on matters.	0.13	.881	2.08	.067+		1.57	1.56	1.64	1.43
Impressions on Presented Artwork	15 Desire to learn more about the presented artwork.	8.85	.004**	0.48	.698		1.68	1.63	1.30	1.43
	16 Emergence of new ideas after viewing the artwork.	13.75	.000**	0.10	.096		1.51	1.43	1.39	1.44
	17 Feeling inspired to create after viewing the artwork.	8.96	.005**	0.14	.933		1.64	1.67	1.61	1.42
	18 Pleasure from viewing the artwork.	7.27	.011*	0.77	.518		1.61	1.56	1.77	1.49
	19 Appreciation of the artwork's appeal.	16.47	.001**	6.06	.636+		1.58	1.65	1.26	0.94
	20 Personal connection and interest in the presented artwork.	4.63	.038*	0.09	.961		1.66	1.75	1.37	1.02
	21 Understanding of the artist's feelings during creation.	5.33	.027*	1.36	.270		1.37	1.87	1.17	1.28
	22 Application of the artist's thoughts to your thinking or creativity.	12.74	.001**	0.09	.965		1.55	1.59	1.25	1.19
	23 Willingness to pay for the artwork	20.01	.000**	2.86	.051+		1.75	1.78	1.36	1.31

Online Art Workshops in Primary Schools Located in Remote Areas of Greece's Mainland and its Islands

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Abstract

This study investigates whether online art workshops in primary schools located in remote areas of Greece's mainland and its islands contribute to the development of students' cognitive, emotional, and social skills, and potential difficulties they may encounter during the workshops. Data were gathered through a semi-structured interview with a primary school teacher whose class of three students participated in an online art workshop once weekly during the 2020–2021 school year. The workshop was conducted after school hours. The analysis of the interview revealed that even though visual arts instruction was delivered online in a modern way, it nevertheless contributed to students' cognitive and social, emotional development. The students did not face any difficulty participating in the online classes; they voluntarily and enthusiastically attended the art workshops. Although the results are consistent with those of previous research, the present research differs in that it examined online visual arts instruction using modern technology. Most previous research examined face-to-face art teaching or the integration of art with the educational process. The innovative use of technology in the present educational activity allowed students who lived far from urban centres to interact with, learn about, and participate in the visual arts directly.

Keywords: art, online learning, cognitive skills, emotional skills, social skills

Online Art Workshops in Primary Schools Located in Remote Areas of Greece's Mainland and its Islands

Chapman (1993) stated, art education should be recognised as an essential subject in the school curriculum and not as an educational decoration. Art education should foster a more comprehensive understanding of the importance of art in children's lives. Art education is not simply to provide children with art materials to occupy them on a rainy day, nor to discover and educate those few children who seem to be artistically gifted (p. 111).

The visual arts in particular have a vocabulary of their own: lines, colours, shapes, and patterns that create images that communicate ideas, thoughts, emotions, experiences, and meanings. Teaching art involves students learning what 'art' is through the artistic process. Through visual arts, students develop skills that they can apply to other domains of their lives. Therefore, art instruction should be made a basic and integral component of educational curricula; however, it is constantly underfunded in modern Greece, especially in remote schools (Kokkos et al., 2011).

From October 2019, the researcher has developed and implemented voluntary online art workshops for students attending remote schools. These art workshops aim to introduce students to the phenomenon of art by teaching them visual arts.

The workshop, entitled 'Online Visual Arts Workshops in Primary Schools in Remote Areas of Mainland Greece and Its Islands' is the subject of this study. The study aims to examine the contribution of modern online visual arts instruction to the development of skills of primary school students located in remote areas of mainland Greece and its islands and the difficulties the students may have encountered during the workshop.

Literature Review

Results of Previous Studies

Efland's (2002) 'Integrated Cognitive Theory' states that education can lead children to acquire learning through art. He contended that art develops children's cognitive functions, forming the basis for teaching art and other subjects.

For teachers, enhancing learning is a challenge. The ability to learn facts and concepts is greatly enhanced when they are placed in the context of everyday life (Tyler & Likova, 2012). According to Matsagouras (2007), when students use their cognitive skills, they must process data that leads to learning and knowledge acquisition. Neuroscience research suggests that teaching art enhances the transferability of learned skills to other cognitive fields. Neuroimaging indicates that drawing activates the same cortical areas as writing, remembering, naming, viewing images, manufacturing, and estimating spatial relationships (Tyler & Likova, 2012).

Richards (2003) studied the performance of kindergarten students in Kentucky, USA, between 1998–2003. He reported that 90% of students with access to art classes achieved

higher grades in reading than the average student in their class. In addition, reading is also enhanced when students draw pictures that symbolise the text they are reading. Burger and Winner (2000) studied the effectiveness of three intervention programmes for primary school children with reading problems. In one, students took additional visual art lessons while completing related reading and writing activities. These children noted greater improvements in their reading and writing. In addition, when visual arts are used to teach mathematics (geometry), students may find the subject more engaging (Schoevers et al., 2019).

Visual art activities such as drawing encourage children to use multiple intelligences: visual-spatial, linguistic-verbal, logical-mathematical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal (Gardner, 1983). They offer children the opportunity to actively participate in a pleasant learning environment because drawing is a creative activity that can cause excitement, enjoyment, and aesthetic pleasure, all of which are components of social-emotional development (Zakaria et al., 2021).

Zakaria et al. (2021) researched in Malaysia with preschool teachers. Two main themes emerged: first, drawing helped children in meaningful expression and active communication; second, social-emotional skills and imagination are closely related to each other. Using them together leads to self-control, understanding, and cooperation with others. The importance of socio-emotional development has also been emphasised in all preschool educational materials in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, and Malaysia (Lindon, 2005).

Mynarikova (2012) implemented an art educational programme for the social and emotional development of 5th-grade children in the Czech Republic and found that art activities were effective for children with a general inability to verbally express their thoughts and feelings due to a fear of being ridiculed and misunderstood. Children were able to express themselves and communicate with others using drawings, music, or movement while improving their collaboration and emotional skills.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to online learning being widely used in several countries, drawing the attention of educational researchers. However, due to their practical nature, many disciplines, including the visual arts, are less amenable to online learning (Wang et al., 2021).

Pepper (2021) conducted qualitative research by interviewing three visual arts teachers from primary, secondary, and tertiary education, focusing on the online experience of teaching the visual arts. Teachers pointed out that one factor that influenced the success of online art classes was the support the students received at home. While some students received support at home, others did not; moreover, the teachers noted a decline in the latter group. Additionally, the teachers pointed out that having technological equipment, a

reliable Internet connection, and art materials was necessary for online art courses to work smoothly.

Critical Review of Literature

The literature review establishes that the visual arts and the arts in general, such as drama and music, enhance students' cognitive, emotional, and social skills, which families and educators acknowledge. However, research on the contribution of the visual arts in education remains understudied in Greece. Most studies on this topic have been conducted in the USA. Furthermore, all research concerns visual arts instruction in face-to-face settings rather than online. A recent research paper that examined the online teaching of visual arts (Pepper, 2021) considers the forced transition from in-class teaching to online teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and not the visual arts teaching in primary schools in remote areas where hiring a visual arts teacher is unfeasible or where students lack access to resources for visual arts activities. In addition, in this study, the researcher and the interviewee both taught at the art workshops; this contrasts with research studies carried out by researchers not involved in the teaching process. Compared with studies where students engaged in online visual arts instruction from home, the current study is unique in that the students attended the online workshops from school premises. Therefore, this study aimed to examine whether teaching the visual arts online contributes to the development of students' cognitive, emotional, and social skills and the difficulties students encounter. The following research questions guided the study:

- How do online art workshops contribute to the development of students' cognitive, emotional, and social skills?
- What do teachers think are the difficulties that students face while participating in online art workshops?

Data Collection and Research Method

Data were collected through a semi-structured interview because of the small sample size (only one interviewee), and closed and open-ended questions were used, following a pre-existing question list.

The interviewee was the teacher of the students and the head of one of the schools where the workshops were implemented for one hour and thirty minutes each week during the 2021 school year. She had 32 years of teaching experience and had previously worked with two students in a school in a remote area of Greece. The school in which the interviewee taught was selected because it had three students, compared to one student where the researcher conducted online art workshops. The students included a 1st-grade girl, aged 7; a 2nd-grade girl, aged 9; and a 4th-grade boy, aged 10–11. One student was of Greek nationality, spoke Greek as his native language, and had recently moved from a large urban centre. The other two children, who were foreign nationals and did not speak Greek

as their first language, had relocated to Greece with their parents at the beginning of the school year; therefore, they did not speak or understand Greek when they started school. Since the researcher and the interviewee lived in different cities, the interview was conducted via Viber.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with the transcription stage. The next stage was organisation; coding the data in thematic units was omitted because there was only one interviewee. Instead of coding, the text responses to the questions under investigation were highlighted using four different coloured markers, one for each question. Three claims generated by the data analysis related to the first research question and one to the second.

Role of the Researcher

The research questions fall within the broader field of the researcher's educational studies and professional interests, and they were further specified after reviewing the relevant literature. The researcher tried to maintain neutrality and objectivity while crafting the questions and when conducting the interview itself. The interview was conducted in a friendly, relaxed, and pleasant atmosphere of mutual cooperation, trust, and respect.

Ethical Considerations/Dilemmas

Prior to the interview, the researcher informed the interviewee that the interview would be conducted in the context of postgraduate qualitative research work. She informed her that the data and information would be kept completely anonymous and confidential, secure, and would be processed with absolute accuracy. The interviewee was also informed that her participation in the study was entirely voluntary and that she could interrupt the interview at any stage to ask for clarifications, report physical discomfort, or voice any other concerns. Following the briefing, the interviewee gave her consent.

Validity

To ensure the validity of this qualitative research, the researcher applied the following techniques: First, the selection of the teacher (sample) was based on her many years of experience teaching in schools located in remote areas of Greece. Second, when the researcher wrote the interview questions, she sent them to a colleague (an active teacher and school principal with a PhD) for feedback. Third, she sent the interview transcript to the interviewee, who agreed with the script and did not make any corrections.

Results

The following three claims emerged based on the teacher's responses to the first research question.

Claim 1: Teaching visual arts through online art workshops contributes to the development of cognitive skills in students living in remote areas.

The first claim concerns students' enhanced cognitive skills as a result of participating in online art workshops. Implementing the online art workshops helped students enrich their artistic expression, assimilate and recall information, develop observational skills, express themselves verbally. Specifically, at the end of the school year, the students wrote reflections about the workshops and used terminology related to art, such as 'We knew Picasso and Akrithakis', 'I used oil pastel and aquarella', and 'I liked the "tsiki tsiki" technique of the Greek artist Alexis Akrithakis' (Figure 1). They offered precise descriptions, made comparisons, solved problems and enriched their imaginations. For instance, one student designed a cloud; she liked its colours but not its shape. After discussion and thinking, the student decided to transform it into a skateboard. According to the teacher, the skills that they incorporated into their learning process could have been developed even further had the workshops continued. Specifically, the teacher mentioned that the students applied the knowledge they acquired both inside and outside of the school context. For example, they started building three-dimensional constructions on their own; the simple outline of a heart they had painted gave way to richer paintings in various shapes and colours, going through a mental process in which they matched colours with each other and considered additional shapes with which to supplement their self-portraits.



Figure 1 | Tsiki tsiki technique of Greek artist Alexis Akrithakis *(Copyright by the author)*

Claim 2: Teaching visual arts through online art workshops contributes to the development of emotional skills in students living in remote areas.

The second claim highlights the workshops improved students' emotional skills. According to the teacher, the online art workshops contributed to the development of the students' emotional skills, such as patience, perseverance, self-confidence, self-trust, self-control, and concentration; they also overcame their shyness. One of the students had always lagged behind the other two and the workshops significantly improved her self-confidence and self-trust. The first-grade student was known for not following instructions and acting impatiently. However, as shown in Figure 2, she was absorbed in her artwork.

Claim 3: Teaching the visual arts through online art workshops contributes to the development of social skills of students living in remote areas.



Figure 2 | *First grade student drawing* (Copyright by the author)

The online art workshops allowed students to improve their social skills through collaboration, teamwork, and competition. The interviewee stated that when it was announced that the President of the Greek Democracy would be visiting the island, the students decided to collaboratively paint her portrait. This required collaboratively deciding how to depict her face, hair, glasses, etc. (Figure 3), demonstrating their improved cooperation.

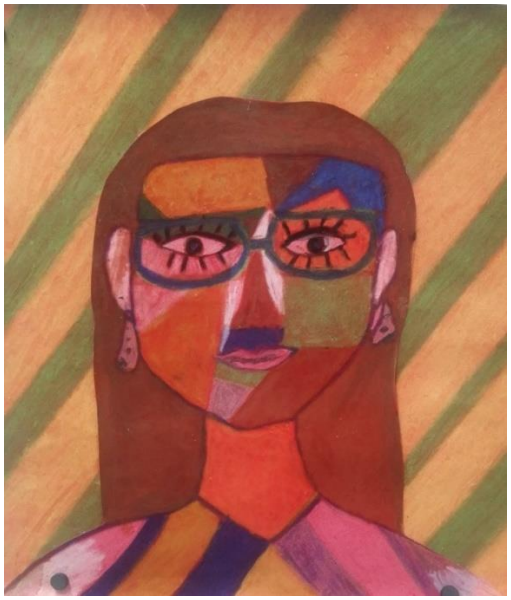


Figure 3 | *Portrait of the President of the Greek Democracy* (Copyright by the author)

Students also developed empathy and communication with people outside of the school context. For instance, when the researcher invited the daughter of the Greek artist Alexis Akrithakis to one of the last workshops, the students unhesitatingly presented their works to her, answered her questions, and asked her about her father's artworks (Figure 4).



Figure 4 | *Conversation with the daughter of the Greek artist Alexis Akrithakis* (Copyright by the author)

Regarding the second research question, the following claim emerged.

Claim 4: The students faced no difficulties during the activity; instead, they had a positive attitude towards participating in the online art workshops.

According to the teacher, the students willingly participated in the online art workshops without facing any difficulties in understanding. Because they realised that it was interesting, they enjoyed it and were enthusiastic about their artistic products (Figure 5, 6, 7). Additionally, the logistical infrastructure may have been a difficulty but not a hindrance to the realisation of the art workshops.



Figure 5 | *Children's artwork: A word that means something special to me, mixed media, 23x12cm, 2021* (Copyright by the author)

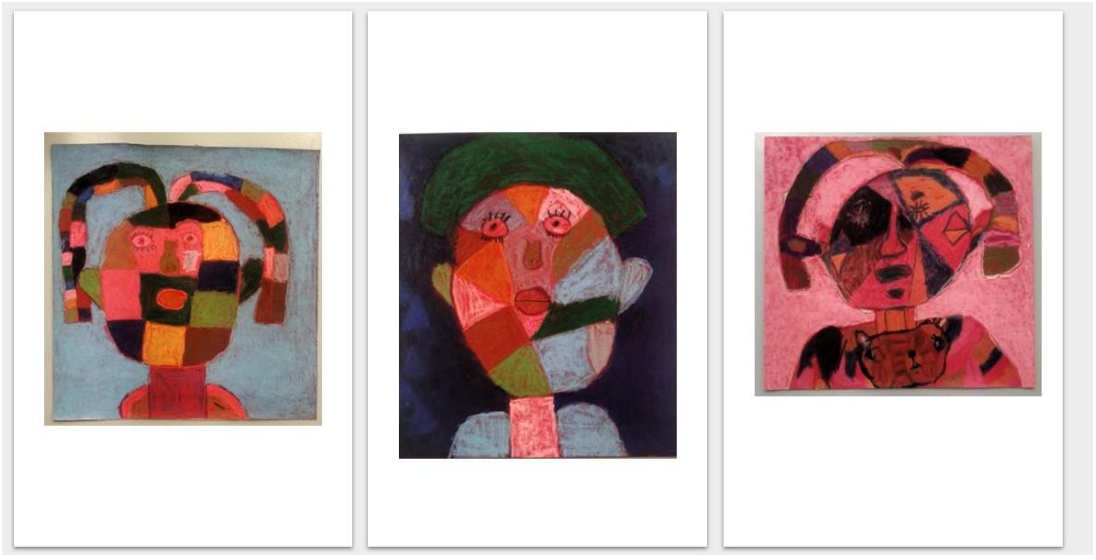


Figure 6 | *Children's artwork: Self-portraits, oil pastel, 33x45cm, 2022* (Copyright by the author)



Figure 7 | *Children's artwork: Suitcase, mixed media, 2022* (Copyright by the author)

Discussion

The results of this qualitative study align with the findings of other studies on the positive contribution of the visual arts to the development of cognitive skills among primary school students (Burger & Winner, 2000; Richards, 2003; Schoevers et al., 2019). Students with access to art programs perform better on tests than students without such access (Cirillo et al., 2008).

In addition to reporting improved school performance of students who attended art programs, Feldwisch et al. (2014) also highlighted that participation, motivation, challenges, and positive attitudes of teachers influence the success of these activities. As the teacher mentioned, the children enthusiastically wanted to participate, collaborate, and be able to express themselves through art. In addition, the students looked forward to lessons. The teacher revealed that the overall evaluation of the art programmes was consistently favourable, with responses indicating that both teachers and students benefited from the programme.

This study highlights the possibility that the teaching of visual arts can contribute to the development of students' cognitive, social, and emotional skills even when instruction occurs online and in schools located in remote areas where students lack access to the arts or in environments where students come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and different grade levels. In addition, Feldwisch et al. (2014) highlight the necessity of training teachers to have a positive attitude towards the arts because, as this research highlights, such an attitude contributes to the success of arts education.

Finally, when a child encounters art or creates a work of art, it is an activity that takes place in the here and now (Vaos, 2015) and affects other aspects of the child's future (Jones & Doolittle, 2017). Therefore, visual arts programmes ought to be an integral part of the educational process, especially for students in remote areas with no other opportunity to interact with the arts.

Implications

The present research can be recognised as unique because it investigated the effects of an online visual arts workshop newly offered in Greece. The positive results have triggered interest in carrying out such workshops in other remote schools, as well as the necessity for additional research on the activity's effectiveness.

A significant step towards achieving equality in education and knowledge is the use of technology to create engaging and more personalised learning experiences (Bendici, 2020, as cited in Pepper, 2021). Thus, access to the visual arts will not be limited to urban students.

Limitations

This study only included one interview; therefore, the results may not generalize to other primary schools in remote areas of Greece. In this case, the results allow the researcher to talk about generalizing the claims of this research for the specific group of students. The teacher gave a detailed description of the development of the students' cognitive, social, and emotional skills as well as whether they experienced difficulties, thus the reader can compare the present case with other similar ones and draw generalized conclusions on his/her own (Vrasidas, 2014, p.81). Further research could apply the same research questions to a larger sample size of teachers in the other remote primary schools in which the workshops have been implemented.

Conclusion

The course, "Qualitative Research in Education", gave the research an opportunity to to test her project within an academic research context. Through the review of the literature and the interview, the research questions were answered, and new topics emerged for investigation.

The researcher faced some challenges due to lack of experience including difficulty finding online research studies and resources, creating research questions, conducting the interview, and writing the paper. The literature available on the topic was not sufficient. The only research study/dissertation found for the online teaching of visual arts was written by Pepper (2021) about 'compulsory' distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The workshops were a positive experience for both the researcher and the children that participated in them. They participated voluntarily and enthusiastically, creating incredible visual works, and as the research results show, the art workshops contributed to

the development of essential, important academic and life skills in the students. For these reasons, the researcher wishes to continue not only online visual arts teaching but also investigating their positive contribution to the educational process.

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Adding Excitements to The Classroom Experience Through Digital Storytelling: Arts-based Instruction Teacher Training for Immigrant Students

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Abstract

The Indonesian government built Indonesian schools in the palm oil hinterland of Sabah, Malaysia, commonly known as CLCs (Community Learning Centres), as a form of responsibility to provide all Indonesians with the right to 9 years of basic education. Although these schools implement the Indonesian curriculum and bring in professional teachers from Indonesia, there is a need for appropriate teaching strategies to suit the needs of CLC students who need more motivation to learn. Previous studies have shown that students with learning difficulties and interest in learning are likelier to succeed when lessons are delivered through art and music. In this regard, training new teachers on appropriate teaching strategies is essential for CLC students who are children of immigrants. New teachers may feel overwhelmed when they start teaching under conditions different from those they studied at university. This study is designed to prepare CLC teachers to teach immigrant children through the arts and determine if this approach is more effective for this population. Several teachers from various CLCs were gathered in one location and then given a day of training on teaching delightful immigrant children through the arts. The study showed how teachers were perceived before, during, and after the training. According to field observations, teachers' teaching methods in the classroom were more diverse. Some teachers also indicated that it was easier to reach immigrant children through art; therefore, teaching in the classroom became more effortless.

Keywords: immigrant student, teacher training, teach through art

Authors note

Permission to use their photos was obtained from all students and teachers who participated in the project prior to this publication

Adding Excitements to The Classroom Experience Through Digital Storytelling: Arts-based Instruction Teacher Training for Immigrant Students

In the context of the Indonesian education system, improving the quality of education is expected to reach all Indonesian citizens, regardless of location. However, the reality is different, as evidenced by the over 50,000 Indonesian children living in East Malaysia, particularly Sabah, who lack access to education. The Indonesian government implemented the Community Learning Centre (CLC) initiative to address this challenge, establishing around 156 centres in Sabah alone (SIKK, 2022). This initiative demonstrates the government's commitment to providing quality education for all, even those residing outside the country's borders.

The Indonesian education system aims to deliver authentic and contextual learning experiences that enhance students' life skills, cultivate a problem-solving mindset, and foster autonomy. Recognizing the need for quality education at CLCs, the Indonesian government established the Professional Teacher Dispatching Program. This program deploys highly qualified teachers from Indonesia, selected through a rigorous process, to ensure that CLC students receive the best education possible. This commitment to quality education underscores the government's dedication to empowering Indonesian students, regardless of location.

However, Teaching at a CLC in an oil palm plantation area demands unique strategies due to the distinct geographical and social landscape of its Indonesian migrant worker community. Unlike their counterparts in Indonesia, CLC students face various challenges: They often help their parents with work in the mornings, leading to fatigue and affecting their motivation for learning. Additionally, they tend to be quickly bored during lessons, requiring teachers to employ engaging and well-organized teaching methods to engage them effectively. This unique context necessitates specialized approaches to cater to the specific needs of CLC students and ensure their success in education (Asrobudi, 2019; Tohari, 2021).

Looking at the CLC condition, incorporating art-based teaching methods can be a transformative approach to spark interest, boost engagement, and unlock their potential. Research by Rooney (2004) highlights the power of arts-based community education in fostering connections, leading to "cooperation and more creative problem-solving." Similarly, Hullsbosch (2010) emphasizes the impact of such instruction on "interest, motivation, and enthusiasm for learning," fostering intellectual development across creativity, self-direction, and complex thinking.

One particularly effective art-based teaching technique is Digital Storytelling. This method leverages technology and creativity to empower students to tell their stories,

fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment. Numerous studies provide empirical evidence for the benefits of Digital Storytelling:

1. Increased Engagement and Motivation: Studies by Burn & Reed (2008) demonstrate how Digital Storytelling creates a fun and exciting atmosphere, leading to increased attention, motivation, and critical thinking skills.
2. Catering to Diverse Learning Styles: Fitriani & Kurniawan (2016) highlights how Digital Storytelling caters to various learning styles, ensuring all students can access and engage with the material effectively.
3. Enhanced Communication and Multimedia Skills: This method promotes communication skills by encouraging students to articulate their ideas and stories. Additionally, it develops their digital literacy and proficiency in using multimedia tools.

Therefore, the role of the teacher is significant, as Huitt (2009) emphasized that the most direct influence on student achievement is what goes on in classrooms. Various specialists have demonstrated that successful teachers are a significant part of any viable school's practice. Though CLC teachers sent by the government are professional teachers, if they had just come to Sabah as new teachers, it would be hard for them to adapt to the unique characteristics of CLC students. Studies indicate that novice teachers with extensive guidance from mentors substantially impacted student performance in as little as two years (Strong et al., 2004).

Indeed, to effectively implement art-based teaching methods and maximize their potential for boosting student motivation, equipping new teachers with comprehensive training in this pedagogical approach is paramount. The goal of new teacher courses is not just to transmit knowledge and methods but to equip them with real-world experience through model lessons and practicums (Frawley, 2013). However, what happens when these courses embrace art-based instruction, fundamentally transforming the educational landscape?

With art-based instruction, new teachers become empowered to:

1. Enhance student comprehension and engagement: Through active participation in artistic expression, students delve deeper into the learning process, fostering meaningful understanding and dialogue (Frawley, 2013).
2. Build a community of learners: Art-based instruction creates a positive learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging and collaboration, empowering students to learn and grow together (Ogden et al., 2010).
3. Focus on the learning journey, not just the destination: By removing the pressure of artistic perfection, teachers can guide students through a transformative learning experience that prioritizes exploration and growth (Brenner, 2010).

4. Simplify the learning process: By placing the student at the centre, art-based instruction reduces the cognitive load of understanding complex material and allows for individualized learning experiences (Putranta & Jumadi, 2019).

This study is designed to prepare CLC teachers to instruct immigrant children via the arts and determine whether this approach is more effective with the population of Indonesian Immigrant children at CLCs through the lenses of teachers. Therefore, this study tried to implement teacher training on art-based teaching methods and look at perceptions and teacher behaviour before, during, and after training.

Research Design

Art-based instruction in pre-service teaching-learning has been studied using various methods, including observational research, self-drawing, teaching surveys, pilot program implementation, and education reviews. This study used an experimental teacher training design to investigate teacher perceptions of Art-based instruction training and methods taught. Implementation was observed and qualitatively examined. Data collection occurred from early 2020 to early 2023.

The study employed purposive sampling to recruit research participants, leveraging new teacher data from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The chosen participants were teachers designated to "batch 10," a cohort of new teachers hired in late 2019. All 60 teachers were included to ensure a comprehensive representation of the batch, resulting in a sample size of 60.

This research will examine teachers' perceptions and behaviour before, during, and after the training. This process is explained in more detail in Figure 1.

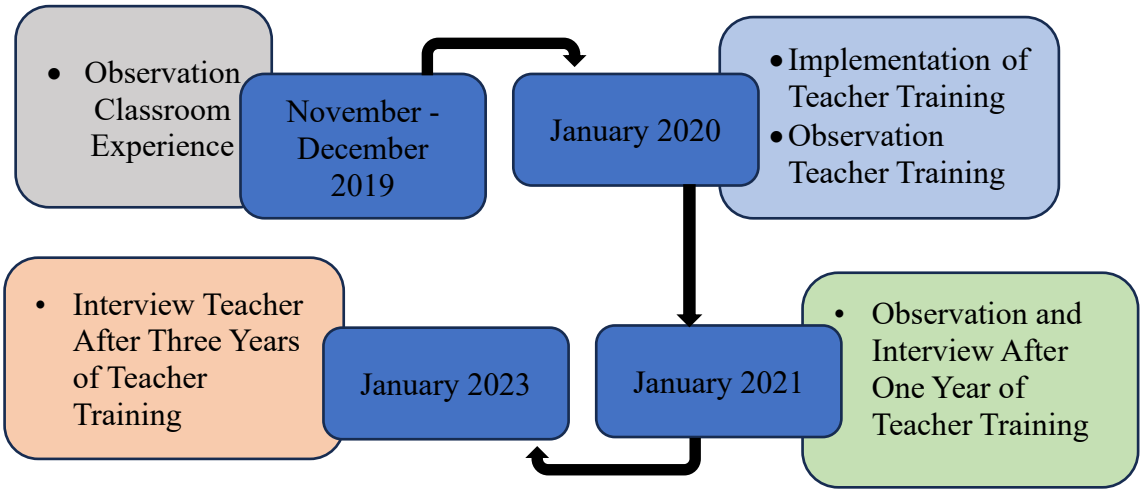


Figure 1 | *Research procedure* (Created by the authors)

Teacher Training Process

Ambili Remesh (2013) describes microteaching as a teacher training method for developing abilities. Most pre-service teacher education programs incorporate micro-teaching, which improves the teaching experience. Very enthusiastic teachers may encounter experience (Révész & Szabó, 2018). Thus, this study used the Art-based Instruction Method in microteaching.

Numerous teachers from various CLCs were assembled in one location and then given a day of training on teaching immigrant children fun via art. The digital storytelling taught in this study utilizes items easily found in the area where CLC teachers teach, namely by using simple media: ice cream sticks, colouring tools, paper, and mobile phones. Teachers are taught to understand how to make videos/films, write screenplays, process videos, and present videos that can attract attention and then make their students able to do the same with the teachers. Figure 2 below further explains the process that took place during the implementation of the teacher training.

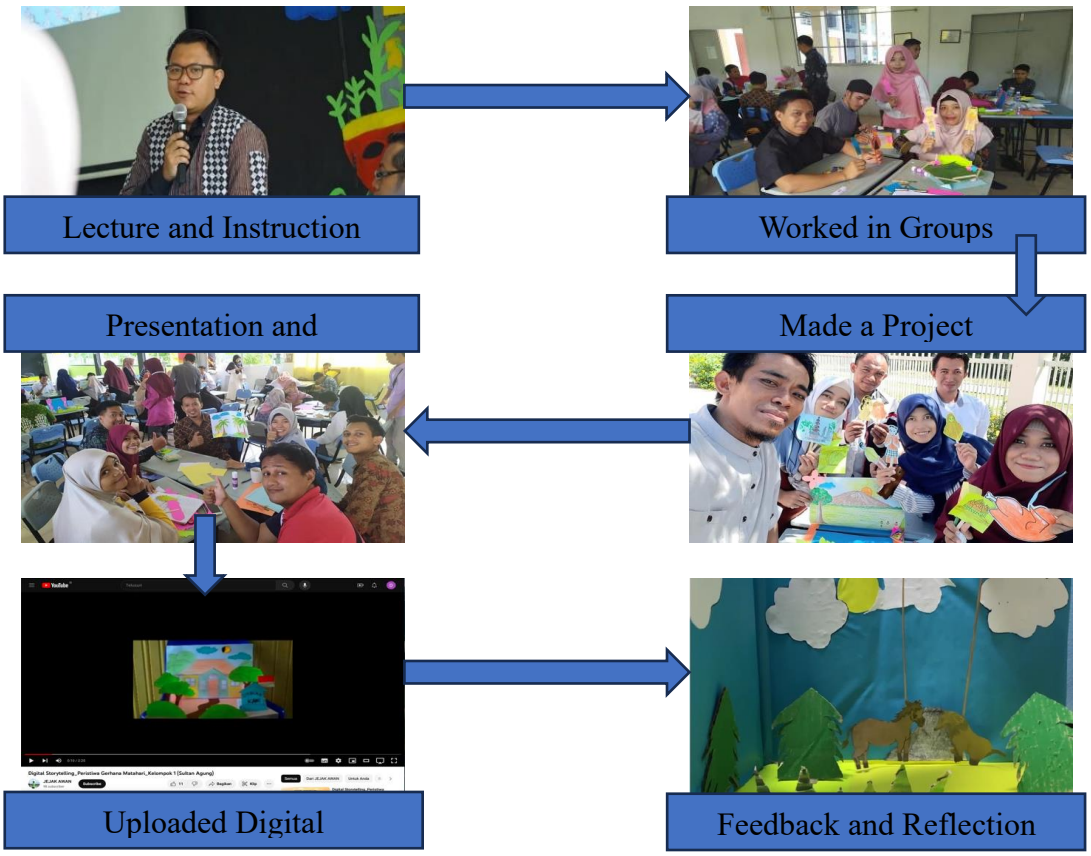


Figure 2 | *Teacher training process* (Created by the authors)

Discussions

This research was analysed using the thematic method, where the observed phenomena and the interview results were categorized into the same themes. In its discussion, this research is divided into four according to the research procedures carried out.

Phase 1: Before Teacher Training Implementation

Observations were held around November and December 2019, a month after the arrival of batch 10 teachers in October 2019. The classroom conditions when the new teachers of batch 10 arrived were examined.

The result was that most batch 10 teachers experienced difficulties due to new conditions and needed to fully understand the characteristics of CLC students and effective teaching patterns for CLC students. Sixty teachers were interviewed and admitted they need teaching methods that are easy to apply and interest their students in learning.

This condition supports Strong et al. (2004) statement that new teachers face many unfamiliar issues, so support through teacher training is needed. The results of the observations and teachers' perceptions of teachers' needs were used as the basis for designing the concept and application of teacher training.

Phase 2: During Teacher Training Implementation

The participants were enthusiastic and active during the one-day teacher training process. When participants worked in groups, no one did not work. All were active in completing the project. As mentioned by Rooney (2004), if arts-based teaching education increases connections, it leads to "cooperation and more creative problem-solving."

The participants mentioned that the digital storytelling training instructor's explanation was easy to understand and provided clear examples of conditions that could be applied in the CLC conditions. Microteaching made them better understand the concept and gave them an experience they could feel were actual conditions. Feedback and reflection at the end of the event also made them understand their shortcomings and strengths. Microteaching increases teaching experience and develops skills; teachers may also have real experiences (Révész & Szabó, 2018).

Phase 3: After A Year of Teacher Training Implementation

Teachers admitted that they implemented the methods they learned during teacher training. We also observed the teaching and learning process in several schools and asked teachers to send us the results of their implementation in the classroom. According to teachers, students who taught digital storytelling were more excited and motivated to learn. In the teachers' assessment, this method improved their speaking, critical thinking, use of technology, and creativity.



Figure 3 | *Students working on their digital story telling projects on one of the subjects taught at CLC* (Copyright by the authors)

Art is not simply an embellishment to the educational journey. It is a transformative force that breathes life into learning. By weaving art into the curriculum, teachers create a meaningful and authentic learning experience that resonates deeply with students. This immersive process fosters the development of essential critical thinking and problem-solving skills and empowers students to embark on a journey of self-discovery and appreciation for their community (Hulsbosch, 2010). Through artistic expression, students gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their world, fostering empathy, connection, and a sense of belonging.

Phase 4: After 3 Years of Teacher Training Implementation

Covid cases are increasing rapidly from mid-2021 to 2022, making the application of teaching methods a little constrained because learning must be done online. Teachers admitted that they applied less often than before. However, the repetitive art-based teaching method is a new learning stimulation for students. Art creation is more than mere expression; it is a powerful tool for shaping new realities (Springborg & Ladkin, 2018).

By engaging students in creating something both engaging and accessible, teachers said that they can ignite their talents and interests, foster adaptability and promoting innovative thinking. This is where digital storytelling shines, providing a platform for students' visual narratives to flourish, as Brenner (2010) emphasizes that artistic ability is not

a prerequisite for creating impactful art. Based on observations and teachers' acknowledgment, even students with limited artistic backgrounds can produce remarkable works.

Furthermore, student-centred learning, as highlighted by Putranta & Jumadi (2019), simplifies adapting and understanding complex material, reducing students' cognitive load and fostering a deeper engagement with the learning process. It also happened in this study case. This shift towards student-driven art creation empowers the teacher and the learner, transforming the classroom into a vibrant hub of creativity and intellectual exploration.



Figure 4 | *Student's work in digital story telling* (Copyright by the authors)

Through Art-Based Learning, teachers try to demonstrate the creation of art by creating digital storytelling themes and stories from the material to be taught, starting from preparing, creating, presenting, and reflecting.

Conclusions

This research is an early effort to investigate the feasibility of using arts-based practices in teacher preparation for schools serving immigrant populations, focusing on illuminating teachers' perspectives on course material and its presentation in the classroom. The findings indicate that teachers are engaged with and responsive to instruction incorporating the arts.

Preliminary results from this study suggest that including arts-based training in teacher preparation programs may lead to improved pedagogical choices for students. This research also lends credence to the idea that using the arts as a tool for subject exploration in the classroom is an artistic endeavour worthy of emulation for immigrant students. Teachers who participated in the study agreed that putting the topic into an artistic context helped them better understand it and that knowledge is best gained when applied to a new field. Looking at the results after three years of implementation, this study supports the program's sustainability due to the ease of application of the method in CLC conditions.

Implications

Further study should be conducted with more extensive samples and longer data-collecting periods to determine the potency of these links for achieving subject mastery. Giving teachers samples of their most remarkable work before they start reflecting and lesson planning might be another methodological change. Teachers may be able to establish more meaningful connections to judgments made in professional practice with more preparatory practice coupled with critical reflection. The efficacy of this new teacher preparation program will also be enhanced by studies that specifically look at the relationship between arts-based instruction and student progress.

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Contributions and Challenges of Utilizing A/r/tography in Reflections of Art Workshop Practitioners in Japan

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Abstract

This study aims to summarize the contributions of a/r/tography for art workshop practitioners in Japan as a new method of reflection-based inquiry. Regarding the contributions of a/r/tography, several cases of art workshop practitioners' reflections utilizing a/r/tography are included. By observing and analysing the practitioners' self-reflection process, it was suggested that a/r/tography enhances deeper reflection that goes beyond personal experiences of the workshop and extends to experiences on art making/teaching. A/r/tography also affords an opportunity to bring to the surface unknown and hard-to-describe aspects of one's memories and feelings, giving others to access them. In group reflection, a/r/tography can also provide an environment for reflection that can unfold and create new understandings through intersubjective experiences of the workshop and related practices. Moreover, the visualizing and sharing such knowledge through visual, textual, and verbal expressions between workshop staff may further contribute to effective teamwork in organizing workshops in a more multifaceted and sensitive manner. While a/r/tography has advantages, there are challenges as well. For those who regard efficiency and reproducibility highly, it seemed to be difficult to embrace changes to the current manner of verbal reflection and accept a new methodology that includes uncertainty and ambiguity.

Keywords: a/r/tography, art workshop, practitioner, self-reflection, contributions, challenges

Author note

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Contributions and Challenges of Utilizing A/r/tography in Reflections of Art Workshop Practitioners in Japan

Workshops are a form or activity of learning or creating communication through participation and experience (see Chambers 2002, etc.). In Japan, workshops are wildly held in different fields such as art, education, community building, etc. In local communities, universities, hospitals, schools, art projects, museums, etc., art workshops are used as a methodology to create a learning and communicative environment through art making. In workshops, there are facilitators and participants rather than teachers and students, and the former have a more equal relationship. Instead of a determined learning goal to be achieved, there is an activity in a designed environment with support from facilitators. Without assessments, participants can focus on their activities, their hands, and feelings, enjoying the process of art making and communication throughout the process.

I have been engaged in art workshops in Japan since 2017. For example, in a workshop for primary school children held at the University of Tsukuba, children were able to visit the art department at the university, as well as ateliers of faculty and students for art appreciation, which are places that typically could not be visited otherwise.

In an art workshop held in University of Tsukuba Hospital for long-term patients and their families, doctors, and nurses, we, the organizers, created an activity to make a wooden frame for photos and sharing stories. As care rooms at the hospital have no windows in order to maintain a sterile environment, patients stay in an enclosed space, which may generate increased mental stress when undergoing an operation. In this workshop, patients and/or their family members made "window" frames using wooden sticks and put pictures in the frames, allowing them to share stories and memories with the doctors and nurses, stories the patients would typically not have many opportunities to share during their stay in a hospital room.

I was engaged in another workshop from 2021, held in "Art Tower Mito" where there is a dedicated room for workshops and art events. In this workshop, different kinds of materials were provided to participants for experimental art making. Through touching and interaction with various materials, the participants could explore and experiment with creating art. In this workshop, one is freed from the promised task of "making a piece of artwork" and does whatever one wants to engage in alternative art making.

Potential of A/r/tography for Art Workshop Practitioners in Japan

Workshop practitioners organize, design, run, and facilitate art workshops. In Japan, workshop practitioner does not refer to a particular job, but rather those who practice in the field of art workshops. They can be artists, teachers, researchers, curators at museums or for art projects, organizers in art NPOs, etc. One does not need to have a license or to be trained as professional to engage in art workshops. In other words, what and how participants gain and feel in a workshop largely depends on how the organizers design the program and activity environment, as well as how the facilitators behave, communicate, and interact. This can lead to a situation whereby some

workshops are interesting and creative, whereas others may not be. For those who are not trained artists or art teachers but are engaged in holding art workshops, how can they make it a more creative space and improve their performance in workshops? In fact, under the situation of low birth rate and aging society in Japan, workshops in local communities are often supported by various citizen volunteers who are neither artists nor art teachers.

On the other hand, most workshop programs are designed case by case, and thus we can say that workshops tend to depend on the situation. Programs are different every time, and even in cases where they have the same design, they differ depending on coworkers and participants. Therefore, practitioners' experiences through workshops are unique. For each workshop, the people who interact are different, and so are the issues. There could be no particular discipline or curriculum for workshop practitioners' learning except through practice itself. In my practice and research in this regard, I was looking for a methodology for the creation of a workshop practice-based space of inquiry for art workshop practitioners in Japan.

As it is suggested that reflection is essential for all learners (Sawyer, 2014), I took it that the key to creating workshops that can offer participants more evocative experiences and develop better facilitative performance for practitioners may be hidden in reflections on the practice itself. In this research, therefore, I concluded that it is important to support workshop practitioners' self-reflection and inquiry based on not only their workshop experience itself but also on a more comprehensive experience of their own. Reflection through one's own workshop experience is essential for meaning making and figuring out what needs to be improved. Inquiries based on one's comprehensive practice could open up new possibilities when engaged in designing educational and communicative environments in workshops.

In Japan, most reflections after art workshops are verbal and limited in time. Within a short time of some 15 minutes, practitioners have to concentrate on talking about issues firmly linked to the workshop itself such as participants' reactions and how the workshop was run. These reflections could be sufficient for improving the technical level of running workshops but not deep enough for creating new knowledge and perspective as an artist/teacher/workshop practitioner, which is considered to be important for one's long-term artistic/educational/workshop-based practice.

Therefore, I focus on a/r/tography, a practice-based research methodology of reflection by the artist/researcher/teacher through art and text (see Irwin & Cosson, 2004, Springgay et al., 2008, etc.). I anticipate that a/r/tography may be able to create new possibilities for practitioners' reflections and enable new experiences through their workshop-based practice to emerge. In this research, the a/r/tography of practitioners is positioned as workshop-based inquiry as artist/researcher/workshop practitioner. I suppose that reflection through a/r/tography as a workshop practitioner can provide an opportunity for them to explore the ambiguous and invisible aspects of their experience in a more sensible and expressive way.

Utilizing a/r/tography in Individual Practitioners' Reflection

In the past few years, I conducted several studies on the use of a/r/tography in practitioners' reflections after art workshops. A/r/tography is a research methodology, a creative practice, and a performative pedagogy that lives in the rhizomatic practice of the liminal in-between (Irwin, 2004). The first study covered self-reflections of 4 university and post-graduate students majoring in art education and at the same time engaging in workshop practice. In this research, they designed and carried out their own workshops first and engaged in reflection through a/r/tography after. This research was conducted in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, and thus the students carried out their workshops online, and did their a/r/tographical reflection offline. Through their reflections on art study/educational research/workshop practice, they figured out their own interests and themes of inquiry and applied different forms of artistic expression for reflection, such as map-making, comics, interactive expressions, etc.

In the case of self-reflection through comic-making (Figure 1), the student reflected on her personal experience of art study from high school to university, which is highly related to the concept of the workshop she designed. In her comic, she extracted important episodes in her personal experiences, including being compared by her high school art teacher with other students who had higher drawing ability, resulting in her almost losing her confidence in art making, but being somehow able to rebuild it after she started studying at university and got to know forms of artistic expression other than drawing. She transformed and rendered these experiences that are deeply related to her concept of the workshop and theme of inquiry into consecutive comic panels. She rendered herself into the characters in her comic, and her thoughts through reflection into the characters' dialogue.

In another student's self-reflection, through map-making, the student mapped her art/educational/workshop practice visually, and through this process she elucidated how she felt and behaved in these processes and clarified the essential factors in her practices and the future direction of her research.



Figure 1 | *A student's a/r/tography work as self-reflection through comic-making*

Contributions of A/r/tography in Self-Reflection of Individuals as Workshop Practitioners

In the case of practitioners' self-reflection through a/r/tography above, I observed that they were able to reach a deeper level of reflection going beyond their personal experiences of making/studying/teaching art. As in the case of comic-making, the student as workshop practitioner related stories based on experiences of art learning in high school and at university, and those memories were unfolded into a relationship and connection with pupils and students she engaged with in workshops and schools who had similar experiences as her. Her experiences as a student were firmly connected with her workshop program and her interest in art education and research.

As Paul J. Kuttner et al. (2018) pointed out, comic-making comprises a broad set of practices of collection and analysis, serving as a powerful means of representation for research, and is an effective, flexible form for communicating research findings and concepts to a wide audience. The research process of a/r/tography, which is fluid, uncertain, and temporal (Springgay et al., 2005) not only affords her an opportunity to bring to the surface unknown and nameless aspects of her memory and feelings but also allows audiences to access this. Her comic-making and the presentation based on her comic created an evocative, provocative, and compelling context and atmosphere that invites others deeply into her memory and internal world. It is a level of reflection that cannot be reached in conventional verbal reflection following workshops, aside from technical issues regarding what happened in the workshop or what needs to be improved.

Utilizing A/r/tography in Practitioners' Group Reflections

Also informing study, I examined practitioners' group reflections utilizing a/r/tography after workshops, different from the earlier case where reflections were conducted separately because of the pandemic. One of the cases was conducted in "Art Tower Mito" mentioned above. The practitioners who participated in the group reflections included the curator/education program organizer in the museum who was responsible for the workshop and one of the citizens who attended as volunteer facilitators. These volunteers are neither artists nor art teachers but are interested in art, exhibitions in museum, art projects, events, and workshops at museum and have attended such art workshops for several years.

In this group reflection lasting about 2 hours, practitioners used materials of interest to them, similar to those used by participants in their workshops, to engage in art making while talking, chatting, and discussing their involvement in contemporary art and their experience as art workshop practitioners. Figure 2 show a/r/tographical work by one of the volunteer facilitators. Setting aside the question of whether it is an artwork in its own right, it does embody her experience and consciousness of art making in her daily life, including the process of preparing and carrying out workshops in Art Tower Mito.

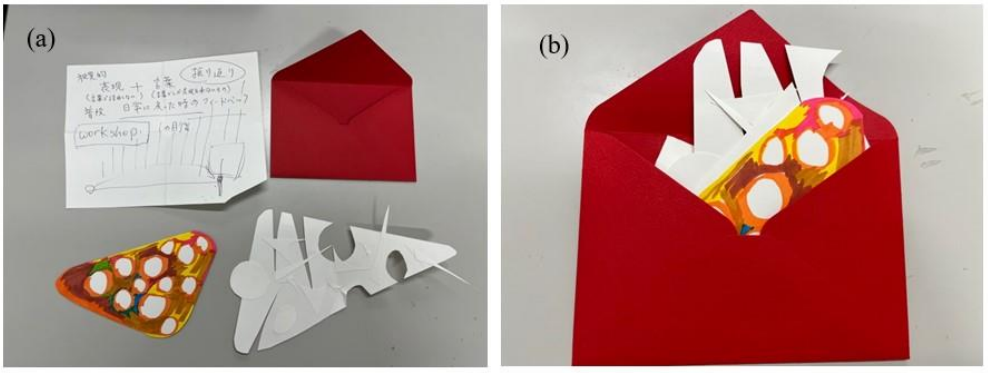


Figure 2 | A/r/tographical work by one of the volunteer workshop practitioners

Another case of group reflection through a/r/tography involved a group of citizens in a non-profit organization (NPO) who ran a workshop aimed at providing experience through art for young children and their parents, as well as enhancing child-raising communities and networks. Most of them were parents raising children and served as volunteers when running workshops. As with the case above, the practitioners were neither artists nor art teachers.

I conducted a group reflection over about two hours after a workshop held by the NPO for young children and their parents in 2021. Through group reflection utilizing a/r/tography, these practitioners started to think/rethink about their identities and roles when engaging in the workshop as workshop organizers/parents/community members. Using mixed media that included pictures, drawings, and collage (Figure 3), their consciousness between these roles began to emerge.

They began to visualize the tensions and issues they face as parents raising children, at the same time as organizing workshop and community networks in a sustainable manner, in which they

need to balance what the workshop program will bring to stakeholders such as local governments and farmers, as well as young children, parents, and local residents.



Figure 3 | A/r/tographical work done by a group of citizen workshop practitioners

Contributions of A/r/tography in Group Reflection for Workshop Practitioners

Based on observation and analysis of the process of group reflection in both cases above, I concluded that a/r/tography can enhance practitioners' reflections through interaction. Practitioners shared intersubjective experiences of the workshop they were engaged in, as well as the respective practices that relate to their perspectives on artistic and educational practice. Expression in visual, textual, and verbal ways in their a/r/tographical reflections encouraged and urged them to consider and share between practitioners in a multifaceted and sensitive way new understandings, knowledge, and perspectives about the meaning and significance of running a workshop as organizers of an NPO/parents/residents.

Irwin suggested the significance and importance of a/r/tographers belonging to communities of practice, as "recognizing this positioning affords…an opportunity to inquire together as they create deeper understandings and meaning making," and "a/r/tographers address the explicit knowledge as well as the implicit or tacit knowledge shared among community members" (Irwin, 2008, p. 72, p. 73). In workshops, practitioners can be considered as members of their workshop-based practice community, in which a significant amount of tacit knowledge is context dependent. Thus, a/r/tography can provide opportunities and environments to visualize their thought, and to create,

encounter, and unfold new understandings and meaning about their practice of workshops/child-raising/community building. Sharing these experiences in a multifaceted and sensitive manner can also further contribute to effective teamwork when organizing workshops.

Challenges in Using a/r/tography in Reflection and Inquiry of Workshop Practitioners in Japan

In conducting this research, I also found challenges in some situations when promoting the use of a/r/tography in practitioners' reflections. In some organizations running workshops, the most efficient means of reflection is needed to improve their work. For workshops that are one-time events, reflection is thus not always an indispensable process. In many workshops, practitioners gather afterward and reflect for a limited time of 10–15 minutes. For some organizers, it seems to take time for them to realize the significance and importance of accepting and trying to create and unfold new possibilities through reflection and art making as organizers/educators/workshop facilitators because what they are engaging in is creating an environment for education and creativity through artistic activities. For those who regard efficiency and reproducibility highly, it was difficult to make changes to the current methodology of verbal reflection and accept a new one that contains uncertainty and ambiguity. In this sense, a/r/tography creates a site to thematize and consider gaps between practitioners in different positions and situations as art teachers/researchers/workshop organizers. In addition to making me think/rethink what a creative workshop should be like, what workshop practitioners should regard as important in designing a creative environment in workshops, and what kind of reflection should take place after the workshop, it has become an inquiry for me regarding what efforts I can/should make in approaching organizations regarding making changes.

It was also challenging to make time for a/r/tographical reflection after workshops that involved volunteer practitioners. In fact, volunteer facilitators participate with different purposes. Some of them are students majoring in art or education that attend for the new experience, some participate with a personal interest in art making or education, and some want to contribute to the community after retirement and do not have a determinate vision of creating new knowledge and understanding. In future research, I am therefore planning to study the practical use of a/r/tography for practitioners including volunteers who may not have as much art-making experience as artists or art teachers, for short periods of time after workshops.

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Qualitative Approach for Interaction regarding Collaboration and Dialogue in Children's Art Activities

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine how a 'creative situation' is formed through collaboration and the use of dialogue by engaging in an art activity. Triangulation was employed to conduct qualitative analyses to incorporate methodologies with different theoretical standpoints, each of which focused on gaze behaviours, interactions, and creative processes. Regarding a case in which a pair of children performed a drawing activity sharing a place and tools, we analysed the relevance of involvement with the partner and the expression contents by referring to the analyses of three researchers. The results were as follows: First, we clarified the presence and progress of interactive collaboration, in which the presence of others shaped their own expressions. Second, it was found that in a chain of actions between pairs, the way of handling the paper and tools, the way of drawing and painting, and their meanings influenced each other in such a way that the intention of that activity was coordinated. Third, results showed that using dialogue, children shared their perspectives on the artwork spontaneously. Sharing a place is generally regarded as the positional relationship of iconography on drawing paper when physically considered. However, this clearly reflects dynamic transition in the relationship between the pair, and when considered from this situation, it turned out that the germination of collaboration occurred.

Keywords: qualitative approach, triangulation, interaction, collaboration, dialogue

Authors note

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Qualitative Approach for Interaction regarding Collaboration and Dialogue in Children's Art Activities

Targets and Outline

The study targets are to clarify the presence and progress of children's interactive collaboration in art activities, and to suggest a possibility of 'triangulation' in human sciences in the field of art education. We focused on activities in pairs, which is the basic form of interaction, to understand how children share their images and move on to creative acts during interactions. Moreover, in this study, 'collaboration' also includes the beginning of joining forces and sharing each other's thoughts and ideas. This paper discusses the following three points:

I. Research methodology in our qualitative approach for interactions in art activities
II. Case study of drawing and painting activity by a pair of schoolchildren
III. Conclusions through 'Triangulation'

Triangulation

Norman Denzin (1978) argued that "by triangulating theory, data, investigators, and methods, a reliable and valid set of data could be generated" (p. 306). Uwe Flick (2018) argued that "triangulation includes researchers taking different perspectives on an issue under study or more generally in answering research questions. These perspectives can be substantiated by using several methods and/or in several theoretical approaches" (p. 23). In addition to the validity of interpretation, we use triangulation to break through epistemological limits that cannot be overcome by a single method. Specifically, these are the gazing behaviour analysis, drawing process analysis, and interaction analysis. Table 1 presents the differences between the three methods.

Case Summary

In this case (Figure 1), two students engaged in drawing and painting activities and shared places, materials, and tools in the behaviour observation room. The girl wearing a green knit cap (called 'G') was seven years and four months old. The girl wearing a red knit cap (called 'R') was six years and eight months old. They attended the same school and classroom and had good relationships. Incidentally, we obtained informed consent on paper from their parental guardians.

Gaze Behaviour Analysis by Shingo Takeda

In gaze behaviour analysis, two eye trackers (Tobii Pro Glasses 2, Tobii Technology) were used to monitor the children's gaze direction. The eye tracker can concurrently record videos of the wearer's visual field and the points at which they look. For example, in Figure 2, the left image shows a gaze status of the right image's child, who is sitting across the table. The image on the right shows a gaze status of the left image's child. At this moment, right image child looks at left image child's painting, While the left image child looks at the face of the right image child. Using the behaviour coding system (BECO2, DKH), the length of gaze time was calculated based on the acquired data to grasp when and how much time children spend looking at another child's hands, face, and drawing and painting space, as well as their own drawing and painting space.

Drawing Process Analysis by Makoto Kuriyama

Using a drawing process analysis sheet (Figure 3), we attempted to show the utterances and actions in the activity process of the two children and the visual information developed on the drawing paper simultaneously in chronological order. Specifically, the images on the paper shared by the two children were arranged in the centre column of the table. Subsequently, the G and R situations were described on each side. Furthermore, on both sides of the frame, we analysed the meanings of their drawings and actions, considering the visual and narrative contexts. This method allows us to understand the unique meanings and experiences that arise in each person's activity process individually and explore how they interact with each other.

Interaction Analysis by Takeyoshi Matsumoto

Figure 4 shows the interaction analysis method and analysis sheet. In this study, we used a sheet with the eye tracker still image inserted under the still image on the interaction analysis sheet, indicated by the yellow frame. Under the extracted still image of Video B, transcripts of G and R's actions, speech, and eye gazes are described in six tracks. These descriptions were referred to Jefferson (1977) and Goodwin (1980). Underneath the mutual action transcripts, G and R's eye tracker video still images were extracted and presented in a table along with their time codes. The table visualises the process by which the drawing act, speech act, and gaze were exchanged, the interaction between G and R, and the creative co-creation of the meaning of the drawing and the act.

Results of Gaze Behaviour Analysis

Table 2 lists the total aggregate time spent looking at each object during the activity. It is evident that R looks at the drawing and painting spaces of the other child more than G does. This time difference between the two was more than double. Figure 5 shows the percentage of each time slot, with the total time of the entire activity being 100% of the total time spent looking at it every 30 s. G's gaze behaviour tends to be more intense in specific scenes. In particular, numbers 1 and 2 exhibited high values. However, R is not so changing as G. Among the total activity times, number 3 shows the highest value. Additionally, between numbers 1 and 2, the time periods (numbers 4, 5, and 6) showing relatively high values were repeated. Therefore, both G and R groups showed characteristic changes in gaze behaviour during the second half of the activity.

Results of Drawing Process Analysis

Figure 6 shows the final drawing. The gothic symbols and numbers on the screen indicate the order in which the two children (R and G) drew the pictures. The meaning of 'R side' and 'G side' is that, at the beginning, R and G were painted on opposite sides of the drawing paper. A table showing when each picture was painted was then created in chronological order. Figure 7 presents a table based on the information from the drawing process analysis sheet, which was described earlier. As shown in the table, G first drew a striped bear. Then, G drew a brown star, brown bear, shooting star, pink rabbit, and big colourful star one after another, using paints and crayons. At the same time, this table shows what R was drawing, and how they affected each other. In this paper, we focus

particularly on the picture painted 21 minutes and 54 seconds after the start time. G saw R drawing a small circle in blue and a pink triangle next to it and said, “I have an idea.” She began drawing an outline of the fish in blue. The combination of circle and triangle drawn by R appeared to remind G of an image of a fish. G then asked, “Was the fish shaped like this? Like this, like this...” She was drawing slowly, as if explaining to herself how to draw. R, however, began to draw a yellow triangle to add to the blue circle she had just drawn. G saw this and said, “What? That’s weird. Oh, that’s candy!” She seemed surprised. G realised that R was not drawing fish. This episode shows that G made sense of the information from others in a different way and used it in the context of her own drawing. Although each seemed to draw different things, it turned out that they were sharing what they were drawing with each other.

Results of Interaction Analysis

The drawing activity targeted by the interaction analysis (Figure 8) occurred from 00:25:00 to 00:27:00. In the graph, these are (4), (5), and (6). Until this scene, G and R were facing each other across the drawing paper. G drew seven pieces from G1’s striped cat to G7’s blue fish, and R drew eight pieces from R1’s yellow star to R8’s candy on her side. G ran out of space to draw on her side of the drawing paper. 02G (00:25:08): “I don’t have a place to draw anymore-let’s use R’s place.” G then moved to R’s side, and both began to draw side by side, facing the drawing paper on the R side. On 04G (00:25:35), G exclaimed, “I’ll draw it, R!” and drew G8 (big candy) between R1 (yellow star) and G1 (striped cat). Then, G drew to connect the big candy with the yellow star that R drew first and then with the striped cat that G drew first. Figures 9, 10, and 11 show the interaction analysis sheets. The following are the results of the interaction analysis.

【1】G and R each drew what they wanted to draw, both on their own side, using the materials and tools they wanted to use.【2】Both G and R were looking at what the other had drawn.【3】Both G and R were drawing or trying to draw what the other person had drawn.【4】Both G and R felt the ‘goodness’ and ‘interest’ of the shape and colour of what the other person had drawn, and tried to draw what they wanted to draw by using them (‘blue fish’).【5】G moved to the place where R was drawing and looked at what she had drawn. Then, G felt the ‘goodness’ and ‘interest’ of what R had drawn, and G had not yet drawn.【6】G drew the shape of the ‘big candy’ that R had drawn in the centre of the drawing paper, and connected the ‘yellow star’ that R had drawn first with the ‘striped cat’ that she had drawn first with a line.【7】R was also pleased that G drew with her on her side.【8】G tried to connect the ‘big candy’ with the ‘striped cat’ that she had drawn first, but stopped and connected the ‘big candy’ to the ‘yellow star’ that R had drawn first with a green line, murmuring “Illuminate, illuminate, connect to the star.” Next, while saying “Connect to the cat.” G connected the green line from the big candy to the striped cat G had drawn first, and said, “Hmmm, hmmm, funny.”【9】By connecting the two worlds, G naturally showed understanding and respect for R’s expression.【10】In the process of connecting G’s and R’s sides to create a single picture, a

new narrative and change in the world of the picture and the act of drawing was created for G, which she enjoyed.【11】G and R enjoyed finding in each other's paintings the accidental bleeding of colour that was created in the process of painting the 'big candy'.【12】G and R shared and rejoiced in the experience of painting the objects (candy, connecting lines, and bleedings) themselves.【13】They verbally expressed the united picture as 'bright town' and 'cheerful town'.【14】Although G and R are different from each other, they connected, overlapped, and expressed their common experience with differences and the unknown in the process of drawing together one picture.【15】The interaction in the drawing activity qualitatively generated and changed the shared situation of the act of drawing and the drawing space.

Conclusions through Triangulation

Why did R watch G's drawings and paintings during this activity? Why did G and R watch each other 's drawings and paintings alternately during the latter part of the activity? The following observations can be made from the three analytical results: in the first half of the activity, R tended to follow G more closely; however, in the second half, G was more likely to refer to pictures that R had already drawn or was trying to draw. In this process, the two communicated their activities and even enjoyed the accidents that occurred when handling materials and tools. The way they interacted and worked with each other was reflected in their gaze behaviour toward each other's activity.

The colours and shapes drawn, meanings experienced in their interaction, and shared meaning of the drawn act were shown multidimensionally and compositely by quantitative data from the gazing behaviour analysis, generative and contextual data from the drawing process analysis, and interaction analysis data [drawing act–drawing–drawing object–interaction act–body placement].

To summarise, it is clear that in a chain of actions between the pair, the way of handling materials, the way of drawing and painting, and their meanings influenced each other, so that the intention of that activity was coordinated while sharing a space. Additionally, by referring to the analyses of the three researchers, we successfully clarified the presence and progress of interactive collaboration, in which the presence of others shaped their own expressions with a concrete rationale.

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Appendix

Table 1 | *Differences in the data and concerns handled by the three analyses*

	Method	Data	Concern
S. Takeda	Gaze behaviour analysis	Quantitative	Relationships
M. Kuriyama	Creation process analysis	Qualitative	Individual activity
T. Matsumoto	Interaction analysis	Qualitative	Relationships

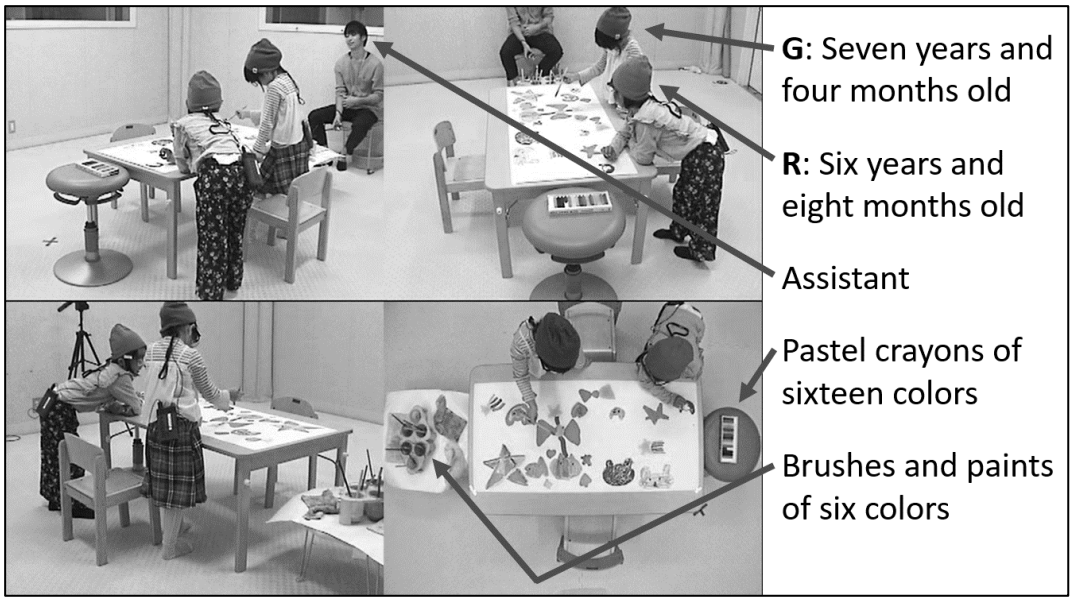


Figure 1 | *The situation in the behaviour observation room*

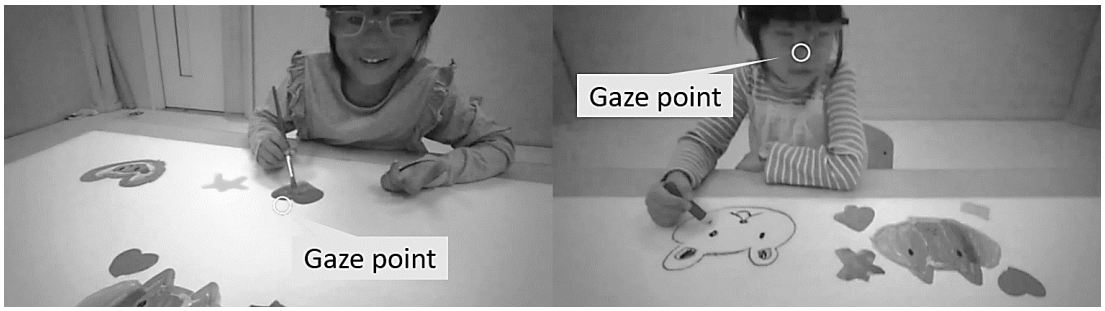


Figure 2 |*The footage of the recorded videos*

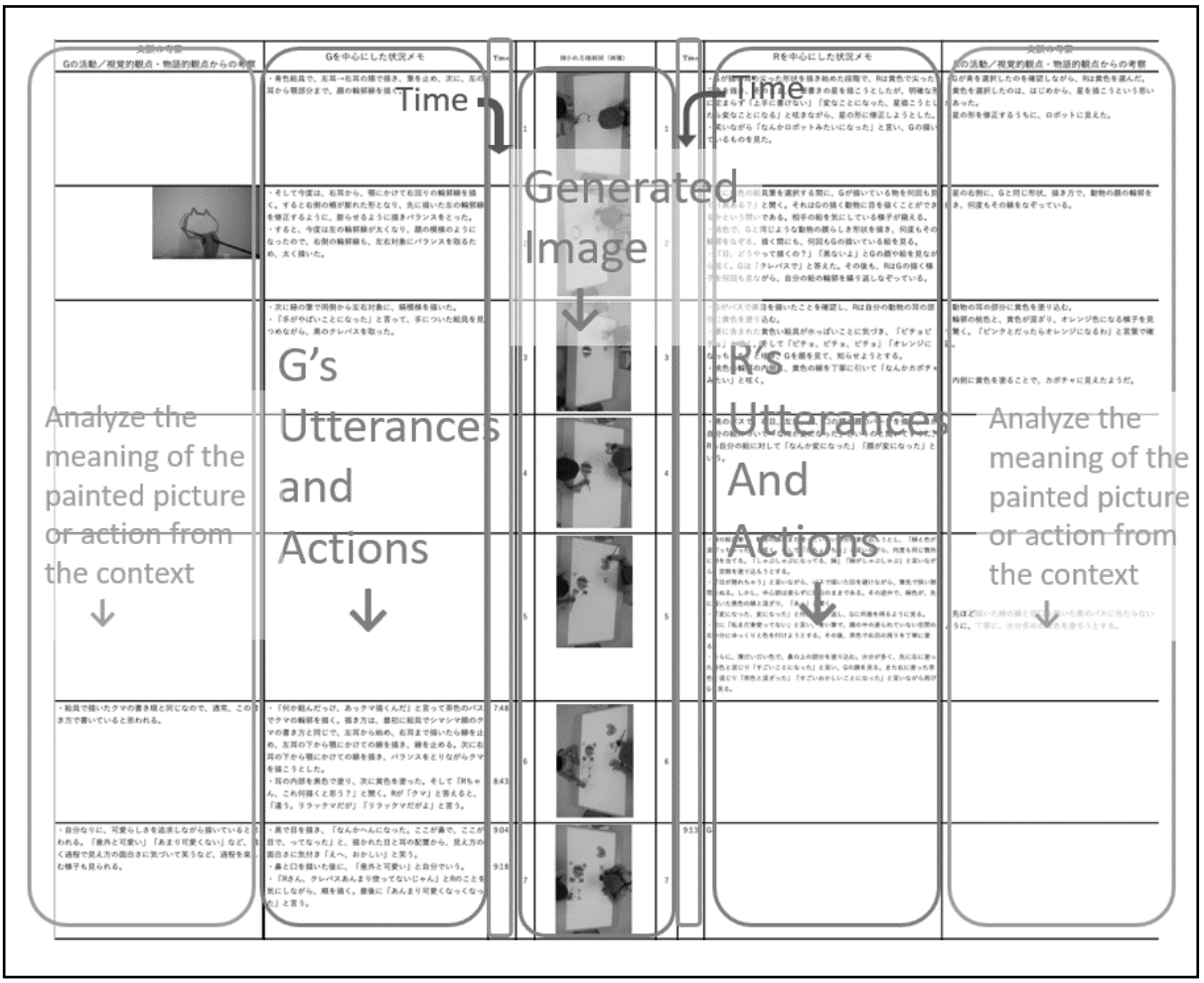


Figure 3 | The drawing process analysis sheet

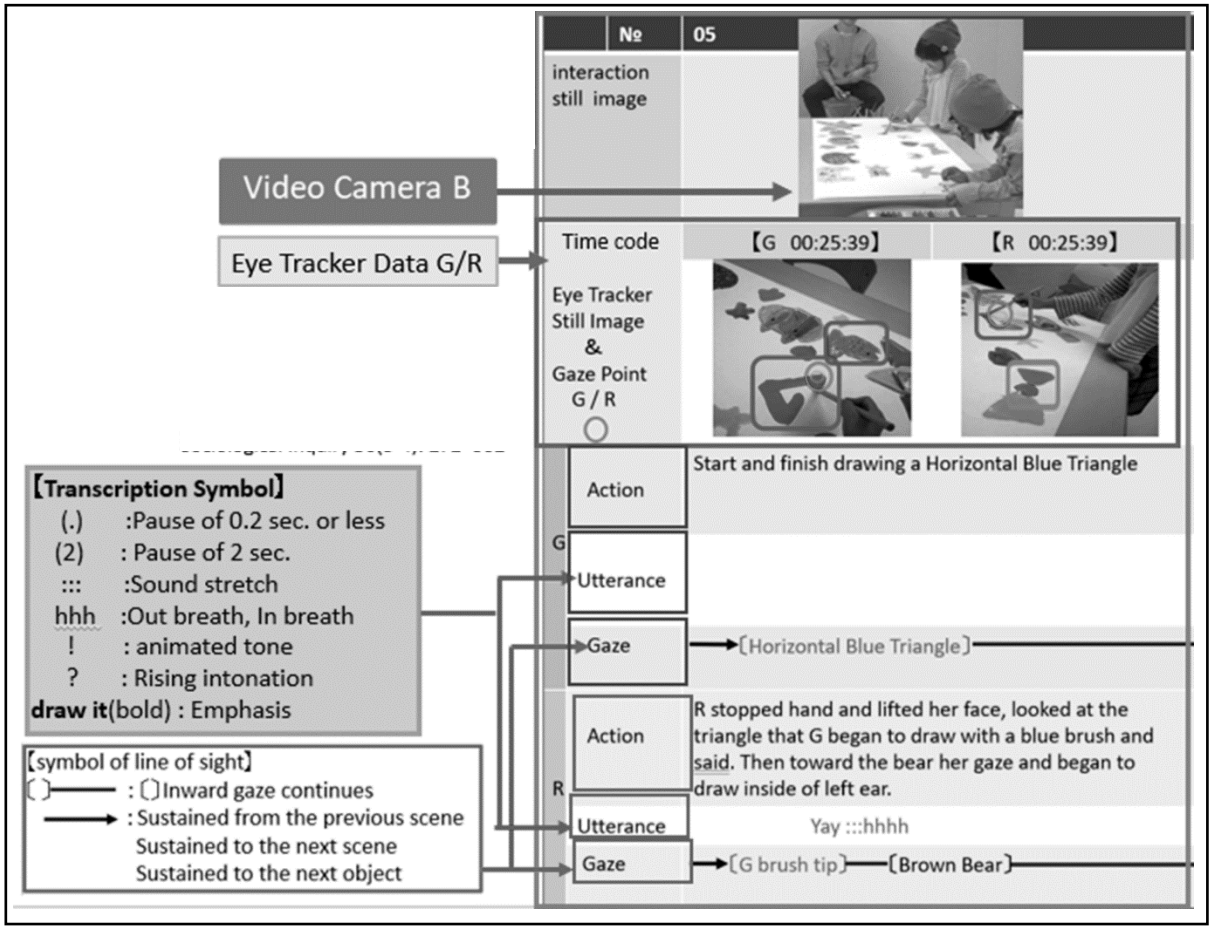


Figure 4 |*The interaction analysis method and analysis sheet*

Table 2 | *Aggregate total time spent looking at each object during the entire activity*

Object	G	R
Hands of the other child	35.03s	32.56s
Drawing and painting space of the other child	67.98s	145.70s
Face of the other child	50.59s	63.90s
Own drawing and painting space	493.43s	444.20s

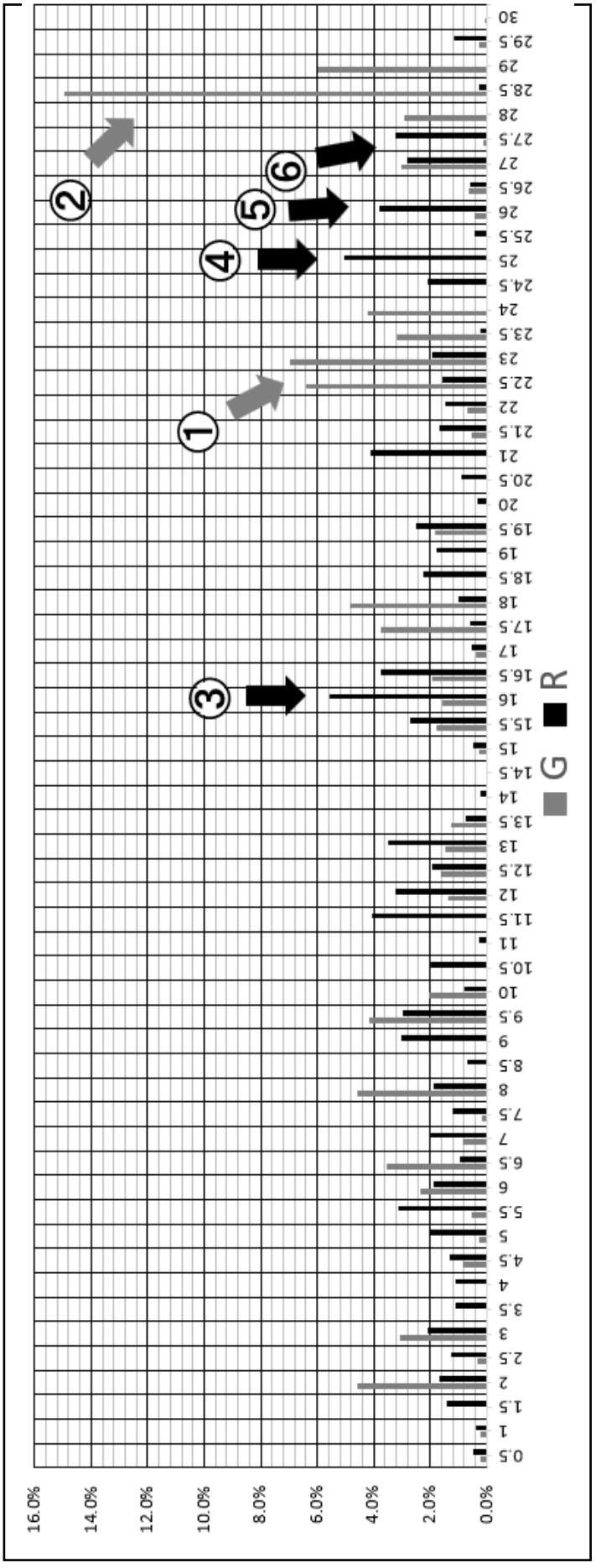


Figure 5. Percentage of gaze time in total activity time (drawing and painting space of the other child).

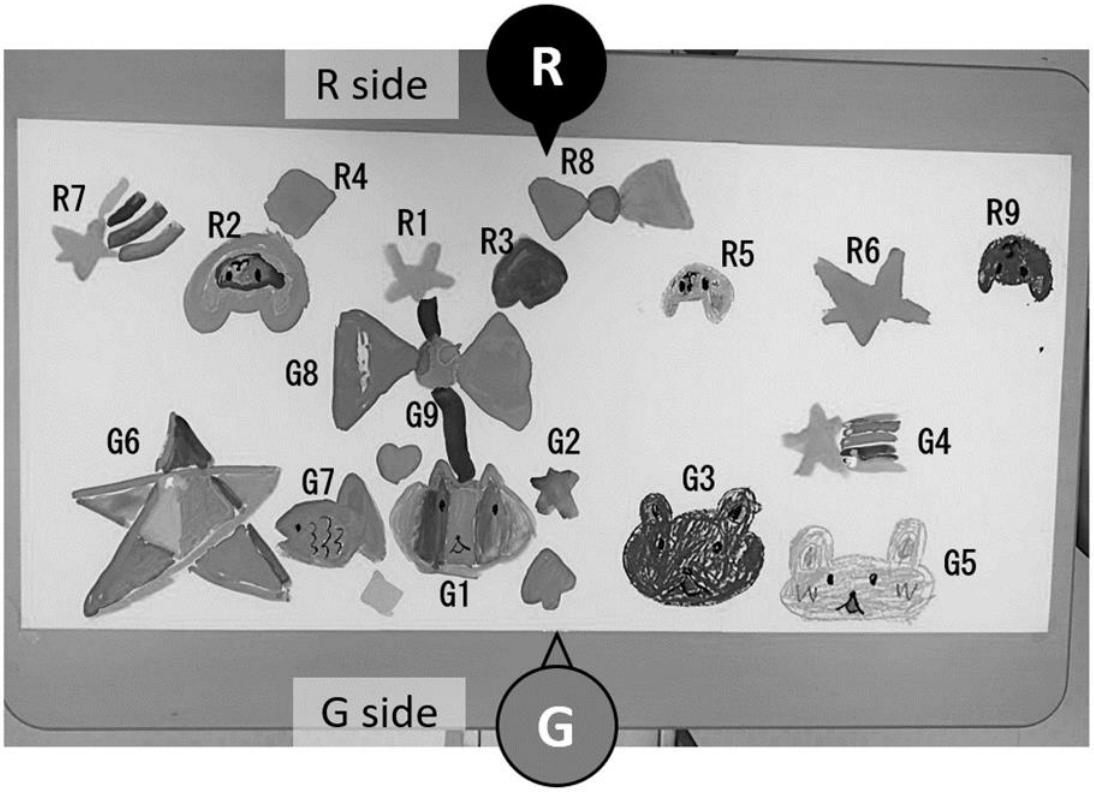


Figure 6 | *The final drawing in the case*

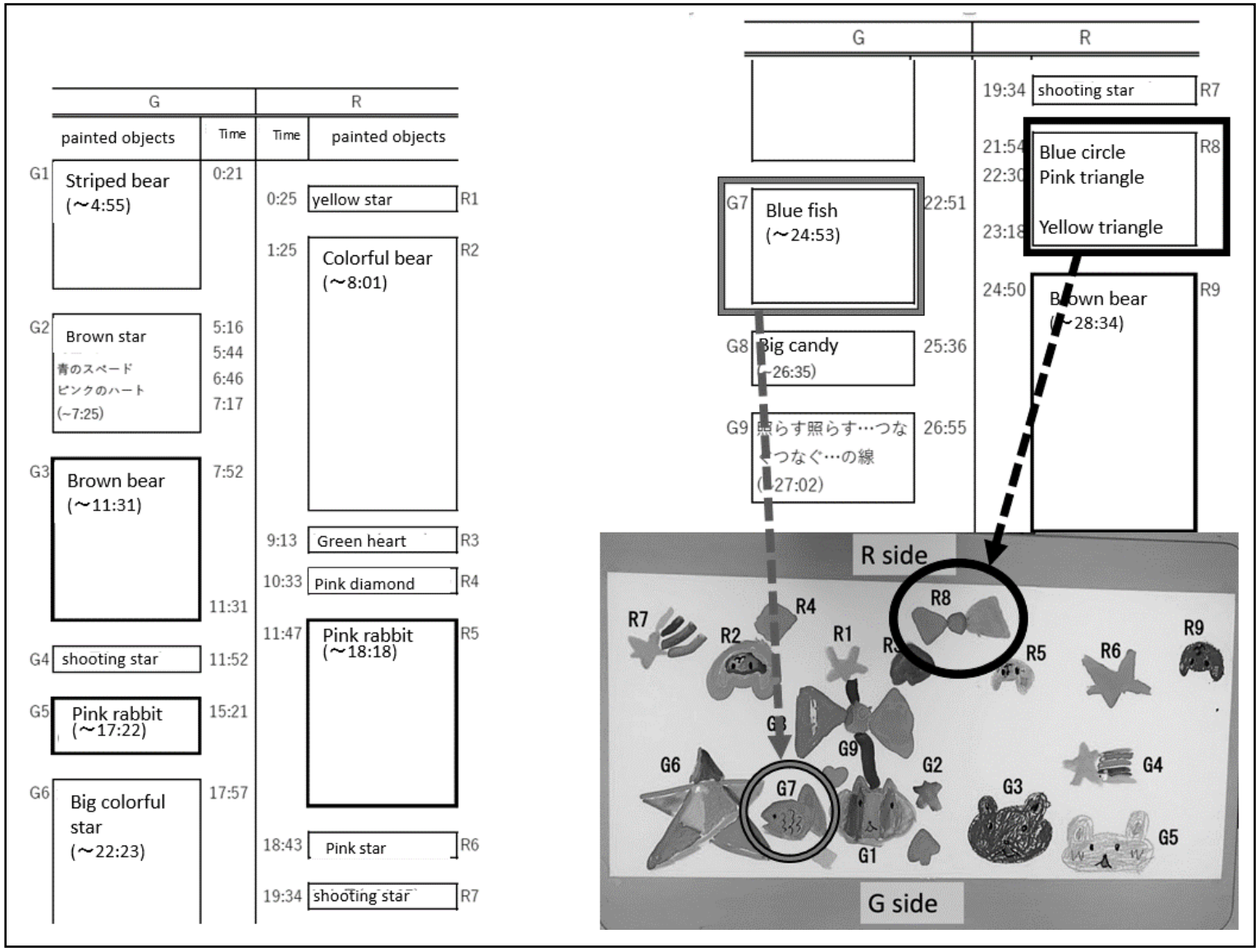


Figure 7. The situation of pictures drawn 21 minutes and 54 seconds after the start.

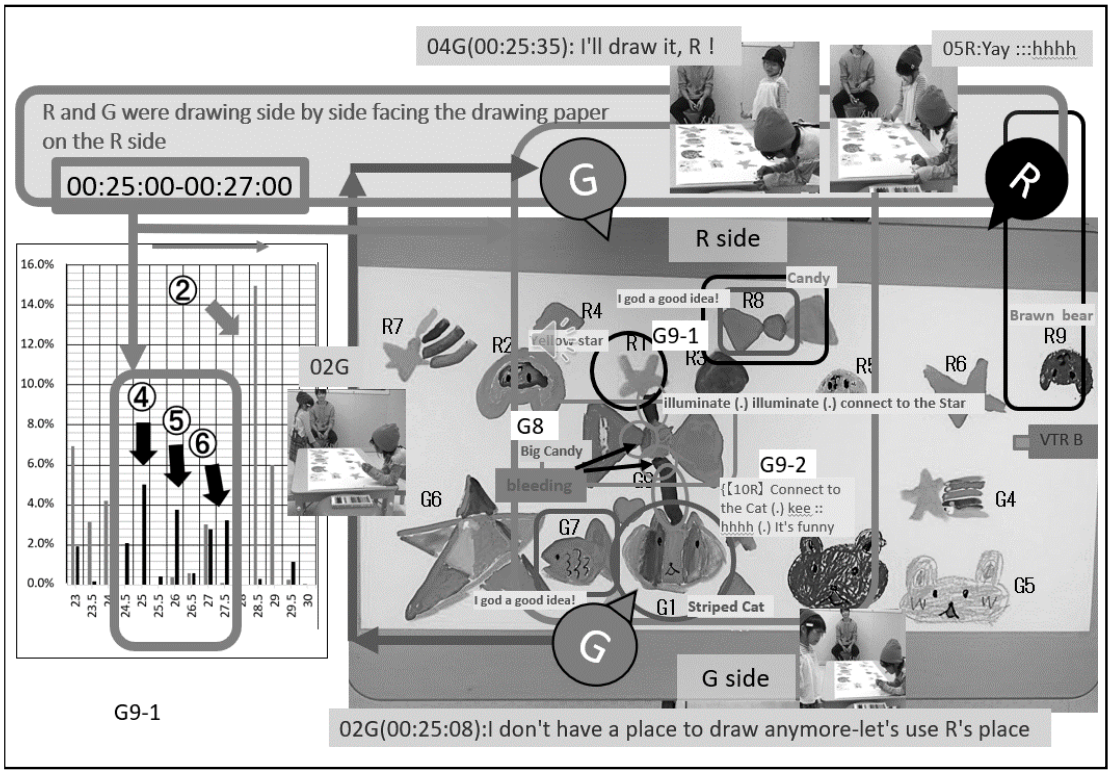


Figure 8 | *The gaze of school children. No school children copied preschool children*

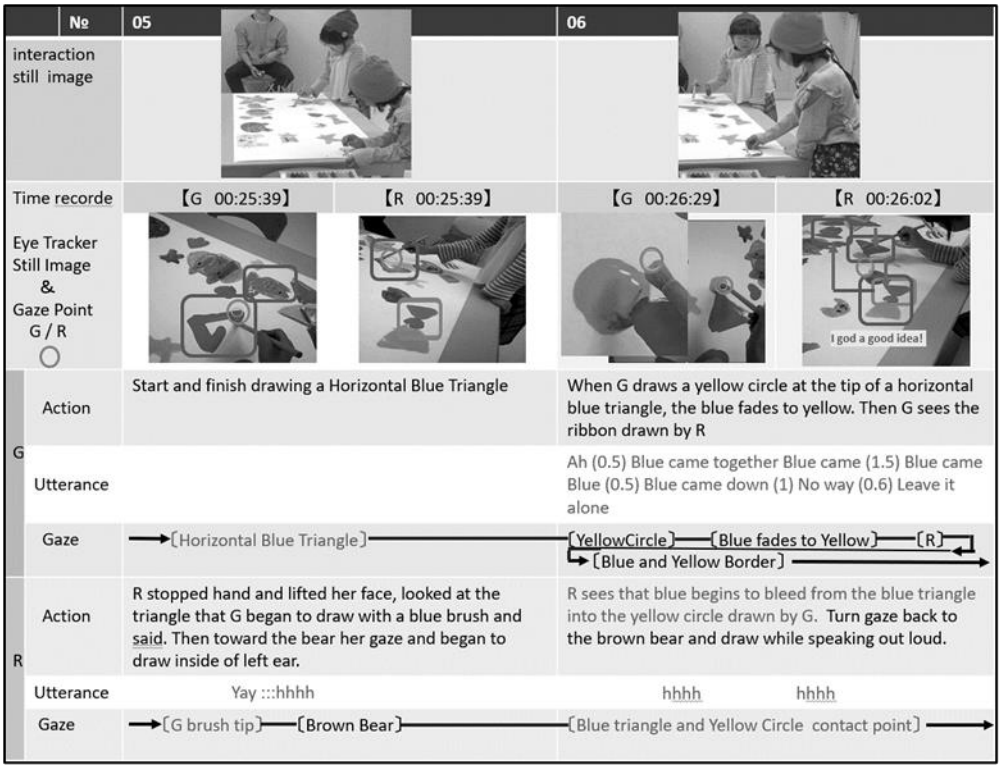


Figure 9 | *The interaction analysis sheets* (State【1】 ~ State【6】)

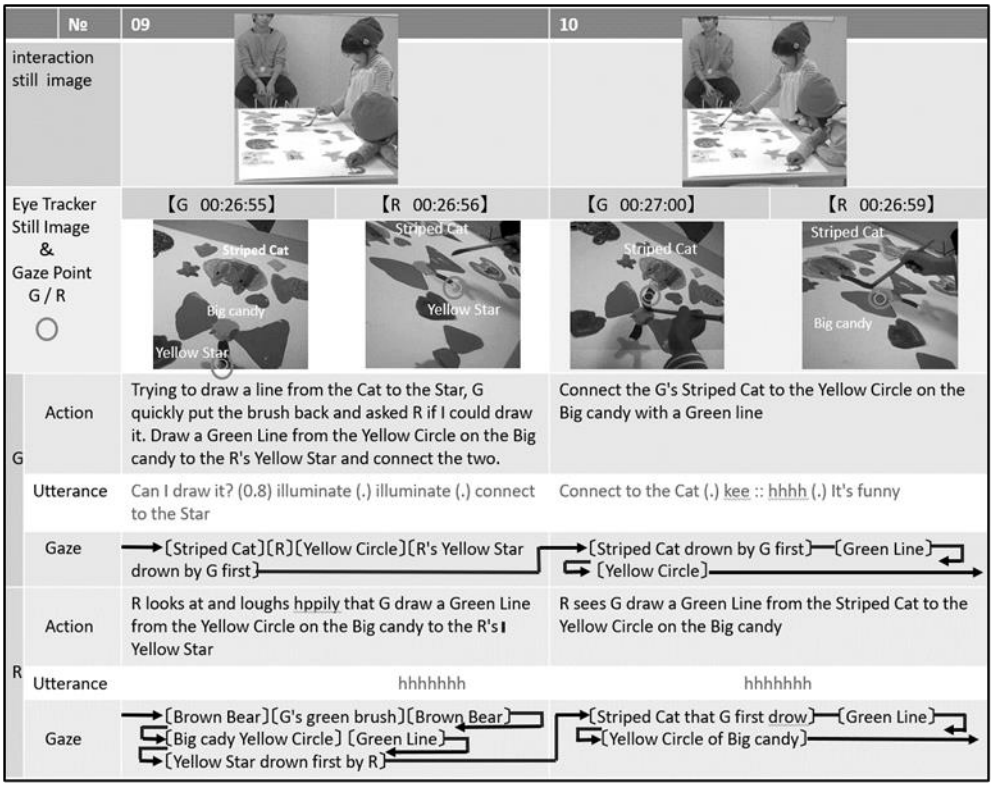


Figure 10 | *The interaction analysis sheets* (State【6】 ~ State【10】)

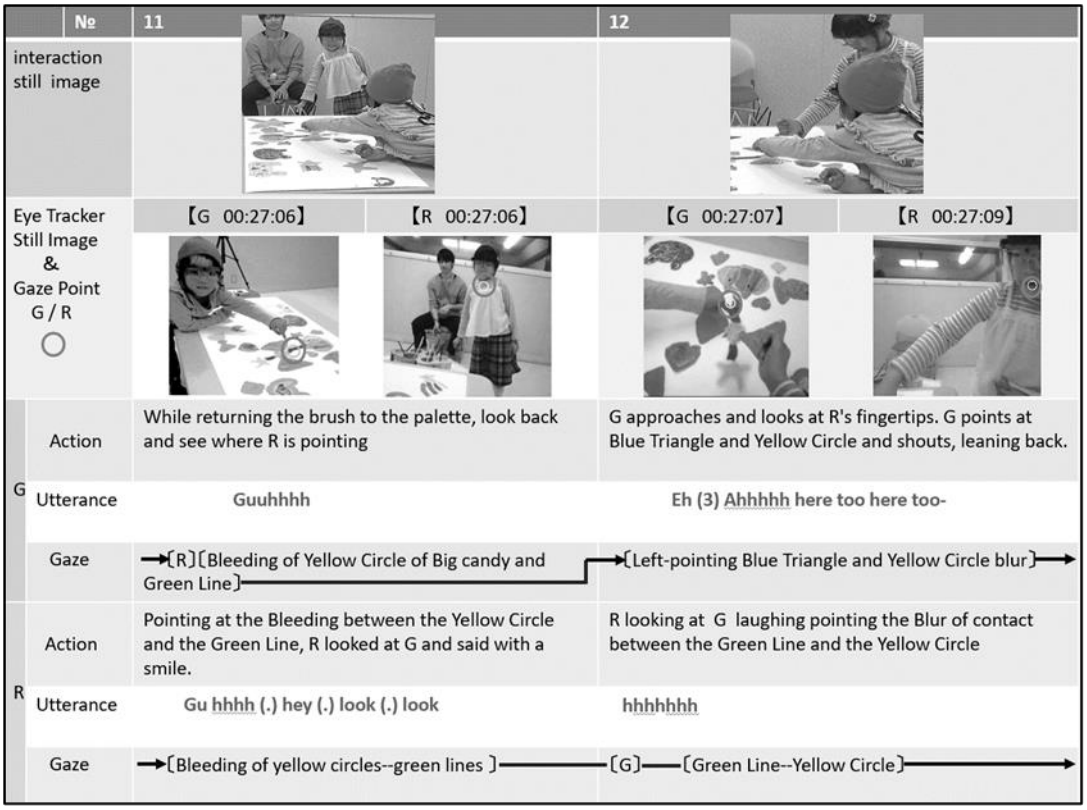


Figure 11 | *The interaction analysis sheets* (State【11】 ~ State【15】

Winning the Heart of Nature: A Phenomenological Experience of Birdness

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Abstract

The notions of "intimacy" (Angelo, 2013), and "reciprocity" (Kimmerer, 2013), that emphasize our responsibilities to more-than-human world, along with the concept of biophilia (Wilson, 1984), have formed the foundations of this research. This study renders my attempts at being *in* and connecting *with* the world as a male bowerbird that builds and decorates a bower to attract a potential mate. The bowerbird's diligent efforts are reciprocated with affection from a female counterpart. The poesis of building and decorating a bower– a transspecies embodiment of a bowerbird–however, granted me with an opportunity to "uncouple from the ordinary" and to have an "aesthetic experience in the natural world" (Greene, 1987, p. 72) that led to an experience of closeness with nature. As I roamed through the forest in search of branches, I ended up winning the heart of nature and felt the love that she generously offered me. As an artist/researcher/teacher, I also experienced closeness with a bird, not by holding a dead bird in my hand as an ornithologist would do, nor by looking at a live one through binoculars as a birdwatcher would, but by looking at bowerbird's land artifacts as a teaching/learning moment.

Key words: biophilia, a/r/tography, art education, nature, phenomenology

Winning the Heart of Nature: A Phenomenological Experience of Birdness

Like exhibitions, research studies are "typically framed and staged around an idea, a desire, an impulse, a concern or an issue" (O'Donoghue, 2018, p. 88). My impulse to embark upon this journey is to uncover the wealth of educational material offered by nature. Employing phenomenology and a/r/tography, I aim to create opportunities for establishing direction and orientation toward cultivating biophilia and bringing the love of life to the attention. Creating *with* and *within* nature and the embodiment of a non-human *Other* in this project allows for new forms of affective and embodied knowledge to be produced. I bring theory, pedagogy and poesis into conversation, what Culhane & Elliott (2016) describe as "to walk the talk, and to talk the walk" (p. 61).

Interconnectedness

In her article, The Bird in Hand (2013), Hillary Angelo discusses different ways of coming to know and building intimate relationship with nature by comparing and contrasting the practices of ornithologists and birdwatchers. Angelo describes ornithologists killing birds to get a close observation of them, an intimate experience of the "bird in hand." Ironically, this killing is an alienation of nature and works against their objectives and best interest because they only get a close observation of a dead bird, and not the full intimate experience expected. Angelo also argues that birdwatching negates the conclusion of some researchers that "modern relationship to nature can be defined in terms of real or perceived alienation" (Angelo, 2013, p. 352). However, I argue that birdwatchers as well, by only watching the birds from distance through binoculars, are ironically alienated *from* nature.

The human-nature dichotomy and the superiority of humans over other creatures are embedded in many Western religions and philosophies. This belief has frequently been used to justify the exploitation and domination of the natural world, serving as the root cause of various forms of oppression, including colonialism, racism, and sexism (Mullin, 1999). Critics of human-nature divide have called for a more holistic approach to understanding the human place in the world, one that recognizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of all forms of life. It is imperative to reconcile with nature and cultivate an empathetic relationship with it. But how?

Eppert (2020) emphasizes that through a more attentive and fluent engagement with our bodies we can experience a "fuller relationship with the natural world." And Reginald Ray (2008, p. 25) states,

> [T]o fully inhabit our bodies … is to discover our embeddedness in the world. We are not above the world at all, in a position of domination and control, but are embedded within it, interdependent with other people, animals, and the world itself.

The idea of interconnectedness pervades the work of numerous thinkers, including Gregory Bateson, who posited that the world constitutes an overarching holistic system within which are subsystems including humans and nonhumans (Bateson, 2000). Andy Goldworthy states, "we often forget that WE ARE NATURE. Nature is not something separate from us. So, when we say that we have lost our

connection to nature, we've lost our connection to ourselves" (as cited in "Andy Goldworthy," n.d.). Merleau-Ponty argues "the flesh of the world is our flesh," (as cited in Manen, 2014, p. 333). This is so true. According to Indigenous people, we are part of nature. When West Coast Indigenous people finish a prayer, they do not say "amen," they say, "all my relations" (Norman Fournier, Cree Nation, personal communication, October 2022). Western culture frequently overlooks this interconnectedness and requires reminders.

Environmental Art

Environmental art similar to what Cvetkovich calls "public genre of speculative thinking" (2012, p. 23) can play a significant role in the sustainability-oriented education and praxis. Artistic inquiry serves as a phenomenological experience that raises significant questions rather than attempting to prove a specific point (St. Pierre, 2018). It is about affecting and effecting. Heidegger and Gadamer suggest that "art is a way to truth as aletheia, providing us with an experience of truth" (as cited in Manen, 201, p. 343). Employing a/r/tography as "a research methodology, a creative practice, and a performative pedagogy" (Irwin, 2013, p. 23), I immerse myself in nature with the aim of merging the sensations of aesthetic experience with the love of life to discover new truths.

Research Questions

How can embodied imitation of the practices of a non-human animal foster deeper connections? What kind of teaching opportunities will emerge through this project? What affective and embodied knowledge will be produced through this art/research/teaching approach?

Theoretical Approach

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach and method of inquiry that focuses on understanding the conscious experience of human beings in the world. It is not just a way of gaining knowledge but also involves interpreting and making meaning from this experience (Qutoshi, 2018). Spiegelberg (1969) suggests that there is not a single, definitive approach to phenomenology as phenomenology is a diverse and flexible field that cannot be reduced to a single method or style. Therefore, it is difficult to find a widely agreed-upon and clear interpretation of phenomenology (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003). In Husserlian perspective, phenomenology begins by returning to the world as it is experienced, without preconceived hypotheses or explanations. Rather than attempting to explain the world, it seeks to describe it as it is experienced. It starts from a perspective that is free from assumptions or preconceived notions (Husserl, 1970; Schmitt, 1968).

In my project, I explore phenomenological writing based on my learnings from *Phenomenology of Practice* (Manen, 2014). An embodied imitation of the practices of bowerbird provides me with an opportunity to study some aspects of lived experiences of both *Self* and the *Other*. This exploration unfolds insights around other universal phenomena such as love, intimacy, hope, and failure.

Embodiment

Phenomenologists believe that our experience of the world is heavily influenced by our physical bodies and sensory abilities (Schmitz et al., 2011; Van Manen, 2014). The concept of embodiment emphasizes the role of the body in shaping our perceptions and interactions with the world. Phenomenologists often argue that this embodied perspective is essential for understanding the human experience and should be considered in any philosophical inquiry. "We experience ourselves, each other, and nonhumans through what Ingold (2011a) calls our 'entanglements' with the world: the interrelationships among embodiment, affect, imagination, and sensory experience" (Culhane & Elliott, 2016, p. 46).

The A/r/tographical Project

Through this a/r/tographic project, I explore art's capacity to establish deeper connections with nature and foster "ecological wisdom" (Guattari, 2000). This is my aim. However, my findings may not exactly reflect this goal in a traditional sense of research. I delve into phenomenological research for the first time. While anxious about deviating from my main path, I am thrilled by the potential for fresh insights to emerge from this exploration. I follow Goldworthy and the male bowerbird as my inspirations for creating art. Goldworthy uses natural material in a new and thought-provoking way. He "presents his work as contributing to and playing off the landscape" and is "best known for his temporary work; delicate constructions of leaves, sticks, ice, and sand which are bound to collapse or decay" (Matless & Revill, 1995, pp. 428-430). His art is comparable to the bowerbird's. The notion of temporality and decay is evident in the work of both.

"Each season leaves a layer, each year leaves a layer, each animal does, so my works are just like that" (Goldworthy, as cited in Matless & Revill, 1995, p. 430). These two artists (Goldworthy and bowerbird) both *leave a layer. "*Bowerbirds have been building bowers for 50 million years" (Rothenberg, 2014). Each bowerbird species has their own unique way of building and decorating their bower and "the differences between the constructions of each bowerbird species have been compared to the distinct styles of individual human artists or schools of art" (Rothenberg, 2014).

As Angelo states "qualitatively different interactions with different available materials lead to the formation of real, different forms of knowledge" (Angelo, 2013, 366). I explore Angelo's notion of "experiences of closeness" to gain an embodied knowledge of nature through a phenomenological experience of *birdness*—a nearly impossible goal. What is important is not becoming a bowerbird, but the journey toward gaining new understandings of nature and existence. I investigate a different way of knowing nature. Different from ornithologists and others in the fields of natural sciences, and different from birdwatchers "who love birds through binoculars" (Angelo, 2013, p. 351). My focus is on the "phenomenological, affective, dimension of human knowledge of nature" (p. 352) and I have the opportunity to experience what Angelo calls, "physical interaction with a material form and mental work done on a thing itself" (p. 353).

Making

I begin by watching documentaries about bowerbirds' courtship behaviours and their bower creation process. To collect the decoration objects for my bower, I go on a walk journey unlike my other walks. I experience a "positional consciousness" (Manen, 2014) i.e., I am not just walking from my home to a destination; I walk with an awareness that I am walking instead of flying. As Manen (2014) states:

> It is not the physical movement of walking itself but the meaning this walking acquires in my daily projects that makes a stroll along the river valley with a friend different from a walk to the corner store, or a walk down the hall in a strange school or hospital. (p. 328)

I notice all the colourful objects—seeds, leaves, flowers, seashells—that I can use to decorate my bower. I am hopeful that I will win some heart.



Figure 1 | Decoration items for the bower, photograph 2022 (Copyright by the author)

I attempt to write phenomenologically about my experience, striving to articulate my "pre-reflective experiential account" of constructing a bower, "hoping that the meanings we [I] bring to the surface from the depths of life's oceans have not entirely lost some of the natural quiver of their undisturbed existence" (Manen, 2014, p. 313).

> *Now, I'm in the world as myself and as the Other. Collecting branches, I still don't know how to make a bower. I just start doing and through this doing I get to learn. I realize that I have an intrapersonal communication with myself and wonder how I can be a bird while I'm using human language in my head. Does the bird also have an inner monologue using a bird language? Does he think? Or does he only feel? What does he think about? Does he think the way we think using some sort of language? I try to bracket language and thought but I realize that it's nearly an impossible task. I keep collecting the branches and putting them together. The branches hold on to each other. Nature collaborates and my bower is being made. The entire day, I wander through the forest, collect my branches, and bring them to the beach where my bower is. I feel like a child in the wild. Today, I am more aware of my presence in and relation to the natural world by noticing the differences between me and the bowerbird in my interactions with nature as we both embark on the same journey (making a bower).*



Figure 2 | Collecting branches for the bower, photograph 2022 (Copyright by the author)

Reflecting

Imitating the bowerbird's artifact, I am conscious of the bodily differences between me and the bird. I have no beak for picking the branches and no wings for flying and transporting. However, I use my hands and even carry a bag to keep the collected objects. The more I get involved in the process, the less I become aware of my body and the bowerbird's body. "As we bypass our own body in favour of the things in which we are involved, so we may bypass the body of the other person, who is similarly engaged in the world." (Manen, 2014, p. 328)

Now, I do not notice that I am using my hands instead of a beak to put the branches together. I am focused on the bower, the branches, and the making. Now, I am just building, like an expert bowerbird. Every now and then a thorn hurts my hands, and the disturbance causes sudden self-awareness of my body. However, I am so involved in the process that I forget about pain, hunger, thirst, and cold. While I am mostly unaware of my body, its "encumbrance" is captured by cameras (filmed and photographed). I am under the gaze of the cameras. Manen (2014) says, "one person may detect in the body of the other person one's state of well-being from the manner in which he or she is in the world" (p. 331). Similarly, the camera, as an observer, witnesses my body and provides me with another layer of bodily experience.



Figure 3 | *Using my hands instead of a beak,* photograph, 2022 (Copyright by the author)

In reviewing the photographs and videos I become aware of some of my struggles through making the bower. Watching my own body throughout the process and my facial expressions reveals my subconscious truth. The truth of pain from which I am running away. The pain resulted from all my unrequited loves. My unrequited love for my motherland that conjures itself in my other relationships. Spending the day in nature and on this land, reminds me that new connections can be made. That even though the hate-love relationship with my motherland resulted in my exile and separation, love can be found in new places and new forms, and new connections can be made.



Figure 4 | *Third experiential modality.* photography, 2022 (Copyright by the author)

Findings: Deeper Connections with Nature, Self, and Other

While making the bower helped dissolve my pain and send the suffering to my subconscious, the traces of this pain are still evident in my body and in my face. “When we record sounds or images, we develop a fine awareness of the sonic and visual worlds that surround us. This implies that we become more fully aware of the sounds and sights that we often take for granted” (Culhane, 2017, p. 8) In this project, capturing images of myself provided me with a fresh insight into my internal psychological experiences through a “third experiential modality” (Manen, 2014). I observe my “corps-sujet (body-subject),” “[the] materiality through which we incarnate our understandings, moods, fears, anxieties, loves, and desires” (Manen, 2014, p. 333).

In the videos, I notice various emotions surfacing within me: sadness, worry, and a fear of failure. Yet, moments of joy and hope occasionally shine through. I find myself wondering: who is this individual? Observing myself from an external perspective, involved in an activity, feels like encountering a new phenomenon. This differs from gazing at oneself in a mirror. Now, I can perceive what others might see when they look at me.

I seem mostly worried, almost as if in pain. Am I already feeling like I've failed? There is significant progress in constructing the bower; however, a lack of confidence is noticeable. When it comes to bowerbird, it is challenging, even with anthropomorphism, to infer his emotions solely from observing his facial expressions. It is possible that unlike me, the bowerbird is confident in his actions, knowing that building the bower will lead to reciprocated love. However, I could be mistaken. Perhaps the bowerbird is also anxious, worried, and even heartbroken from his past mating season attempts. Perhaps he tried before and did not find love in return. Maybe he feels hopeful this time, or perhaps, just like me, he is following what he thinks he should do while fearing failure deep down. Maybe he feels undeserving of love because he was kicked out of the nest by his mother as a nestling. He could be carrying childhood traumas, feeling disconnected and unloved. Yet, he builds the bower, finding solace in the connection it brings—connection to nature and to his identity as a bowerbird defined by the bower and his art.

At day's end, I am filled with euphoria. However, even in moments of joy, the marks of past pain linger in my body and face. To truly heal and transform, I must alter how my body engages with the world, as "there exists a secret alliance between animated corporeality and spiritual existence" (Buytendijk, 1988, p. 15).



Figure 5 | *Bower*, photography 2022 (Copyright by the author)

Conclusion

By creating my bower (artwork) on the land, I tapped into "the natural process that occur beyond ordinary perception" (Song, 2012, p. 798). Engaging in bower making allowed me to transcend the limits imposed on me by mere "daily observations of the earth in action" (Song, 2012, p. 799) and heightened my awareness to observe patterns previously unseen. I created with "animate Earth," and the process helped me, as Lipsett states, "feel more alive and appreciate the expressive arts as a powerful bridge between nature and ourselves [myself]" (as cited in Song, 2012, p. 800). Further, I was reminded of the social, political, and historical contexts underlying the origins of my feelings of condemnation and damnation, i.e., the politics and power relations that insidiously permeate all aspects of my life. This introspection reaffirms my belief in the pathway to my liberation: fostering bonds with nature and adopting the Indigenous perspective that recognizes ourselves and nature as "part of an extended ecological family. (Salmón, 2000, p. 1327).

The bowerbird's hard work is reciprocated by the love he receives from a female bird. The poesis of building and decorating a bower– a trans-species embodiment of the male bowerbird– however, granted me with an opportunity to "uncouple from the ordinary" and to have an "aesthetic experience in the natural world" (Greene, 1987, 72) that led to an experience of closeness with nature. As I roamed through the forest in search of branches, I ended up winning the heart of nature and felt the love that she generously offered me. As an artist/researcher/teacher, I also experienced closeness with a bird, not by holding a dead bird in my hand as an ornithologist would do, nor by looking at a live one through binoculars as a birdwatcher would, but by looking at the bowerbird's artifacts as a teaching/learning moment. By learning more about non-human ways of life–engaging in a non-human's artmaking process–I began to unearth the wealth of material in this world to create with and by which to be re/created.

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Section II:

Designing and Structuring Arts Learning

Detail Teaching and Its Importance in Architectural Education

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Abstract

In Architectural education, studio courses vary in number. Under the context of current innovations in education, the content and practices covered in these courses should be improved. This study aims to emphasize the significance of introducing a unit of “Architectural Detail,” which is missing in the studio curriculum for architectural education. Details are the smallest signification units in the architectural structure of meaning, a narrative element, and an object of representation. Although detail has a fundamental place in architecture, the focus on detail is still in the background of education today. It will be beneficial to provide an introductory knowledge base that will increase the student's knowledge of details in their later academic and professional life. A 4x6=24-hour section titled “Architectural Detail Unit” in the studio course curriculum was created for this study based on the information from the author’s master’s thesis and relevant literature. This research is designed as a case study that consults expert opinions on this unit. The study group’s opinions, who are the instructors conducting the studios, about the theoretical and applied content of the prepared detail unit were solicited. The outcomes from interpreting the qualitative data gathered using an interview form are revealed.

Keywords: detail in architectural education, architectural detail, architectural detail and architectural studio

Detail Teaching and Its Importance in Architectural Education

Architectural education has long recognized the significance of studio courses as a signature pedagogy for the discipline. The design studio is regarded as a core of architectural education, providing students the ability to gain new skills, learn numerous aspects of design, and foster creativity via experiential learning (Shulman, 2005). These studio classes have evolved through time. There is also a rising acknowledgment of the need to improve the content and procedures of studio courses in order to more effectively meet the professions and society's increasing demands.

In the studio lectures, theoretical and technical knowledge and skills acquired in lecture-based courses are transformed into design ideas and products (Mackintosh, 2014). However, losses and difficulties may occur during this transmission, resulting in some deficiencies. A prominent example of this challenging situation is the bent and broken link between "the architectural detail" and the design studio. Although detail has a fundamental place in architecture, the focus on detail is still in the background of architectural education today. Architectural detail occasionally takes an extremely significant role in the framework of studio lectures in accordance with the scope and substance of the defined project or the project designed by the student. However, the subject has been frequently overlooked. It is not only missing in the studio curriculum but also lecture-based courses. When the contents of the studio courses and elective courses in the undergraduate curriculum of Istanbul Technical University (ITU), Middle East Technical University (METU), and TOBB University of Economics and Technology (TOBB ETU) in Turkey are examined, it is seen that the architectural detail has remained below technical courses such as building courses as a structural phenomenon. The meaning of architectural detail encompasses considerably beyond what is covered in these classes. Before completing their studies, it is crucial for students to grasp the significance of architectural detail, which extends well beyond a mere joint. This research endeavours to address this deficiency by presenting a unit plan as a potential solution.

Architectural Detail

The term "detail" is defined in dictionaries as a "small part in relation to a larger whole (https://www.merriam-webster/com/dictionary/detail, n.d.)." The dictionary definition of detail may be insufficient to reveal its physical and abstract meaning in architecture. The definition of detail in architecture deviates from its dictionary definition, as exemplified by Alberti's description. According to Alberti, a column, which is an architectural element, embodies both a whole composed of parts and a part of a larger whole, such as a temple (Frascari, 1981). This implies that architectural details can be conceived and executed at various scales. The understanding of detail in architecture encompasses the intricate elements and components that contribute to the overall composition and functionality of a structure (Edward, 2011; Sekler & Curtis, 1978). This perspective acknowledges the significance of both the individual elements and their integration within the larger architectural context. Therefore, the definition of detail in architecture extends beyond the mere notion of small-

scale embellishments, encompassing the interplay between parts and the whole (Edward, 2011; Frascari, 1981; Özsoy, 2022).

The term “detail” in architectural literature can be traced back to the 18th century in France, where it emerged in theoretical studies. Initially, it was closely linked to style and often used interchangeably. However, as time progressed, the term "detail" has taken on multiple connotations. In the context of modernism, detail has evolved beyond its original meaning of structural joints or mere ornamentation (Edward, 1990: Forty, 2004; Frampton, 1980 & 1996). Instead, it has become an integral part of larger design decisions, serving as an extension of the overall architectural composition once again (Özsoy, 2022).

Problem Definition

Architectural detail is much more than a joint. Detail is a narrative element, an object of representation, and the smallest unit of meaning inside the architectural framework of meaning that expresses the whole of which it is a part (Corbusier, 1985; Frascari, 1981; Labatut, n.d.; Muller, 1998). However, students of architecture frequently struggle to grasp this premise. In architectural education, “architectural detail” is still relegated to the background, despite its significant role in the field of architecture. Both in theoretical and studio classes, architectural detail is disregarded. Although architectural detail is a matter of design, it is featured in many books and courses as a technical subject, a structural solution, and pragmatic expertise. Students approach the detail as though it were a mathematical problem, believing that this will help them discover the truth rather than understanding it as a component of the design. Students fail to understand the importance of architectural detail to their studio work and do not always see its applicability to their projects. Theoretical courses may not be productive for learning architectural details for students of the architecture program whose signature pedagogy is the design studio and where applied learning styles dominate. Therefore, it will be productive for them to examine the details practically and use them in their projects.

Aim of the Study

In this study, it is aimed to develop a unit focused on “Architectural Detail” that will provide students with a foundational understanding of architectural detail in their academic and professional lives. To comprehend and assess the unit's contribution to detail teaching, it is also intended to compile educators’ thoughts.

This study aimed to shed light on the role of detail teaching in shaping the future of architectural education and its impact on the quality and integrity of architectural practice. By examining relevant literature and drawing upon empirical evidence, this study will reveal the benefits and challenges of incorporating detail teaching into architectural curricula. Through this exploration, it is aimed to inspire educators and practitioners alike to embrace the value of detail teaching and its potential to elevate the standards of architectural design and construction.

Method of the Study

The “Explanatory Case Study” pattern, a qualitative research method, was used. The research involved a literature review, interviews, and analysing documents as data sources. Four instructors conducting the architectural design studios were determined as the study group. Regarding the theoretical and applied content of the prepared detail unit, the opinions of this group were sought out as subject-matter specialists. The outcomes from interpreting the qualitative data gathered using an interview form are revealed in the study.

Architectural Detail Unit

The purpose of this unit was to fill the “detail” gap in architectural education. The development of this unit plan was guided by the author's research on architectural detail, relevant literature, architectural design studio curriculums, and her master's thesis named “METU Gate A1: As an Architectural Detail.”

The unit is intended to be applied for four weeks and six hours at the start of the architectural design studio. I created four distinct daily/ lesson plans that would be used every week. These four daily plans are titled “Introduction to Architectural Detail: Abstract Meaning and Representational Role of Detail,” “Re-reading Architectural Detail,” “Representing Architectural Detail,” and “Project and Architectural Detail” in order of appearance.

Aim of the Unit

The unit is structured around six main objectives:

1. Teaching that an architectural detail has an abstract meaning, is an object of representation, and is a design element rather than a mere joint,
2. Teaching the bidirectional relationship of the architectural detail with the whole in,
3. Learning that architectural detail is an object of representation, understanding that represents the architect’s intentions,
4. To enable students to envision the creative possibilities of detail as they learn and understand how details come together in an exemplary way, by applying them in their contemporary designs,
5. It is aimed to combine the architectural detail unit and the studio, allowing students to develop a more permanent understanding of architectural detail,
6. It is aimed to enable students to deal with architectural details through on-site empirical observation.

Evaluation of the Unit

Formative assessments are utilized in the unit teaching process to support students in reinforcing theoretical concepts and developing detail awareness in project applications. The jury assesses the student's ability to apply architectural detail in term projects after the unit process, and a final mark is assigned based on how effectively they are accomplished. At a predetermined rate, outcomes in the architectural detail unit go toward the final score for the studio course.

Limitation of the Unit

This study is limited to lesson plans created for four design studio courses and a unit plan created to be incorporated into the curriculum of the seventh-semester architectural design studio course in the undergraduate degree in architecture.

Dail Plans of the Unit

Daily Plan 1st Week. The first course will be held at Middle East Technical University (Figure 1). Following the presentation of the unit's lesson plan and all required details to the students, a group discussion will take place to assess the student's current understanding of and opinions on architectural detail. The instructor of the architectural detail unit will then give a presentation on architecture and detail. This presentation will be a theoretical presentation covering the meaning, importance, and historical development of architectural detail The instructor will then go over the case study she conducted on the architectural detail over the METU Campus and Gate A1 with the class. The student is going to acquire an understanding of how to approach details empirically and how to evaluate details in the field. The instructor will physically show the theoretical knowledge she provided in the first half of the lecture using the details of the campus. During these presentations, the students' first impressions of the architectural detail will be discussed.

Daily Plan 2nd Week. The second class will be held at the Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum, where the case study will be held (Figure 2). At the beginning of the lesson, the students moderated the expected readings for this week and what they learned from the first week's trip; will be discussed as a group through the produced media. After that, a presentation will be given that will explain the stages taken from the first design concept developed for the museum to its completion by the museum's architect. In the third part of the course, students will be released to examine the structure and document the details. Within the framework of their readings and discussions, the students are expected to document the details that are of interest to them in the museum structure where the case study is made and that can be a reference to the details in their projects.

Daily Plan 3rd Week. The third class will be held at the Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum. Students will present the re-readings they have completed individually or in groups. During these presentations, they will give information about what details can be referenced in their studio projects (Figure 3).

Daily Plan 4th Week. The final lecture of the unit will be held in the studio where the project lectures are held. In this class, a final jury of the unit will be held. Students are expected to summarize their

work during the unit and present to the jury how they handled the architectural details in their projects and the designs they defined in detail in their projects Figure 4).



Figure 1 | *Students on a field trip at METU, 2020* (Copyright by the author)



Figure 2 | *Students on a field trip to Erimtan archaeology and art museum, 2020* (Copyright by the author)



Figure 3 | *Representation of a detail, 2023* (Copyright by the author)



Figure 4 | *Students present final works, 2023* (Copyright by the author)

Mimari Tasarım Stüdyosu Dersi
Mimari Detay Ünitesi Dört Haftalık Ders Planı

Birinci Hafta

Ders	Mimari Tasarım Stüdyosu
Sınıf	3. Sınıf / 7.Dönem
Öğrenme Alanı / Ünite	Mimari Detay
Konu	Mimari Detaya Giriş; Mimari Detayın Soyut Anlamı ve Temsil Rolü
Süre	360 dk.

Ders İşlenişi	İlk ders Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi'nde yapılacak ve üç bölümden oluşacaktır. Dersin ilk bölümü mimarlık fakültesinde yapılacaktır. Ünitenin ders planı öğrencilerle paylaşılıp gerekli bilgilendirmeler yapıldıktan sonra öğrencilerin detay ve mimari detay hakkındaki mevcut bilgi ve görüşleri grup halinde tartışılacaktır. Ardından mimari detay ünite yürütücüsünün tarafından mimarlık ve detay üzerine bir sunum yapılacaktır. Mimari detayın anlamı, önemi, tarihsel gelişimi, modern mimari ve detay konularını kapsayan bu teorik sunumun ardından yürütücü daha evvel ODTÜ Kampüsü ve A1 Kapısı üzerinden mimari detay üzerine yapmış olduğu durum çalışmasını öğrencilere anlatacaktır. Bu sunum öğrenciye detaylara ampirik olarak nasıl yaklaşacaklarını ve çalışacakları alanı nasıl incelemeleri gerektiği hakkında fikir verecektir. Bu sunuşların ardından öğrencilerle mimari detayla ilgili akıllarda oluşan ilk izlenimler görüşülecektir. Dersin ikinci bölümünde ünite yürütücüsünün anlatımıyla detaylar *alle* de yapılacak yürüyüşle gözlemlenmeye başlanacaktır. Dersin üçüncü bölümü A1 kapısında gerçekleştirilecektir. Ünite yürütücüsü dersin ilk bölümünde anlattığı teorik bilgileri burada fiziksel olarak gösterecektir. Kısa bir tartışma ve soru cevap kısmından sonra ders tamamlanacaktır.
Öğrenme ve Öğretme Etkinlikleri	Dikkat Çekme: Mimari detay konu başlığını öğrenciler için ilgi çekici hale getirmek için kült ve güncel mimarlardan ve yapılardan örnekler verilecektir. Ders için alan gezisi düzenlenecek ve öğrenciler farklı bir ortamda ders yapacaklardır. ODTÜ'de yapılacak olan ders detay ve modern mimarlık üzerine teorik olarak öğrendiklerini yapılı çevrelerinde görüp inceleme şansı verecektir. Güdüleme: Öğrencilere verilen teorik sunuşlar ve yürütücülerin moderatörlüğünde yapılan tartışmalarla mimari detay ve önemine dair bilinç sağlanacaktır.
Ölçe ve Değerlendirme	Mimari detay ünitesinin ilk stüdyosu sürecinde öğrencilerle anlatılacak konular öncesinde ve ders sürecinde soru-yanıt yöntemiyle biçimlendirici (*formative*) değerlendirmelerle yapılacaktır. Böylece daha ders sürecinde detay konusu pekiştirilmeye çalışılacaktır. Bu dersin sonunda öğrencilerden sonraki hafta teslim etmeleri üzerine mimari detay hakkında oluşan ilk fikir eskizlerini çalışmak istedikleri medya ile temsil etmeleri beklenecektir. Sonraki hafta için mimarlık bölümü üçüncü sınıf düzeyine uygun detay okumaları ödev olarak verilecektir.
Ünitenin Diğer Derslerle İlişkisi	Bu ünite yoluyla mimarlık tarihi ve kuramları dersi arasında bir bağlantı ve ilişki kurulmuş olacaktır. Mimari detay ünitesi ile stüdyonun birleştirilmesi, öğrencilerin mimari detaya dair daha kalıcı bir bilgi ve anlayış geliştirmelerine olanak sağlayacaktır. Öğrencilerin mimari detayı ve özelliklerini birer tasarım problemi olarak ele almaları önceden ya da ünite süresince edindikleri teorik bilgilerini pekiştirirken stüdyo projelerinde uygulanarak pratik olarak kullanmalarını ve stüdyo projelerine katkı yapmasını sağlayacaktır.

Figure 5 | *Week 1, unit plan produced by the author, 2023*

Interview with Studio Instructor and Findings

Interviews are conducted with four lecturers who have been teaching studio classes at various universities for more than ten years. Two of the meetings with instructors took place in person, and the other two took place over Zoom. The teachers approved the interviews to be recorded. The teachers received a document with daily lesson plans and an explanation of the unit's goals before the interviews.

Semi-structured Questions and Instructors Responses for Interview with Instructors

1. What do you think about the applicability of the unit in coordination with the term project? What kind of problems could be encountered during this unit?
   All the reviewers were told that the Studio lecturers have an important role to play in this unit. The only issue that could arise, according to the two reviewers is that the unit wouldn't be integrated and would stick like a solid compartment to the studio. It was said that this situation may be avoided by making room for the students and by extending the unit over the entire semester with the help of instructors.
2. When would be the most effective time to implement the unit?
   It was said that it would be effective to complete the unit at the start of the semester as scheduled. According to the first and fourth reviewers, the unit can be at the beginning of the semester or in the middle. Meanwhile, they also pointed out that the unit must continue in the studio both before and after it is implemented. The third reviewer recommended that this program, which was put into place for the first four weeks, should be structured in a manner that would support the next eight weeks.
3. Is the third-year second-semester studio (fourth design studio) appropriate for this unit plan?
   All the reviewers stated that the unit could be applied in any semester starting from the second year. But they also add that applying it after the second semester of the second year would be more efficient because the risk of limiting students in the first studio would be eliminated.
4. Do you think the 6-week, 4-hour duration of the unit is sufficient?
   All the reviewers stated that it is sufficient. According to the second and third reviewers the unit would span the entire studio and not be limited to just these four weeks.
5. How much of a positive and bad impact does the unit have on the studio? What precautions are available against negative effects? What are the unit’s advantages and disadvantages?
   Reviewers all agreed that the unit is both necessary and effective. The fact that the unit has multiple lecturers and negotiates was deemed positive. The fourth reviewer stated that while detail is a practical matter that is typically left until the end of the studio project, with the help of this unit, it is perceived as a factor that can shape the design from the very beginning. The unit will establish awareness of architectural details and consider them as a part of the whole in the design.

The second reviewer mentioned that the existing studio organization in the instructor's mind will help to make speculations about the unit plan and that would produce outstanding outcomes. The first reviewer warned about case studies. The case buildings should not be used as the focal point but rather should be used to illustrate the significance and additional meanings of the architectural detail, which is the primary subject of the study. Otherwise, the case structure might be highlighted, and the student could shift the focus of his work. According to him to prevent this, methods of narration and presentation should be used. To avoid turning the unit into a structure analysis, the presenter and instructor should emphasize and concentrate on the details. He also suggested one additional assignment for the unit; Before beginning their project, students may be asked to bring the details of a structure they are familiar with or are interested in.

6. Can this unit plan accomplish most of the goals?

All reviewers agreed that by the end of the unit, most of the goals could be achieved.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the significance of architectural detail in architectural education and practice cannot be overstated. The design studio, as a signature pedagogy, plays a crucial role in shaping the understanding and application of architectural detail among students. However, the existing curriculum and pedagogical approaches often overlook the comprehensive understanding of architectural detail, relegating it to a technical subject rather than a fundamental aspect of design. This deficiency has led to a disconnect between theoretical knowledge and its practical application in design studios, resulting in students' struggles to grasp the abstract meaning and representational role of architectural detail.

The research presented in this study addresses this deficiency by developing a comprehensive unit plan focused on architectural detail. The unit plan aims to provide students with a foundational understanding of architectural detail, emphasizing its abstract meaning, representational role, and its significance as a design element. Through a series of daily plans and activities, the unit plan seeks to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application, enabling students to envision the creative possibilities of architectural detail and apply them in their contemporary designs.

The methodology employed in this study, utilizing an explanatory case study pattern and qualitative research methods, involved a literature review, interviews with experienced studio instructors, and analysis of documents as data sources. The findings from the interviews with instructors revealed positive feedback regarding the applicability, timing, and duration of the unit plan, as well as its potential impact on studio courses. The instructors emphasized the need for integration of the unit plan with the studio curriculum and highlighted the advantages of establishing awareness of architectural details from the beginning of design projects.

The architectural detail unit plan, developed based on extensive research and empirical evidence, aims to bridge the gap in architectural education by providing students with the necessary knowledge and skills to understand and incorporate architectural detail effectively in their design projects. The unit plan's formative assessments and integration with studio courses are designed to support students in reinforcing theoretical concepts and developing detail awareness in project applications.

While the study acknowledges the limitations of the unit plan, such as its application to specific design studio courses and the need for further integration with the curriculum, it provides a comprehensive framework for addressing the deficiencies in architectural education related to architectural detail. The unit plan's objectives, daily plans, and evaluation methods are designed to ensure that students gain a holistic understanding of architectural detail and its role in architectural practice.

In summary, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on architectural education by highlighting the significance of architectural detail and proposing a practical solution through the development of a detailed unit plan. By shedding light on the role of detail teaching in shaping the future of architectural education and its impact on the quality and integrity of architectural practice, this study aims to inspire educators and practitioners to embrace the value of detail teaching and its potential to elevate the standards of architectural design and construction. The unit plan presented in this study serves as a valuable resource for educators seeking to enhance the teaching of architectural detail and empower students to integrate detail effectively in their design projects. An important conclusion obtained from both literature-based data and interviews with a certain group of expert participants, albeit limited, is that it is a deficiency that the subject of architectural detail is not treated as a separate unit in studio courses. The opinions of the same expert group were that the unit plan developed within the framework of this research was applicable and could provide detailed training. As a suggestion, it would be useful to include the detail unit in conjunction with other units in architectural education studio courses. This way, prospective architects will gain important pre-employment competence regarding the importance of detail and its applications.

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The Role of Using a Visual Interface to Enable Lower Secondary Students to Adopt Good Habits

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Abstract

Today, increasing living standards and the endless options that life offers to people create several uncertainties. People who do not know what to do and cannot discover what is good for them may experience difficulties in life. Not intervening in the types of behaviours acquired through human life at an early school age leads people to feelings of stress and boredom which cause them to form bad habits and sometimes appeal to violence. In addition, young people's bad habits also blunt their artistic creativity and design skills. In this paper, it was briefly mentioned how habits are shaped in individuals and how good and bad habits are formed. A digital interface has been designed to help students aged 11-14 to stay away from violence and bad habits therefore adopt good habits. The aim is to evaluate this interface, which will be used in art classes, in line with the opinions of field educators and experts. Students aged 11-14 were selected as the study area, and in this context, secondary school teachers, pedagogues, and expert designers were selected as the sample and their opinions were consulted.

Keywords: habits, violence in schools, visual interface design, online art education

The Role of Using a Visual Interface to Enable Lower Secondary Students to Adopt Good Habits

Individuals acquire their habits in various ways, through education and experiences. It is important that the good habits and desired attitudes gained through education are permanent. For this purpose, various methods can be developed in different lessons in education and training programs. Art lessons in school education programs can be more effective than other lessons in developing good habits, attitudes, and desired behaviours due to their structure (Özsoy, 2007).

As Clear (2018) puts it habits are "a routine or practice performed regularly; an automatic response to a specific situation" (Clear, 2018, p. 6). Habits are not a phenomenon that emerges at birth, but a type of behaviour that is acquired through learning. Around half of our everyday behaviours are performed automatically, with little forethought (Gardner, Rebar, and Lally, 2022). The better habits people have, the better their perspective on life. Bad habits, on the other hand, negatively affect the lives of individuals and prevent them from achieving their goals. It causes individuals to waste their time as well as endangering their health (mentally and physically).

Good Habits

Most of the people consider habits such as brushing your teeth, drinking water regularly, reading books, healthy eating, and doing sports as good habits. Some good habits are easy to implement, others can be very difficult, and some may seem almost impossible. As Duhigg indicates, "Habits are powerful, but delicate. They can emerge outside our consciousness or can be deliberately designed. They often occur without our permission but can be reshaped by fiddling with their parts" (Duhigg, 2012, p. 25).

Bad Habits

"Bad habits are slightly different, but when we try to break a bad one, we create dissonance, and the brain doesn't like that," says Dr. Luana Marques (Calechman, 2022). Bad habits often arise as a way of coping with stress and boredom. One of the most effective ways to break bad habits is to replace them with good ones. "So, unless you deliberately fight a habit—unless you find new routines—the pattern will unfold automatically" (Duhigg, 2012, p. 20).

Exercises for Students' Self-Discovery

Mood Journal

A mood journal is a place to track your feelings and moods, look for patterns, and learn what triggers particular emotions (Wright, 2023). The person who keeps a mood journal notes the moments during the day when he/she is the most upset, the angriest, the most surprised and the best feelings.

Mindfulness

One of the most difficult situations when people are trying to adopt a new habit is doing multiple things at the same time and not fully focusing on any of them. Staying in the moment, being careful and having your mind on what you are doing is very important when trying to form a habit.

Wake-up Morning Mediation

When it comes to shaping habits, how we start the day in the morning is very important. People often start the day without realizing that they are stepping into a new day. It is important to include wake-up morning meditation in the training model to say motivating words to feel better in the morning.

Aim of the Research

In this paper, it is aimed to design a visual interface and develop a digital application to be used online in the visual arts lesson to help 11 to 14 years old students gain good habits. Depending on this purpose, a unit in which the visual interface has been developed and the opinions of teachers and experts about this interface and the unit are consulted. In this framework, answers to the following questions were sought in the research:

1. How is the visual interface design and digital application created to prevent violent behaviours and to gain good habits?
2. How is the process of preparing the lesson unit aimed at preventing violent behaviours and gaining good habits carried out?
3. What are the opinions of teachers and design experts about the curriculum of the lesson unit that includes the use of visual interface and digital application online?

Limitations of the Research

This research is limited to the lower secondary school visual arts lesson, the curriculum of this course, the visual interface design and digital application developed to be applied in this lesson, and the opinions of lower secondary school visual arts teachers and expert designers in terms of the functionality of the program.

Methodology of the Research

In this study, “Explanatory Case Study” design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used. This design is descriptive and uses one or two cases to provide information about a situation. This helps to interpret other similar data, especially if there is a reason to suggest that the reader has little knowledge about a programme (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Within the framework of this design, findings were obtained by examining the documents on the subject as well as interviewing teachers and design experts about the visual interface design, digital application and unit plan developed to be used in online teaching.

Research Process

Preparation of Unit Plan and Lesson Plan

With the research on habits, the idea of writing a paper titled ‘Role of Using a Visual Interface to Enable Lower Secondary Students to Adopt Good Habits’ emerged. As a result of the research carried out within the scope of this paper, the idea of finding a solution by going to the root of the troubles experienced by individuals to improve habits has emerged. After the research and discussions, it was decided to adapt the prepared plan to the education system and the process of

preparing an education plan for lower secondary school students started. Before the unit plan was prepared, a preliminary interview was conducted with a lower secondary school teacher.

Process of Visual Interface Design and Digital Application Development

Before the visual interface design and the creation of the digital application, in-depth research on habits was conducted. How habits are formed, what individuals focus on when developing good habits and what are the sources of bad habits were investigated. Then a plan was made, and it was decided that this plan should be adapted to the education system. While designing the interface, colour and illustration preferences were made for lower secondary school students. To ensure that students and teachers can use the interface without any problems or confusion, care has been taken to ensure that each content is clear and precise. The prepared draft interface was shown to both the teachers and the expert designer, and their opinions were taken.

Study Group

The study group of the research consisted of two secondary school visual arts teachers, one lower secondary school guidance teacher and one expert designer. Secondary school teachers were asked questions about students' habits and feedback were received about the unit plan and daily plans. Teachers were also asked to evaluate the prepared visual interface. An expert designer was also included in the study group. The thoughts of the expert designer about the visual interface prepared as a draft were taken.

Data Collection Tools and Analysis

Within the scope of the research, document analyses and interviews were conducted. In-depth research based on the literature on how habits are shaped, what needs to be done to change and control habits was conducted. Highly valued books and articles on habits were analysed. In addition, lower secondary school teachers and an expert designer were taken as the study group, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with this group. The following open-ended questions were included in the interview form.

Findings

Two visual arts teachers and one counsellor, who were specially selected in the study group, were explained the unit plan, lesson plan and the parts related to the design in detail, and the findings considered to be important for the research were obtained.

In response to the question "What are your observations about the habits of the students?", the first teacher (T1) said: "*The family has a significant impact on the profile of students. If the family reads books, so does the child. But if the family constantly watches television and spends a lot of time on their phones, the child does the same. I think of education as a trivet: student - teacher - parent. If this trivet is healthy, children have a solid foundation. I think that students should be supported from outside to acquire good habits."* The second teacher (T2); *"Since I have experience in both private and public schools, I can say that the two are very different. Children's habits change according to their income levels. Private school students have a better chance of developing habits that are good for*

them. Parents send their children to sports or art courses for their children's development. Unfortunately, the student profile in public schools is not very good. Since their income levels are low, they stay away from activities that will improve themselves." The third teacher (T3); "*There are many factors affecting students' habits. Although the most important factor seems to be the family, sometimes a well-educated student can be affected by students with bad habits. In fact, we frequently encounter such examples. Students who do not want to be excluded by their friends can turn off the consciousness they have gained from their family and behave just like them. As they enter adolescence, their habits can change rapidly. There are also students who enjoy habits that are good for them in primary school. However, students may see good habits as a weakness in secondary school as they enter their teenage years."* These answers given by all three teachers show us that there are some problems when it comes to habits. It is very important to understand these problems well and produce solutions to create awareness against the problems that students have experienced or will experience in the future.

The answers given to the second question "Do you think that Good Habits Education will be effective in closing the existing deficiencies?" are as follows: (T1); *"Even though these students have started lower secondary school, they are still children and I think they will take the education you prepared as a task. But I think it would be effective if this training is carried out in the presence of a psychological counsellor and guidance counsellor (PDR). I also do not think that the two lesson hours in the daily plan will be sufficient. I think it can only be effective if it is integrated with other courses and if it is increased. The idea is very good, but the time seemed limited to me."* (T2); *"I definitely think so. It should definitely be added to the curriculum. I think it will be more effective if it is done only at the beginning of each semester or at the beginning of each month." (S3); "I think that the training you have prepared is necessary. However, I think that a plan spread over a longer period instead of two lesson hours will be effective."* According to the answers we received from the teachers, it was concluded that a separate study should be carried out to expand the training plan.

The third question asked to the group was "What do you think about the aesthetic and functional dimensions of the visual interface design prepared for the Good Habits Education unit?" The responses of the teachers are as follows: (T1): *"I think it is applicable. If students participate in a digital environment, they will gladly participate. I also think it is functional. I think adding more remarkable features would be effective to attract students to the application."* (T2): *"I think there is a deficiency in colours, it is too white. A more colourful interface design can be made. I believe that it will be quite effective and can raise students' awareness."* (T3); *"I think it is definitely applicable. I can say that the fact that it is digital is a big plus. I think it just needs to be coloured."* In the light of the answers, we received from the teachers, colour work was done on the visual interface and then it was presented to the expert designer. The opinions of the expert designer, who was specially selected in the study group, about the draft visual interface study were also taken.

The first question asked to the expert designer was “Could you make an evaluation of the draft visual interface design in terms of aesthetics and functionality?” and the designer answered as follows: *“The interface design looks understandable. In addition, aesthetics and functionality can be improved by adding frames to the buttons and minimizing some visuals.”* Changes were made in the design by taking the suggestions of the expert designer into consideration.

To the second question “What are your opinions about the usability of the draft visual interface for students and teachers?” asked to the expert designer; *“A very understandable work that can be used by students and teachers has been realized. Frames should be added to the necessary places to create only the feeling of a button view.”* The desired correction was made by considering the suggestions of the expert designer.

In response to the question “Would you evaluate the suitability of the draft visual interface especially for middle school first grade students aged 11-12 years?”, the designer responded: *“Colour, character and visual choices seem to be suitable for middle school students. We can say that it is a successful start for the draft. The idea is also quite good.”* The comments of the expert designer were found valuable, and the importance of the draft interface design prepared for the research was emphasized.

Discussion and Conclusion

It is very important to control our habits that determine the whole shape of our lives. Achieving control at an early age also prepares us for the problems we will experience. Within the scope of the research, lower secondary school teachers and expert designer were taken as the sample.

Lower secondary school teachers consist of a visual arts teacher working in a private school, a visual arts teacher working in a public school and a counsellor working in a private school. In the interview with the teachers’, semi-structured questions were asked about the topic, unit plan, lesson plans and visual interface. According to the findings, it was concluded that reorganizing the plans by expanding and enriching them and preparing a plan to be integrated with other lessons would further increase the effect of the research. In the semi-structured interview with the expert designer, it was concluded that the design prepared as a draft was generally effective and could be made more effective with only a few corrections. The Good Habits Education Program, which was prepared to facilitate the struggle against these difficulties and to raise awareness among young people, was found necessary because of the research and interviews. It was concluded that the prepared programme should be expanded, improved and the program, which started with the 5^{th} grades, should be arranged for the 6^{th}, 7^{th}, and 8^{th} grades in the future. It was also supported by the interviews that the Good Habits Education Programme will create a good consciousness in the shaping of habits.

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Art-Inspired Play Proposals in Space

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Abstract

One of the main “fault lines” we observe with the students of the Degree in Early Childhood Education is the lack of knowledge they have about contemporary art and the processes of artistic creation. Based on an anonymous test to detect their level, we learned that the majority of students have a great lack of knowledge about contemporary art. At the same time, they are unfamiliar with artistic practices such as installation or performance. Our paper sets out a series of practical educational exercises, developed throughout the course and presented in an artist notebook. The project ends with a proposal for a game in space inspired by art installations. Art and education merge in a space created for play. The “fault lines” detected initially becomes the key structure of the acquisition of knowledge throughout the course.

Keywords: art installations, play, early childhood education

Art-Inspired Play Proposals in Space

In this paper we showcase the implemented practice within the Plastic and Visual Education course of the Early Childhood Education program at the University of Zaragoza, Spain. In the first session, we carried out an initial assessment of the students' previous knowledge of their cultural references. The assessment consists of drawing up a map of their main cultural references, in which they have to indicate their favourite artist, song and film.

After analysing the maps of references made by the students during the academic year 2019/ 2020, we observed that they know current musical references, but they are not familiar with current visual artists We noticed that the overwhelming majority of students concentrated solely on the following artists: Diego Velázquez, Francisco de Goya, Pablo Ruiz Picasso, Vincent van Gogh, Leonardo da Vinci and Joan Miró. Only European artists, all of them men, painters and already dead. These four characteristics, a priori unimportant, imply a series of issues that concerned us. A dearth of knowledge regarding artists from diverse cultural contexts, an inadequacy in acknowledging the contributions of female artists—highlighted by artist and researcher María Gimeno in her performance "Queridas viejas" (Gimeno, 2019)—a deficiency in exploring artistic disciplines beyond conventional painting, and a lack of familiarity with contemporary artistic practices collectively signify a restricted comprehension within the realm of art.

Why should we be concerned about these issues? Primarily, the absence of familiarity with artists from diverse cultural contexts hampers our understanding of alternative modes of thinking, social organisation, and realities distinct from our immediate cultural milieu, as the researcher Spivak reports in her work (Spivak, 1988). This limitation restricts the scope of our knowledge, hindering the exploration of diverse perspectives and impeding our ability to consider possibilities beyond our own. Consequently, there is a failure to address crucial issues such as tolerance and respect for those whose experiences differ from our own.

Secondly, the complete omission of references to female artists poses challenges in recognising the role of women within the artistic realm, often relegating them to the limited role of a "muse." This oversight hinders the broader acknowledgment of women as active and influential participants in the artistic process.

Thirdly, the absence of representation for a variety of art disciplines and forms restricts our perception of art solely to painting, overlooking the vast array of existing artistic disciplines and manifestations such as sculpture, performance, video art, and installation. This narrow focus denies us the opportunity to appreciate the richness and diversity present within the realm of artistic expression.



Figure 1 | *Play proposal 1, 2019* (Copyright Zarzoso López)

Finally, the total lack of knowledge of contemporary art practices produces a great disconnection between the students and the art research that is currently being developed. This prevents them from being aware of the issues being dealt with in contemporary art, which on many occasions are issues that also concern the students, as they are being developed in the same contemporary context in which they live. This last characteristic is striking because the students know the musical references that are being produced at present, in most cases, they quote contemporary performers, only two students mentioned performers and composers from the past, such as Edith Piaf and Chopin. It would be good to analyse this phenomenon, which opens the following research question: Why does contemporary music reach the vast majority of young people, while contemporary art only reaches a minority?

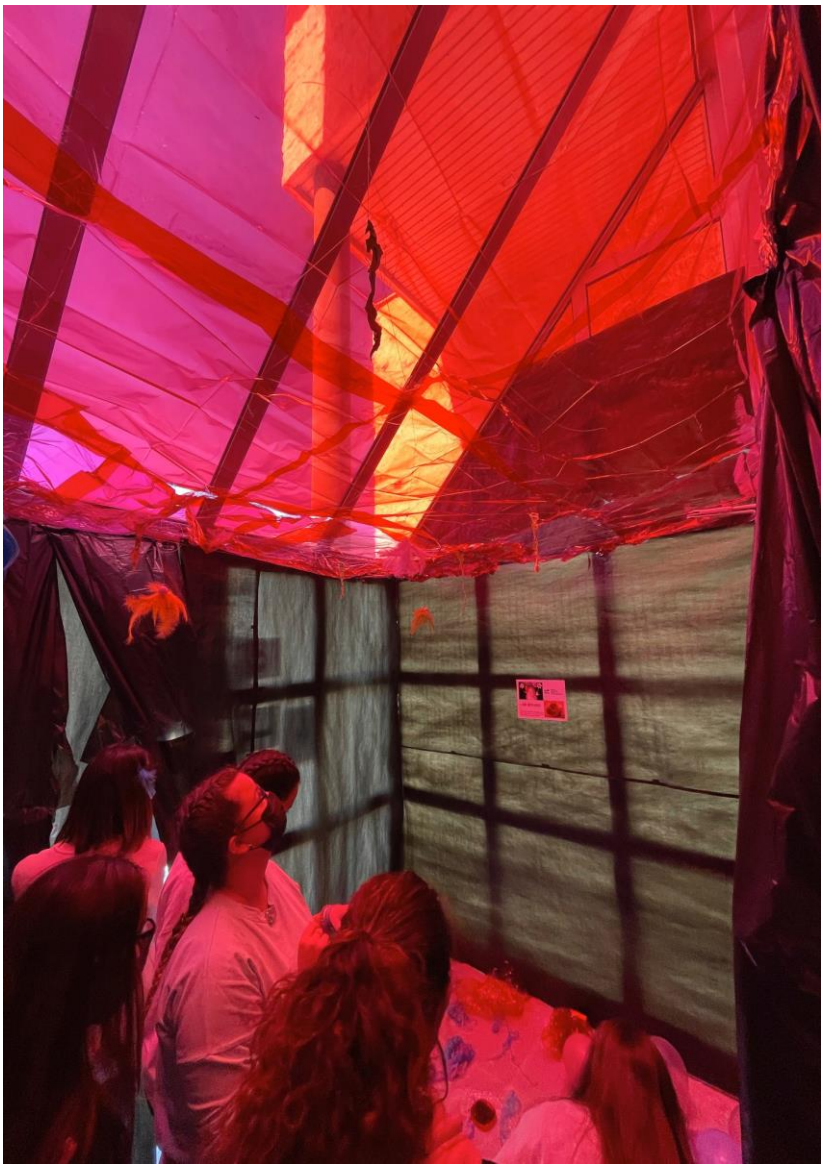


Figure 2 | *Play proposal 2, 2019* (Copyright Zarzoso López)

Each of the previous issues analysed helped us to detect the students' shortcomings in relation to art practices and to be able to structure the subject on the basis of these needs. Our approach was as follows:

- Introduce references from cultural contexts other than European, both male and female, such as Otobong Nkanga (Nigeria), Ruth Asawa (USA), Isamu Noguchi (Japan), Ai Weiwei (China) and Cecilia Vicuña (Chile).
- To teach art practices of different disciplines and art manifestations, such as sculpture, installation or performance.
- Bring students closer to contemporary artistic practices and creative processes.
- Evaluate the acquisition of this knowledge, we require a final educational art installation project (play proposal).

The requirements for designing and carrying out the final educational art installation project were inspired by the work of Professors Cidrás and Blanco (2023):

1. Work on the basis of a concept to be investigated and a reference point among those studied during the academic year.
2. Analyse the type of materials to work with, taking into account the environmental and sensory implications and their own characteristics.
3. Make preliminary sketches to be able to discuss them in class.
4. Carry out the final installation.



Figure 3 | *Play proposal 3, 2019* (Copyright Zarzoso López)

It is crucial to highlight several noteworthy aspects. Firstly, all the deficiencies identified during the initial evaluation were successfully addressed by the conclusion of the course. Students exhibited a remarkable expansion in their understanding across various dimensions:

5. Enhanced comprehension of artists from diverse cultural backgrounds.
6. Amplified recognition of contributions by women artists.
7. Increased familiarity with a spectrum of artistic disciplines beyond traditional painting.
8. Augmented awareness of contemporary artistic practices.

Secondly, students expressed that their acquisition of this knowledge was facilitated through engaging experiences and enjoyment, especially in exploring the realm of contemporary art a domain unfamiliar to many prior to undertaking the Visual and Plastic Education course.



Figure 4 | *Play proposal 4, 2019* (Copyright Zarzoso López)

Lastly, students conveyed their intent to proactively explore more art centres in the future, seeking to discover new artistic references and further enrich their understanding.

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A Comparison of the Turkish MEB 20212 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course Curricula (5th and 6th Grades)

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Abstract

This study aims to compare the Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama course (5th and 6th Grades) curricula published by the Turkish Ministry of Education in 2012 and 2018. The two most up-to-date drama course curricula, which were prepared by the General Directorate of Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education in 2012 and 2018, published were analyzed using a document analysis method. As a result of the research, in the 2012 curriculum it was aimed to transform students into members of a playgroup by using a game-based approach and moving away from drama methods and techniques. The 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Lesson (5th and 6th Grades) Curriculum was updated in terms of achievements and the number of units, and it was built on the components of drama, and the curriculum is made more suitable for the field of drama.

Keywords: drama, curriculum, secondary school

A Comparison of the Turkish MEB 20212 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course Curricula (5th and 6th Grades)

Educational processes update themselves in accordance with the social, cultural and economic differentiation of societies and are reshaped by including new knowledge and skills in order for individuals to educate themselves in accordance with these changes. Countries that can create an up-to-date education system by renewing their goals and vision are successful, and one of the priorities of creating a dynamic education process in this direction is to evaluate the existing education system correctly and to update the missing points. Fitzpatrick, Sanders and Worthen (2011) stated that programme evaluation studies answer questions such as which programmes are implemented well, which programme implementations are inadequate, what are the costs and benefits of the programmes, which parts of the programme are more effective, are all elements of the programme planned effectively, what arrangements should be made to make the programme more effective.

Curriculum is a guide that shows the objectives, duration, methods, techniques and evaluation processes of the courses at a certain level. Wiles and Bondi (1988) stated that a curriculum is shaped around knowledge bases, the needs of society and human learning and development. The elements it contains should be appropriate to the needs of the individual and society as required by the time and should not lag behind the scientific and technological developments taking place at the time of implementation. In this direction, curricula should be developed regularly in order to enable education executives to fulfil their functions in the most efficient way by determining the framework of education.

The success of curricula is related to the level of students' achievement of the objectives in the programme. However, many curricula have inadequate parts as a result of implementation. According to Yüksel and Sağlam (2014), the curriculum has a systematic structure within itself. This order consists of various elements and a failure in any of the elements of the programme affects the other elements in the system. Determining which elements of the programme are responsible for such negative situations plays an important role in the evaluation of the programme.

In this study, the evaluation model based on the elements of the curriculum is used. The reason for this is to reveal the situations that may occur during learning experiences by examining the elements of the selected curricula in detail. The evaluation model based on the elements of the curriculum is based on the examination of the purpose, content, learning-teaching process and evaluation elements.

According to Wholey, Hatry, and Newcomer (2010), creating key evaluation questions is the first and often challenging process encountered during the design phase of the evaluation. In order for the above-mentioned elements to be within the scope of a successful evaluation, the following criteria were determined during the research:

a) Criteria for evaluating the objectives of the drama teaching programme.

- Are the objectives capable of translating into behaviour?
- Are the objectives clear and understandable?

b) Criteria for evaluating the content of drama teaching programme.

- Is the content maintained and consistent?
- Does the content cover the components of drama?

c) Criteria for evaluation of learning-teaching process related to drama teaching programme.

- Does the learning-teaching process comply with teaching principles?
- Are the tools, equipment and materials in the learning-teaching process adequate and effective?

d) Criteria for evaluating evaluation situations related to drama teaching programme.

- Are the evaluation principles, criteria and procedures to be used in the evaluation process included?
- Are different types of assessment included in the teaching programme?

Within the framework of the determined criteria, Turkish 2012 and 2018 Secondary School Drama Curricula are compared, and it is important in terms of evaluating the elements and the way they are handled in both drama curricula prepared with a different perspective.

Findings and Interpretation

The comparative analyses and evaluations of 2012 and 2018 published Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama course (5th and 6th grades) curricula are given in tables below.

Table 1

Comparison of 2012 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curricula in terms of Basic Structure and Learning Areas

2012 Drama Course Curriculum	2018 Drama Course Curriculum
2012 Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curriculum consists of basic approach, general objectives, measurement and evaluation, tools and explanations.	2018 Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curriculum consists of special aims, issues to be implemented, structure of the programme, units and durations, subjects, achievements and explanations.
Unit-based approach.	Unit-based approach.
It is seen that the basic structure is built on creating a play group. The first year is planned to form the basis of the second year. 5th grade 5 units 6th grade 5 units	Repeated acquisitions at both grade levels need to be deepened in Grade 6. 5th grade 9 units 6th grade 9 units

As seen in Table 1, unit-based approach was used in both drama teaching programmes. As a result of the update, the number of units increased at both grade levels. In both curricula, it is thought to introduce drama to students at the 5th grade level and to deepen it at the 6th grade level.

In the 2012 drama course curriculum, it is stated that children should be transformed into a play group by moving away from the classroom atmosphere and the basic structure should be constructed in this way. In the programme, where the drama teacher is called the game manager, they are expected to transfer the rules of the game and to follow the continuous development of the group throughout the study. In the 2018 curriculum, the unit named "drama and play" is included in both 5th and 6th grades and establishes the relationship between play and drama. From this point of view, the regulation made in 2018 is a correct step in terms of associating drama only with the concept of play.

Table 2

Comparison of 2012 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curricula in Terms of Form

2012 Drama Course Curriculum	2018 Drama Course Curriculum
It was implemented for 5 years between 2012-2017.	It entered into force in 2018 and started to be implemented.
There are explanations to the game manager / drama trainer about the implementation of the programme.	The issues to be considered in the implementation of the drama course curriculum is stated.
Consists of 17 pages	Cconsists of 19 pages.
It has a structure that focuses on the game.	Learning based on experiences is centred.
It was stated that only observation records should be kept regarding measurement-assessment situations.	Various assessment tools related to self-assessment; peer assessment and teacher assessment are included.
The basic tools to be used in the drama course framework programmes are specified.	The stages, characteristics and principles of drama are included.

As a result of the formal comparison of both curricula, as can be seen in Table 2, the 2012 drama curriculum took the play at its centre and accepted the activities based on play, drama and theatre at school as a whole and transferred the facts about the play in the curriculum. In this respect, the curriculum is similar to the Ministry of National Education 2012 Fine Arts and Sports High Schools Drama Course Curriculum. Adıgüzel (2012), who evaluated the mentioned programme, states that considering the content of the programme and the proportional excess of play-based activities, it is aimed at creating play consciousness instead of drama consciousness.

The 2018 drama curriculum, on the other hand, includes the stages, characteristics and principles of drama and is designed to include both learning about drama and learning through drama based on the experiences of students. The absence of a teacher's guidebook in both curricula may

hinder the effective implementation of the programme. In the study conducted by Erşan (2014), the teachers who implemented the drama curriculum stated that a teacher who is an expert in the field should enter the lessons because they think that they do not have enough knowledge in the field of drama.

Table 3

Comparison of 2012 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curricula in Terms of Content

2012 Drama Course Curriculum	2018 Drama Course Curriculum
	Three-Dimensional Current Curriculum was taken as a model.
Subjects and activities were used as a model.	• Subject • Acquisitions • Explanations
Activities progress from simple to complex.	The main point is the achievements and explanations.
Implementation methods of the activities are not included in the programme.	Subjects are associated with achievements
Activity statements are student-centred.	Outcome statements are student-centred.
There are teaching method suggestions based on exercises, games, improvisations, role plays.	There is a teaching method proposal in which the stages of drama are followed.

When Table 3 is examined, there are subjects and activities related to these subjects in the 2012 Drama Course Curriculum. While the implementation forms of the activities are not included in the programme, they are given only in one or two sentences. Published in 2018, the Drama curriculum is outcome-based. Topics, achievements and explanations related to these achievements were included in the programme. While there is no sample lesson processing in both curricula; in 2012, a teaching method in which the characteristics of the game were used as a teaching method was used, and in 2018, a teaching method that includes all stages and techniques of drama was adopted. In this context, it was determined that the content of the drama curriculum updated in 2018 is richer, the teaching methods are broader and more student- centred because it is outcome-based.

Table 4

Comparison of 2012 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curricula in Terms of Specific Objectives

2012 Drama Course Curriculum	2018 Drama Course Curriculum
Supporting creativity.	Develop creativity, imagination and imaginative thinking skills
Develop self confidence	Develop self confidence
To contribute to the development of critical thinking skills and independent thinking skills.	Gain independent and critical thinking skills
• To develop the ability to discuss an idea • To open ways of understanding others by developing empathy skills. • To open ways of understanding individual differences.	• To be sensitive and respectful towards his/her body, feelings, thoughts, differences and social events • Interaction between cultures • Developing democratic attitudes and behaviours

When Table 4 is examined, it will be seen that the curricula of Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama course (5th and 6th grades) published in 2012 and 2018 are largely the same in terms of specific objectives. Both programmes aim to develop skills such as creativity, confidence, critical thinking, artistic awareness, cooperation, empathy and self-expression.

Table 5

Comparison of 2012 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curricula in terms of Outcomes

2012 Drama Course Curriculum	2018 Drama Course Curriculum
2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama course (5th and 6th grades) curriculum includes activity expressions related to learning areas. Total number of activity statements in the programme: 95	In the 2018 Secondary and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama course (5th and 6th grades) curriculum, achievements and explanations related to learning areas are included. Total number of objectives in the programme: 99

When Table 5 is examined; it is seen that the activity statements in the drama curriculum of 2012 were updated as outcome statements in 2018. Within the scope of the renewal and change studies in the curriculum made by the MEB Board of Education to be valid as of the 2018 academic year, the competencies and skills that students are expected to have started to be included in the curricula with achievements and achievement explanations.

In the drama curriculum published in 2018, a number of outcomes ranging from 1 to 13 were determined in accordance with the subject and scope of each unit. The learning outcomes are clear

and understandable, which can be transformed into behaviours, and are prepared according to student needs. The order of the outcomes is based on taxonomic characteristics and is related to the subject area. In this curriculum, learning outcomes are determined in a balanced manner in accordance with cognitive, affective and psychomotor development areas. The following acquisitions can be shown as an example of this situation:

Cognitive Field Outcomes

- DRM [drama] 5.1.3.1. Understands the importance of communication in the drama process.

Affective Field Outcomes

- DRM [drama] 5.2.4.2. Uses his/her senses effectively in the drama process.

Psychomotor Field Outcomes

- DRM [drama] 5.4.1.3. Acts the role he/she undertakes according to the necessity.

Outcomes are student-centred. While there are fewer objectives in the units to be implemented in evaluation and out-of-class places, there are more objectives in the units with group interaction and games.

Table 6

Comparison of 2012 and 2018 Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curricula in terms of Learning-Teaching Process

2012 Drama Course Curriculum	2018 Drama Course Curriculum
The drama instructor should explain the rules of the game in a language that the game group understands and keep the group's desire to play high by monitoring the behaviour of the group. The qualifications of the drama instructor are not included in the curriculum.	The drama course should be conducted under the guidance of a teacher who has drama field knowledge and experience. The qualifications of the people who will implement the curriculum are determined by saying that the drama teacher should have a rich play repertoire, drama techniques and basic acting knowledge.
The curriculum is based on play and theatre and includes activities created through the interaction of various components. These components are Playgroup Game rule, The Game, Takes part in the curriculum as a game manager.	Drama lessons should be carried out with student participation, based on play and animation, focused on pretending, based on spontaneity and dramatic fiction.
In the curriculum, it was determined that the students should willingly participate in the role play, follow the rules of the game, not lose their reality when they enter the role and use their imagination and creativity.	The roles of the students were also determined in the implementation process of the curriculum. Shaping their learning experiences by associating their experiences related to life with animations on a voluntary basis is one of the elements included in the curriculum.
It is aimed to gain artistic awareness with the activities in the curriculum.	In the curriculum, it is mentioned that drama is both an art field and can be used as a tool in education. In addition, information about the stages of drama was given.
A structured teaching programme was created using the possibilities of the play and theatre.	Regarding the concept of play, which was the main focus of the previous drama curriculum, drama benefits from all general features of plays, but drama is not "acting".
Play and art obey the same structural rules in terms of their sequential structures as form and process, therefore play overlaps with improvisations and performances.	It was stated that students could improvise on a topic or theme, but they could also make use of texts when necessary.
It is stated that games and exercises will be intertwined in the drama teaching process. It was stated that game types such as role games, material games, body-based games should be used in the teaching process and improvisations and theatre can also be used as a tool.	The necessity of using techniques such as role playing, improvisation, pantomime, dramatization, frozen image, writing in the role, role cards, return, meeting arrangement, fragment, dream, gossip circle, teacher's role in the teaching process was stated.

According to Table 6, in the 2012 drama curriculum, there is an education-teaching process in which games and animations are intertwined, the classroom environment turns into a game group and the teacher is positioned as the game leader who sets up the games. Within this structure, drama is included in the programme not as an art field but as a teaching tool.

In the 2012 drama curriculum, the most important update is that all components and stages of drama form the basis of the teaching process. The learning-teaching process is planned to be structured with the use of various drama techniques by a teacher with drama field knowledge and experience. When we look at the common aspects of both programmes, it is seen that the aim is not to act, improvisation and animations are used, and different disciplines are included in the process.

Results

2012 Drama Course Curriculum was published as the first drama curriculum written for students at the secondary school level. In this programme, a game-based approach was used and it was aimed to transform students into members of a game group by moving away from the classroom environment. With the addition of improvisation and animation activities to the teaching process, it is aimed to give the games an artistic quality. However, many activity expressions in the programme need to be explained in order to be more easily understood by practitioners.

2018 Drama Course Curriculum has been updated in terms of achievements and number of units and built on the components of drama. The addition of elements such as the characteristics of the teacher who will implement the drama curriculum, the stages of the learning-teaching process, and the points to be considered in the drama implementation process facilitated the implementation of the programme. In addition, the game types in the 2012 programme were replaced by drama techniques, making the teaching process more suitable for the structure of the art of drama. In addition, in the 2018 curriculum, necessary arrangements have been made to implement measurement and evaluation activities in a more effective and broader framework.

In the light of all these reviews and evaluations, it is thought that the changes made in the 2018 Secondary and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curriculum are positive and will be effective in creating both drama structure and processes that students can learn with drama. Basing the basis of the Drama curricula to be prepared in the following years on the 2018 Secondary and Imam Hatip Secondary School Drama Course (5th and 6th Grades) Curriculum and using it without radical changes will contribute to the sustainability of the programme.

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A Study of Brush Painting Textbooks and Children's Artwork in Japan's Early 20th Century

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Abstract

This study focuses on art education in Japan's primary education of the early 20th century. Japan's educational system was enacted in 1872, and students in art classes used textbooks as a reference and mainly engaged in activities using pencils and brushes. Thereafter, in art education, the free drawing education advocated by Kanae Yamamoto, beginning in the late 1910s, created a significant trend that has led to the present day. This study focuses on the type of art education conducted in the middle of modern education until the beginning of free drawing education. Specifically, it focuses on the brush painting education that was popular at that time and analyses some brush painting textbooks. Further, it examines the textbook illustrations and compares them with children's pictorial works that were believed to have been modelled after those illustrations. This clarifies the classroom practice of art education in Japan's middle period of modern education and provides an opportunity to understand different thoughts and practices from history. Ultimately, this leads to a discussion of what art classes can do in today's education by reconfirming one of the historical teaching methods that oppose today's mainstream, child-centred art education for free expression.

Keywords*:* history of art education, textbooks, children's artwork, Japan

Author note

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This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI (Grant Number 19K02784). Images of the textbooks used in this article are retrieved from the Japanese Modern Textbook Digital Archive, Library of Education, National Institute for Educational Policy Research (Japan). Regarding the students' artwork used in this article, permission was obtained from the administrators, the students' relatives and the students.

A Study of Brush Painting Textbooks and Children's Artwork in Japan's Early 20th Century

Art education in Japanese schools began in the latter half of the 19th century and continued into the early 20th century when students were taught to draw by referring to textbook illustrations. Pencils were used as essential media at the beginning of art education. However, from the late 19th century, owing to the influence of nationalism, drawing education using brushes was recommended, and many schools practised this method in their schools. Many art textbooks on brush painting were published and used in art classrooms. The textbooks' illustrations included various themes, including familiar objects and landscapes for the students, and were presented with beautiful visuals. Students studied drawing using such illustrations as sources for creating their works. What types of pictures were included in brush painting textbooks, and how did the children draw and paint them? How is the brush painting education taught in art classes today different from past education?

This study focuses on the type of art education conducted in the middle of modern education. Moreover, it analyses some brush painting textbooks by examining the illustrations and comparing them with students' pictorial works that were believed to have been modelled after those illustrations. The study then clarifies the classroom practice of art education in Japan's early 20th century, which is considerably different from today's education. Ultimately, the comparison provides insights and understandings of different thoughts and practices from history.

Brush Painting Education in Japan's Art Education

Beginning of Japan's Art Education

Japan's educational system was enacted in 1872. Art education was included in the curriculum, and Western-style education, focusing on pencil drawings, was introduced. The textbooks used in art education were based on a progressive method that instructed students to draw from easy to difficult subjects (Masuda, 2003).

In the late 19th century, brush painting education was highly promoted for preserving national essence. A controversy arose over the superiority of pencil and brush drawings (Kaneko, 2003; Kurata & Nakamura, 1979; Yamagata, 1967). In 1904, Japan's Ministry of Education issued pencil drawing and brush painting textbooks, and classes were taught using either of them. Along with the government-designated textbooks, the teachers instructed students to practice drawing and painting lines and shapes using the illustrations in art books as a reference. Thereafter, the debate over whether pencil drawing or brush painting education was better converged, and content incorporating both approaches began to be implemented (Kaneko, 2003).

Free Drawing Education as Not to Copy Textbooks' Illustrations

Around 1918, Japan's art education changed primarily through the beliefs of Kanae Yamamoto, who emphasised that students should be taught alternative methods to copy and encouraged to create drawings of their own choice. This became known as free drawing education and spread throughout the country as a significant movement (Kaneko, 2003).

Yamamoto criticised the practice of drawing based on national textbooks used in art classes at the time, discouraging drawings that imitated pictures in textbooks and encouraging children to draw what they viewed and felt. He emphasised this importance, rejected the copying education practised during those days, and advocated an education that fosters children's creativity. Yamamoto's argument for allowing children to express themselves freely was connected to the social thinking of that time, thereby receiving support from many teachers (Kaneko, 2003; Masuda, 2003; Yamagata, 1967).

Brush Painting Textbooks Used in the Early 20th Century

Although this study mainly focuses on primary education, two brush painting textbooks were selected, one for the elementary level and the other for the secondary level, to clarify the characteristics of brush painting textbooks used in the early 20th century in Japan. The study focuses on the themes depicted in the illustrations of these textbooks while identifying the trends of the art themes during those days. Images of the textbooks used in this study are retrieved from the Japanese Modern Textbook Digital Archive at the Library of Education of the National Institute for Educational Policy Research (NIER), Japan.

Brush Painting Textbooks for Elementary School Students

This study examines *Mohitsu Gacho* [Brush Sketchbook] as an example of brush painting textbooks used in elementary schools. Issued in 1909 by the Ministry of Education, *Mohitsu Gacho* comprises two types of textbooks, including *Jinjo Shogaku Mohitsu Gacho* [Brush Sketchbook for Ordinary Elementary School] designed for Grade 3 to 6 and *Koto Shogaku Mohitsu Gacho* [Brush Sketchbook for Higher Elementary School] used in Grade 7 and 8. From Grade 5, the textbooks were divided according to gender and designed for male and female students. During that time, the school curriculum was different for boys and girls. From Grade 7, the textbooks were issued in three types: for male, female, and both male and female students. The content was similar, however, some illustrations differed (e.g., a man's face was in the textbook for male students, whereas a woman's face was in the textbook for female students).

The brush painting textbooks' illustrations were constructed considering developmental stages from easy to complex. Each textbook contained 13 to 21 illustrations, depending on students' grades. The style of drawing education at that time was to teach students using textbooks; therefore, copying art from textbook illustrations tends to be emphasised. However, in addition to copying art, textbooks included sketches, drawings from

memory, and creating patterns or designs. In *Mohitsu Gacho*, the standard ratio for sixth graders was 20% for copying art, 50% for sketches, and 30% for drawings from memory and creating patterns or designs.

Using the textbook, students began learning to draw lines, circles, and squares with brush and ink. Thereafter, they learned how to draw simple flowers, patterns, fruits, vegetables, and household items, using textbooks as a reference, while learning about colours, pattern composition, and perspective drawings. Grade 5 and above students were expected to use paints to colour their drawings.

The titles of the textbook illustrations include: "Mt. Fuji (*Fujisan*)," "Cat (*neko*)," "Pattern (*moyo*)," "Umbrella (*kasa*)," "Book and Bookmark (*hon to shiori*)," "Butterfly and Dragonfly (*cho to tombo*)," "Grapes (*budo*)," "Turnip (*kabura*)," "Dog (*inu*)," "Scenery (*keshiki*)," "Dandelion (*tampopo*)," "Wild Duck (*kamo*)," and so forth.

Brush Painting Textbooks for Secondary School Students

This study examines the textbooks used in secondary schools to explore how brush painting education was organised and implemented in Japanese education at the time. It analyses the secondary school brush painting textbook, *Shintei Joshi Mohitsuga Rimpon* [Revised Girls' Brush Painting Books], as an example of textbooks published for girls' high schools, published at about the same time as *Mohitsu Gacho*.

The Ministry of Education approved the textbooks, comprising nine books designed for students of Grade 7 onwards. Two volumes of the textbooks were set to be used in each grade. The author of the textbooks is Jippo Araki, a Japanese painter who also worked at Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School. The third edition of the textbooks analysed in this study was issued in 1910.

Similar to brush painting textbooks for elementary school students, various themes are included in secondary school brush painting textbooks. The titles of the illustrations are "Camellia (*tsubaki*)," "Rose (*bara*)," "Mt. Fuji (*Fugaku*)," "Butterfly (*cho*)," "Butterfly Pattern (*cho moyo*)," "Fruits (*kudamono*)," "Mouse (*nezumi*)," "Rabbit (*usagi*)," "Deer (*shika*)," "Horse (*uma*)," "Figure Design (*jimbutsu zuan*)," and so forth.

Analysis of the Brush Painting Textbooks

For the analysis of the textbooks, the themes were divided as follows: "animals," "birds," "colour charts," "compositions," "fish/shellfish," "flowers," "fruits," "insects," "patterns/designs," "person/body," "plants," "scenery," "tools/instruments," "toys," "various sketches," "vegetables," and "others" to understand the trend of brush painting textbooks. By examining the themes of the textbooks' illustrations, this study attempts to clarify the type of painting Japanese students expressed in their art classes during the early 20th century. They are classified according to the title written on the illustrations. If an illustration combines two themes simultaneously, 0.5 is counted for each time. There are various types

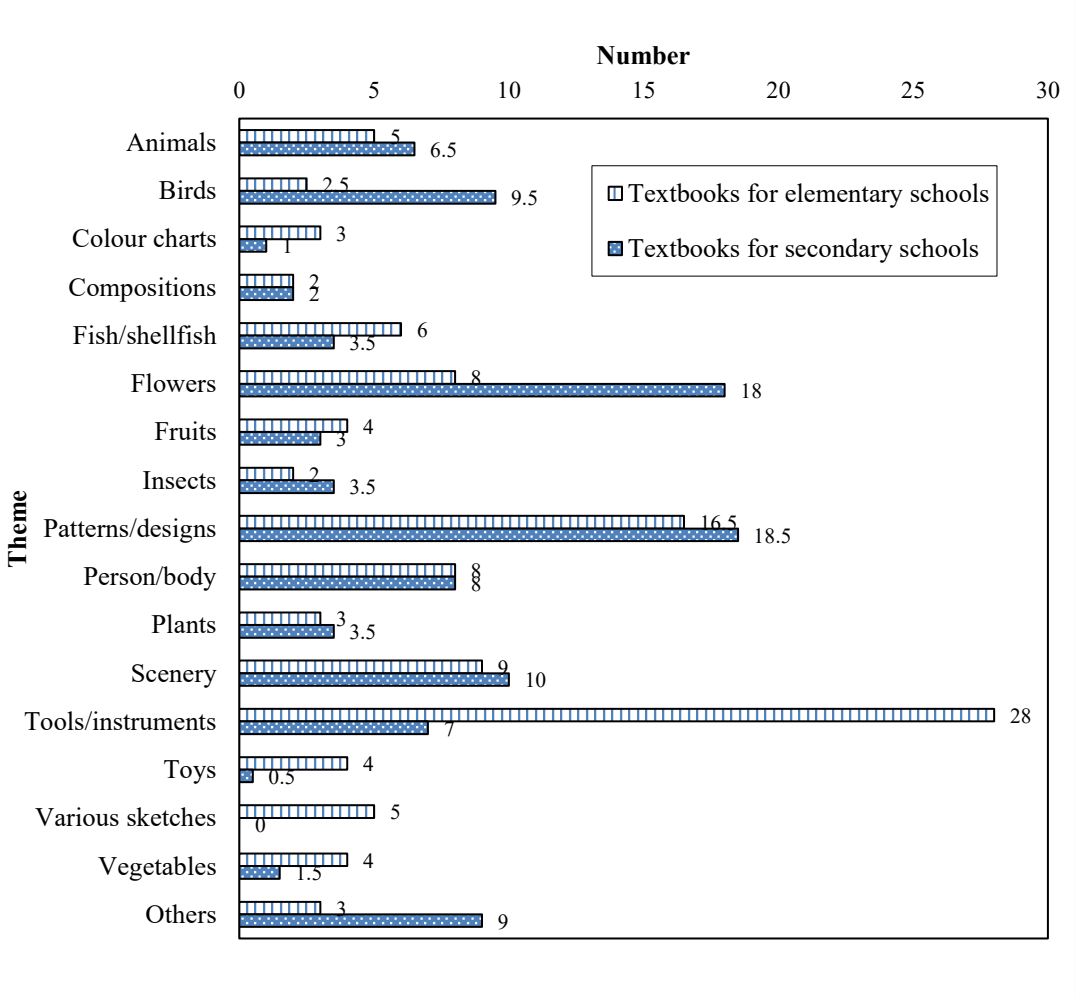
of patterns, however, if the illustration's title is written "pattern," it is considered "patterns/designs" (e.g., "Butterfly Pattern" counts "patterns/designs," not "insects.").

Figure 1 indicates the number of textbooks' illustrations by themes for elementary and secondary school brush painting textbooks. For elementary school textbooks, this is based on the total numbers for Grade 3 to 8 textbooks. This figure helps to outline the high rate of "tools/instruments," 28 illustrations (24.8%); "patterns/designs," 16.5 illustrations (14.6%); "scenery," 9 (8.0%); "flowers," 8 (7.1%); and "person/body," 8 (7.1%).

Moreover, for secondary school textbooks, the figure indicates the high rate of "patterns/designs," 18.5 illustrations (17.6%); "flowers," 18 (17.1%); "scenery," 10 (9.5%); and "birds," 9.5 (9.0%). Instead, the number of "tools/instruments" from elementary school textbooks is reduced.

Figure 1

Number of the Themes of Illustrations Depicted in Brush Painting Textbooks



Note. Although the elementary school textbooks include some of the same illustrations for Grade 5 and upper grades published separately by gender, this study counted the same illustration as one.

Findings Based on Analysis of the Brush Painting Textbooks

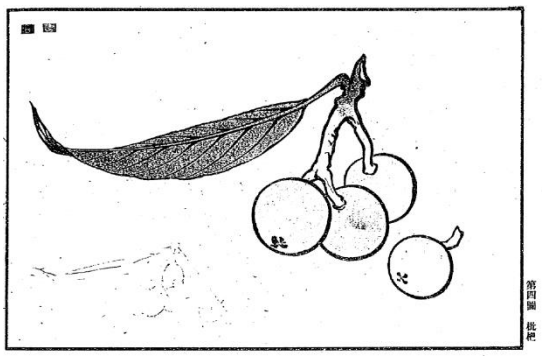
The following outlines some findings based on the analysis of the textbooks. Brush painting textbooks offered students themes, techniques, and samples of artwork. Both elementary and secondary brush painting textbooks had many illustrations of "patterns/designs." Moreover, the textbooks provided elementary students with familiar items, for example, "tools/instruments," including life tools, stationery, flowers, and sceneries for art expression. In addition, brush painting textbooks provided secondary students with more detailed artwork that requires higher skills in using brushes, including flowers, sceneries, and birds, for art expression.

Children's Artwork Referring to Illustrations of the Brush Painting Textbooks

What type of pictures did children at the time draw and paint using these textbooks? Figure 2 is a type of fruits from *Jinjo Shogaku Mohitsu Gacho*. Figure 3 depicts work by a Grade 6 student who refers to the illustration of the Grade 6 brush painting textbook. The student seemed to attempt to carefully copy the shape using a brush.

Figure 2

"Loquat (biwa)" from Jinjo Shogaku Mohitsu Gacho for Grade 6 Male Students



Note. The textbook image is from the Japanese Modern Textbook Digital Archive, Library of Education, NIER. Retrieved 9 August 2023, from https://nieropac.nier.go.jp/lib/database/KINDAI/EG00016731/900186982.pdf

Figure 3

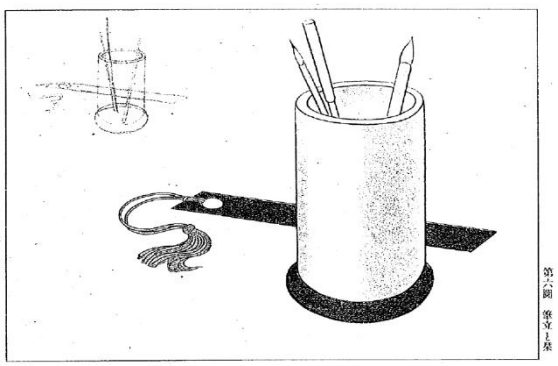
Student Artwork Created During the School Year of 1912



Furthermore, there is an interesting example of combining different illustrations—two illustrations of textbooks, "Pen Holder and Bookmark (*fudetate to shiori*)" (Figure 4) and "Mt. Fuji (*Fujisan*)" (Figure 5) are combined (Figure 6). "Pen Holder and Bookmark" is included in a different textbook, *Shintei Gacho* [New Textbook of Drawing], and "Mt. Fuji" from *Jinjyo Shogaku Mohitsu Gacho* is depicted on the surface of the pen holder, both designed for Grade 6 students.

Figure 4

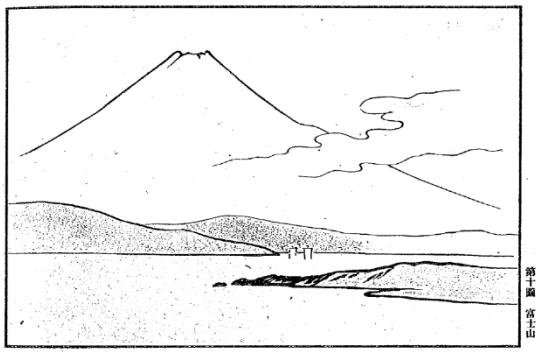
"Pen Holder and Bookmark (fudetate to shiori)" from Shintei Gacho for Grade 6 Male Students



Note. The textbook image is from the Japanese Modern Textbook Digital Archive, Library of Education, NIER. Retrieved 10 August 2023, from https://nieropac.nier.go.jp/lib/database/KINDAI/EG00016741/900186878.pdf

Figure 5

"Mt. Fuji (Fujisan)" from Jinjo Shogaku Mohitsu Gacho for Grade 6 Male Students



Note. The textbook image is from the Japanese Modern Textbook Digital Archive, Library of Education, NIER. Retrieved 9 August 2023, from https://nieropac.nier.go.jp/lib/database/KINDAI/EG00016731/900186982.pdf

Figure 6

Student Artwork Created During the School Year of 1910

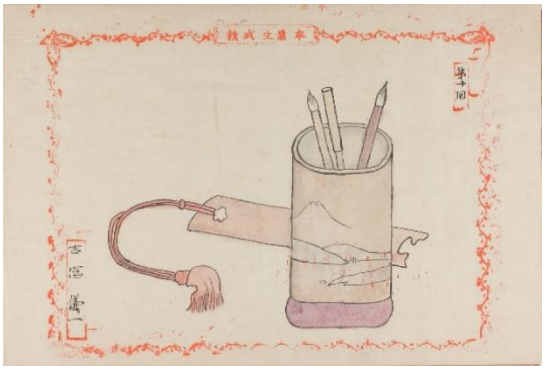


Figure 7 presents a type of flower in the secondary school textbook, *Shintei Joshi Mohitsuga Rimpon*. The student attempted to depict the flower in the secondary school brush painting textbook, as presented in Figure 7. The flower's original colour in the textbook of Figure 8 is white, whereas the student painted it blue.

Figure 7

"Camellia (sazanka)" from Shintei Joshi Mohitsuga Rimpon, Volume 4

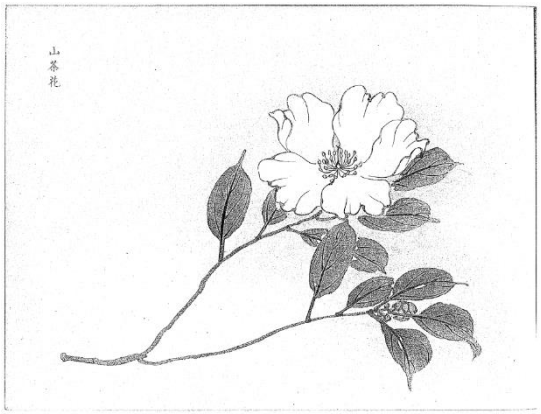


Figure 8

Student Artwork Created During the School Year of 1921



Note. The textbook image is from the Japanese Modern Textbook Digital Archive, Library of Education, NIER. Retrieved 9 August 2023, from https://nieropac.nier.go.jp/lib/database/KINDAI/EG20081323/900433225.pdf

Analysis of Children's Artwork Created Referring to Textbooks

Several important findings were obtained from this study. Students carefully copied illustrations from art textbooks. They developed artistic expression skills by referring to textbook illustrations and, more likely, through repeated practice over time. They were also interested in using themes such as flowers, fruits, scenery, and objects. Furthermore, they created their artwork by combining different illustrations. Unique creative expressions can be found in student artwork of those days.

Brush Painting Activities from Today's Art Classrooms

In today's art programmes in Japan, students continue to create brush paintings. The students use the medium and experiment with brush strokes, bleeding and smudging the ink. Contrary to the brush painting education conducted in the early 20th century in Japan, today's art education offers various art activities. Today's activities include, for example, enjoying the different lines that can be created by changing the shape of the brush tip and experimenting with creative ways to draw by changing the brush's speed and the ink's darkness. In addition, students find expressions they like from the shapes they draw, and they appreciate their work with their classmates.

The brush painting activities implemented in today's art classes differ from the education once practised in Japan. Both are valuable activities in passing on culture using brush and ink; however, their methods differ. In the early 20th century, art education primarily comprised using brushes, referring to textbooks that included many illustrations as role models, and carefully imitating textbook images while learning techniques. Brush painting education began more than 100 years ago; students were required to repeatedly draw brushstrokes, learn about Japanese painting, and contribute to acquiring techniques for drawing and painting with brushstrokes. Thus, it could be called specialised education in Japanese painting.

On the other hand, student-centred learning activities are conducted in today's art classes, with many subject themes such as scenery paintings, story and imaginative paintings, and printmaking. Among various art themes, the activity using brushes and ink has been designed to allow students to experience traditional Japanese painting techniques. A century has passed since art education was first introduced in Japan's schools. In the progress of Japan's art education, various art themes have been developed, valuing children's independence and ingenuity, and art education practices such as Kanae Yamamoto's free art education have also been developed. While new ideas and teaching methods for art education have been promoted, today's art education allows students to experience expression using ink and brush.

The significant difference between the two educational methods is evident. Historical ideas and methods that differ from the student-centred approach, the mainstream art education valued today, reaffirm what is important in art education. This does not imply that the brush painting education provided in the early 20th century was not appreciated, but rather that it is necessary to examine the art education provided there and use it in future art education.

Conclusion

This study explained brush painting education in Japan's early 20th century. First, it analysed textbooks as an example of brush painting education used in Japan at the time. The textbooks included various themes familiar to students, such as daily necessities, flowers, designs, and scenery. Some of the students' artwork appeared to refer to illustrations from brush painting textbooks; therefore, this study explored trends of student artmaking in those days. Analysing the works of the time, the students used textbooks as a model and carefully drew them, changing some parts and combining other illustrations. Finally, it concludes the current method of learning brush painting in Japan's elementary schools differs from the past. Examining the type of education necessary to inherit and develop Japan's unique traditional culture is essential to investigating past textbooks and works and the current art education practices.

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Teaching Practices of Problem-Based Teaching and Multi-Assessment for Developing Social Issues in Exhibition Planning

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Abstract

This study takes the development of art curatorial content on social issues as the research objective, tries to solve the problem of the discrepancy between the exhibition space and the exhibition context in teaching exhibition planning, and constructs an exhibition assessment scale as the basis for peer assessment learning. The problem-based learning method was introduced into the teaching planning of exhibition planning, and the effectiveness of the teaching was analysed by combining the tools of lectures, questionnaires, peer assessment, project work, and off-site teaching. The results of the study revealed that the problem-based learning strategy brought stronger social connections to students. The combination of qualitative textual descriptions and quantitative scales helped students to learn how to analyse exhibitions. Therefore, encouraging the use of multiple assessment and the development of a problem-based approach to exhibition planning as a social issue can help students to develop curatorial skills and awareness of social issues in response to future trends in art education.

Keywords: problem-based learning, exhibition planning, peer assessment

Teaching Practices of Problem-Based Teaching and Multi-Assessment for Developing Social Issues in Exhibition Planning Introduction

The teaching of “Exhibition Planning” focuses on the research and consideration of exhibits and seeks to position curatorial viewpoints from the research and historical perspectives. It also tries to categorise and plan traditional exhibits, simulate exhibitions on paper, or make space models as a teaching method, so that students can try to imagine what the contents of the project will be like from the models, but it lacks a practical method of professional social curatorial direction and professional exhibition design in art museums. However, there is still a lack of professional curatorial direction for social issues and practical methods for professional exhibition design in art museums, and it is not easy to get closer to the actual art exhibition situation.

This study analyses the “exhibition planning” offered by the department of cultural and creative industries of a national university in central China, and develops the depth and breadth of curatorial themes that are closer to the social issues by introducing the difference of curatorial issues in Problem-Based Learning, and explores the difference of students' conception of the concrete exhibition space after introducing digital tools. We also explored whether the introduction of digital tools had led to differences in students' perception of the specificity of exhibition space. Through the operation of domestic and overseas open databases and online exhibition digital tools software, we changed the physical exhibition space into an online viewing mode, learned to combine virtual and real exhibition digital tools to build three-dimensional exhibition contents, which is close to the practical exhibition site, and developed a diversified assessment system for exhibition teaching through the online platform of art and cultural exhibition venues and contents, so that online exhibitions can continue to have a diversified application and disseminate the effects of education.

In addition, the creative arts and humanities have long been difficult to apply to quantitative and objective analysis systems, and the subjective assessment by teachers has been the main focus, which seems to make it difficult for students to participate in the assessment and gain the ability to observe and analyse exhibitions. Therefore, it is important to find out how the assessment criteria can be applied to the evaluation of the teaching results of exhibition curatorship, so as to summarise the results of the study in an objective and referential way, and to help teachers to review the effectiveness of the teaching objectives.

Based on the above research objectives, the questions to be investigated in this study are: (1) What is the methodology and performance of the curatorial theme for the development of social issues in independent learning? (2) Can the multiple assessment criteria for exhibitions complement the learning of observational analysis of exhibitions? From these four perspectives, it is hoped that the study of teaching tools and strategies to

answer the research questions will be beneficial to the development of digital strategies for curatorial teaching and learning, as well as the development of in-depth and diversified curatorial topics and planning content performance.

In the teaching system of art exhibition, Sandell (2006), a British museum scholar, proposed the FTC model to explore the connotation and meaning of art works, using the system of Art= Form+Theme+Context to discover the visual focus from the elements of form, explore the relationship between each other from the elements of the theme, and explore the relationship between the elements of the theme and the relationship between them from the context. From the elements of form, we will discover the visual focus; from the elements that appear in the theme, we will explore the relationship between them; and from the elements of context, we will judge the importance and relevance of the artwork. In order to enhance the students' visual literacy, the corresponding skills of interpretation, application, and appreciation should be enhanced through the use of traditional and new media to create still and moving images to enhance students' understanding, thinking, decision-making, communication, and learning (Sandell, 2009).

Ho and Yen (2011) applied Sandell's FTC Model to an art and design practical orientation course for university students as a basis for analysing the assessment of students' work, which provided a diversified form of assessment and revealed that the learning of visual art creation places more emphasis on thinking about and exploring the context of the work. The curatorial practice in this study is also faced with the question of whether the contextualisation of the artists' works is in line with the curatorial thematic viewpoints, and thus PBL is introduced as a social issue assessment discussion to extend the thinking about the function of art curatorship, and as a basis for reflecting on social environmental issues. Based on Sandell's FTC, Huang Qiaohui and Chuang Mingzhen (2013) added the factor of cost and developed the FTCC exhibition evaluation model, taking the decision-making process of the "Fanlak-cho Political University Renewal Exhibition" as the target of their study, and found that the model can be used as a basis for curators to construct an exhibition form, and to increase the interactivity between the art and the audience, as well as to broaden the participation of the audience and the professional exchanges. However, this study chooses to exclude the cost factor first, so as not to affect the breadth and depth of curatorial thinking.

This study takes contemporary visual art as the main curatorial type and direction and tries to solve the problem that curatorial practice is stuck in the evaluation of the planning stage of an exhibition, which is not close to the actual exhibition situation. Secondly, we intend to include the observation of exhibition costs in the analysis of exhibition observation. However, since the size of the exhibition budget is very much related to the form of the exhibition and the quality of the presentation, the curator is not in a

position to dominate the costs in the real world, and it is difficult to provide a cost framework in the digital curatorial teaching process.

Methods

Participants

This study was conducted with 31 students (11 males and 20 females) in the first semester of “Exhibition Planning” at a national university in Taiwan. The age range of the students was between 18 and 22 years old, with a mix of art and non-art related backgrounds.

Tools

Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

To make the curatorial practice of the exhibition planning course free from the previous training of curating artists' solo exhibitions, problem-based learning (PBL) was introduced, in which students were asked to think about issues related to them from a social context. Therefore, in this study, the “Exhibition Planning” course takes social issues as the main direction for the development of exhibition themes. Through the three-stage PBL learning method, we start from the diffusion of the theme, from personal to social concerns, and then extend the issues on which there is a consensus, and then guide the students to develop curatorial themes through independent discussions, think about their own experiences and social images, and discuss feasible solutions and ideas, and then divide up the work independently. Finally, students will divide the work among themselves to collect and categorise the data and use online tools and issue reading to classify and compile the data.

Peer Assessment and Assessment Rubrics

In this study, the mid-term report and the final report of the exhibition project were used as assessment tasks to develop an assessment mechanism based on the teaching and learning objectives, and the assessment grades were classified as low, medium, and high, and corresponded to a scale of 1 to 10, with excellent 8 to 10, fair 4 to 7, and to be strengthened 1 to 3. The mid-term report on exhibition planning is a case study of research, collection, exhibition, and education promotion of foreign museums conducted by a group of three students. The assessment items are divided into four categories, including: basic introduction of the museum, collection and research information, exhibition curation content, and education promotion and marketing, and the text describes the differences for students to learn and evaluate. In addition, the assessment of presentation performance was added, including: presentation visual design, oral expression, presentation time control, and question and answer interaction performance, which was analysed as a score for one major item, and the results of the five major assessment items could be added up to a maximum of

50 points, accounting for 50% of the assessment, and the teachers gave the same 50% of the assessment, which was then integrated to form a total score for the item.

Results

Case Study on Museums and Peer Assessment

The course is divided into 10 groups, with students conducting their own searches for museums and dividing their work into discussions and analyses, covering different states, countries, industries and collection attributes. Students analyses the elements for exhibition construction from the permanent or special exhibitions announced by each museum, not only from the official website information, but also from art criticism, social media, news reports, audio-visual information, space graphics, etc., and try to piece together the exhibition situation, starting from curatorial theories, historical research, exhibit types, interpretive information, promotional activities, media marketing, and derivatives, etc. We will not only sum up and compile the information but also put forward the observations and recommendations on the advantages and disadvantages of exhibitions by each group.

In addition to summarising and compiling their observations and ideas on the strengths and weaknesses of exhibitions, students will construct a relationship between museum space, works and people. At this stage, students began to analyse the peer assessment of the student reports, and each group of students was given 9 items of peer assessment and 1 item of self-assessment scores. The three scoring items namely, “basic introduction of the museum”, “information on the collection and research”, “curatorial contents of the exhibition”, and “education and promotion marketing”, were combined into one score, and the items, namely, “visual design of the presentation”, “ability to express themselves verbally”, “control of the time for the presentation”, and “performance of the Q&A”, were combined into one score and the scores, namely, “visual design of the presentation”, “ability to express themselves verbally”, “control of the time for the presentation”, and “performance of the Q&A”. The items were combined into one mark and accounted for 50% of the marks of the assignment. The mean scores obtained by each group ranged from 35.7 to 42.4, and the standard deviation ranged from 3.88 to 7.31, which were used as the basis for understanding peer assessment, in order to train students’ oral presentation skills and to identify their own problems through peer assessment and make corrections.

Comparing the results of students’ mutual assessment with teachers’ assessment, it was found that the teachers' assessment of the mid-term and final of the two courses was on the high side, while the peer group was analysed in a more detailed way by referring to the assessment grades, but it could still be found that the results of the peer group and the teachers' assessment curved in a similar direction with similar results of the highest and lowest grades.

Teacher Observation Form for Problem-based Learning

In this study, students were divided into seven exhibition groups (referred to EGs in this paper) to discuss the social aspects of the curatorial themes of the exhibition planning course, and to think about the curatorial themes of each group in terms of the five social issues provided by the teacher.

In the first stage, each group used brainstorming groups to develop social issues related to themselves by applying the concept of mind mapping on poster paper, trying to find a consensus among the group members and focusing on a single issue by using diffuse thinking.

In the second stage, the group will focus on the issue and discuss "personal experience", "social impact", and "solutions" to the issue through rounds of Questions & Answers. The group will take 4 to 5 rounds of Questions & Answers at different levels, record the results, and write down the related key words, objects, works, or files, and then use the information in words or pictures to form subtopics and genres step-by-step.

Finally, in the third stage, a complete list of exhibits was gradually developed through the division of labour for independent learning. Based on the influence from the individual to the social level, information on art exhibits was collected through the collection systems of museums and art galleries, open database platforms, the Internet, the news media, and literature, etc. A large amount of information was compiled and then analysed to determine the similarities and differences in attributes of the artworks, such as age, media, function, content, metaphor, etc. The classification of artworks and the reference to the existing physical objects were also done to determine the similarity and difference between the artworks and the museums. After analysing the similarities and differences in the attributes of the works, such as age, medium, function, content, metaphor and other attributes, the exhibits were categorised, and reference was made to the spatial plan of the existing exhibition venue for the planning of exhibits configuration.

Works of Social Issues Exhibition Planning

As this study introduces the problem-based independent learning strategy and moves towards the curation of multiple perspectives on issues through thematic learning, the students extended the richness and diversity of social issues through the use of mind maps and endeavoured to develop various types of exhibits by collecting works from the platform of multiple open databases, trying to read the works and responding to the core issues of the issues, which were related to the environment, gender, demography, public health, and animals, etc., and were able to develop three to five sub-themes for each of them. Each of them develops three to five sub-themes, with the maximum number of exhibits up to 49, and seeks to fit the physical space into the exhibition's theme. For example, EG1 (exhibition group 1) focuses on the issue of marine pollution, using the

warehouse of Pier 2 as the exhibition space, and analysing the connection between ports and oceans, as well as the history of Kaohsiung's shipbuilding industry; EG2 chooses to use the National Science Museum as the venue for the exhibition of marine ecology-related themes, with the museum's original marine biology research and collections as the link.

At the same time, each group attempted to design the exhibition's main visual, spatial simulation, educational activity design, cultural and creative merchandise development, marketing strategy and other extended content, such as: for exhibition practice to develop into a more in-depth learning effect, such as: EG2 and EG7 designed the exhibition's main visual; EG7 attempted to use the image editing software to create a 3D spatial simulation; EG1, EG2, EG3, EG7 attempted to link the exhibition theme and the characteristics of the exhibits to plan detailed promotional activities, and even design teaching materials or learning sheets; EG1, EG7 designed exhibits-related derivative merchandise; EG1 tried to link the marketing strategy to plan detailed promotional activities, and even design teaching materials or learning sheets. EG1, EG2, EG3, and EG7 all tried to link the exhibition theme with the characteristics of the exhibits to plan detailed promotional activities and even designed teaching materials or study sheets; EG1 and EG7 designed exhibits-related derivative products; EG1 chose to analyse the marketing strategy in a more comprehensive way and proposed different stages of media insertion. However, the short duration of the course made it difficult for the students to present their results in full during the class, so the students were supplemented with a more complete video presentation of their work, so that they could have more time to observe and analyse their work during the peer assessment. In terms of overall performance, EG1 had a close relationship with its members, the students were more homogeneous in terms of their abilities, and they cooperated with each other to develop a list of 49 groups/exhibits with a complete list of artwork items, and they were able to provide a professional exhibition promotion plan due to the marketing expertise of the group members, while EG2 had five members, two of whom were highly interested in curatorial work, and one of whom was good at editing software for artwork design. In addition to writing text and compiling information, EG7 independently added the production of the main visual map of the exhibition, three-dimensional spatial simulations, and highly detailed promotional and marketing activities, while EG7, because of the team leader’s ability in spatial design, organisation, and video editing, as well as a high degree of curatorial interest, independently added the production of the main visual posters of the exhibition, advertising leaflets, and the design of exhibition tickets, and chose to use the outdoor train tunnel as the non-conventional exhibition space. In addition, the project used an outdoor train tunnel as the exhibition venue to try to create the curatorial concept of the cycle of life, old age, sickness, and death, and developed a number of peripheral cultural and creative merchandise designs based on the images and

colours of livestock, and even simulated the funding schedule, with the goal of applying for a public sector curatorial plan, and the total project proposal was written in more than 18,000 words. Cross-disciplinary collaboration can stimulate more in-depth curatorial thinking and motivation for execution, and the combination of social issues with one's own concerns can enhance a high degree of independent learning motivation. Through classroom discussion and collaborative learning, art curatorship can become an educational medium for solving social issues.

Conclusions

In this study, we have introduced PBL into independent learning from the previous training of diffuse thinking keyword conception. Compared with the previous exhibition planning teaching of art exhibition themes, we allow students to actively think about the direction of social issues from the perspective of their personal experiences and social impacts, and to discuss this issue as a solution that needs to be urgently solved, and to use artworks with the functions of introspection, resonance, and alertness as the medium through the viewpoint of the artworks on display. At the same time, the open database platform allows students to reduce the difficulty of searching for information on individual works of art in the thematic theme, and further expand the types of exhibits to include not only paintings, but also films, archives, photographs, etc., which is close to the contemporary art exhibition mode and promotes the completion of the thematic (PjBL) learning outcomes.

Furthermore, students joined the assessment mechanism, and it accounted for 50% of the mid-term and final grades, which had a considerable impact on students' subjective judgement of the project outcomes and allowed them to distinguish the assessment results through the differences in data grades and word descriptions. It is suggested that in the future, the second level of assessment can be carried out from the third level of the grades in a more detailed way, so that the students can directly respond to the assessment results. It is also suggested that in the future, the number of groups can be reduced and the reporting time can be lengthened, so that students can have sufficient time to observe and analyse the results and give more substantive feedback.

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Adapting New Technological Approaches to Sustainable Art Education Using Blockchain and NFT

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Abstract

This study investigates the potential of Blockchain and NFTs to transform art education by using these technologies to store studio outcomes and evaluations securely as NFTs on the Blockchain. The project focuses on enhancing evaluation fairness and educating students about Blockchain and NFT technologies, increasingly crucial in the digital era. Blockchain, initially popularized by Bitcoin, is an encrypted, immutable database that has extended its applications beyond finance to various fields, including education. In this context, NFTs, which are unique, unalterable digital assets, are utilized for securely storing not only digital transcripts and degrees but also course outcomes and interactions in art education. This study employs qualitative interviews, focus group discussions, system installations, and quantitative surveys to assess the experiences of participants in art education. It aims to explore how Blockchain can boost creativity, sustainability, and efficiency in education, and suggests modifying teaching methods to make art education more equitable, transparent, and effective.

Keywords: blockchain technology, art education, curriculum diversification

Adapting New Technological Approaches to Sustainable Art Education Using Blockchain and NFT

Industry 4.0 also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is the combination of advanced technologies in industrial operations, where intelligent networks connect data, equipment, and people over the internet and prioritize machine control over human control production processes (Javaid et al., 2021). Computer and internet technology enabled this Industrial Revolution, leading to autonomous robots and improved manufacturing processes. It involves various technologies, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), Cyber-physical systems (CPS), Intelligent Manufacturing, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cloud Computing, 3D printing, and Blockchain (Chen et al., 2022; Schwab, 2016). As these technologies continue to evolve, their impact is expected to reach all aspects of life, society, and the economy.

Blockchain technology, a decentralized and immutable ledger, has attracted great interest due to its cryptographic security, transparency, traceability features, and the potential to eliminate dependence on third parties (Alammary et al., 2019). Blockchain technology gained prominence with Satoshi Nakamoto's 2008 launch of Bitcoin, which solved trust issues in distributed systems through tamper-proof, timestamped document storage to ensure transaction sequence and auditability, distinct from digital signatures. Although primarily associated with cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, the application of this technology has expanded outside the financial sector into other fields such as healthcare, governance, telecommunications, personal information, supply chain management, voting systems, and education (Guustaaf et al., 2021). Blockchain technology has the potential to significantly alter traditional processes, resulting in increased efficiency, transparency, and trust in online transactions. This revolutionary influence may be compared to the internet's role in transforming information sharing. Blockchain technology is used to maintain the authenticity and transparency of transactional information due to its decentralized and distributed characteristics. Smart contracts are particularly significant because they can automate agreements, thereby increase operational efficiency and decrease the need for third parties. Despite challenges like as scalability and energy consumption, the technology has the potential to change many different sectors by delivering digital solutions that are trustworthy and effective.

Non-Fungible tokens (NFTs), based on Blockchain technology, are unique digital assets that differ from interchangeable cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin. They have garnered interest for their ability to revolutionize digital ownership and authenticity. Serving as secure storage for digital assets, NFTs offer definitive proof of ownership and enable creators to monetize their digital works, thus transforming industries such as art, music, collectibles, and virtual real estate. The understanding and exchange of digital assets are evolving using NFTs.

Blockchain in Art Education

Art education has always been important in shaping cultures, allowing for self-expression, and encouraging innovation (Efland, 1990). It was largely available to the privileged in ancient times and was used to maintain cultural and religious ideas. With the establishment of institutions in the 17th and 18th centuries, art instruction became increasingly systematic. Art education became more accessible during the nineteenth century, resulting in increasing innovation and variety in the art world. Modern art movements challenged traditional teaching methods and encouraged novel ways as the twentieth century progressed. Art classes enable learners to discover their expression while discovering their creativity via visual arts, music, theatre, and dance. Exposure to art history also improves cultural knowledge and understanding, leading to a more harmonious and progressive community. However, it is possible to claim that art education, just like any other area of education, is comprised of a great deal of components that are open to examination and call for improvements to be made.

One of the primary issues that need consideration is the possible obsolescence of art education, which may be due to a variety of factors. These include continuously changing social necessities and the ever-evolving nature of art itself, additionally to a failure to properly embrace technology, a lack of links to other disciplines, and an insufficient focus on developing critical thinking abilities. Art education must accept new methodologies to stay important and useful as the world changes. Since digital art, virtual reality, and other new technologies are altering the artistic scene, traditional art education may not equip students with the abilities essential to compete in a technology-driven art environment. Experts stress the need for art education to embrace an interdisciplinary approach, working with fields like science and technology to provide students with a well-rounded view of the creative scene today.

Educating artists without the benefit of today's available technology may lead to several disadvantages. It is possible that conventional teaching strategies could end up being less interesting to students, which could reduce their enthusiasm for learning. This lack of talent also leads to insufficient skill development, since new technologies provide platforms for developing expertise in a variety of creative forms and methods. In addition, students who are not allowed to interact with technology lose out on real-world experience, which leaves them unprepared for professional environments that heavily rely on electronic resources. Lack of technology also reduces the quantity of chances for experimentation and invention, which stifles student's creative potential. Students struggle with contemporary art without technology, which affects their collaboration, portfolio diversity, administration, and digital literacy. Adopting new technologies in art education can facilitate an innovative and equitable learning environment.

There is significant potential for Blockchain technology to transform several facets of the educational system. Because of the capabilities of Blockchain to build a decentralized and secure network, educational data, degrees, and credentials can be maintained more effectively and publicly than ever before. According to Amitkumar et al. (2021), the Blockchain system uses digital certificates and public key infrastructure to enhance information security and ensure strong authentication, protecting data in digital education. This technology also allows educational institutions to maintain secure and reliable records of student achievements, helping to prevent academic dishonesty.

Several educational institutions have started to employ Blockchain technology to create, validate, and store electronic transcripts, certificates, and digital degrees (Rahardja et al., 2019). Wang et al., (2019) argue that Blockchain technology can significantly enhance higher education by streamlining data management and security for student credits, enrolment, and certifications, while also reducing costs and promoting a student-centred approach. Smart contracts provided by the Blockchain have the potential to enhance the effectiveness of administrative tasks such as enrolment and scholarship distribution, while also nurturing inter-institution trust and cooperation. In addition, Blockchain's decentralized nature may facilitate peer-to-peer learning platforms and certification verification. Therefore, students and instructors can explore skills without involving third parties. Although Blockchain technology is still in its early stages, it has the potential to enhance the transparency, accountability, and creativity of educational institutions.

Incorporating innovative technologies such as Blockchain and NFT into educational settings has the potential to transform conventional teaching approaches. Blockchain technology has the potential to improve the safety and trustworthiness of academic records, credentials, and accomplishments due to its decentralized and transparent nature. NFTs can uniquely represent digital assets, including but not limited to artistic creations, scientific discoveries, and educational resources. Educational diplomas, degrees, and accomplishments may be verified and authenticated using NFTs, avoiding fraud. Educational institutions may build and distribute distinct digital learning materials using these tokens. NFTs may also motivate and engage students by rewarding their accomplishments by collecting digital items. By providing safe authentication of credentials, this integration has the potential to provide a more interactive and stimulating learning environment for the student. Nonetheless, some obstacles must be overcome to fully realize the promise of these technologies in education.

Methodology

This study seeks to investigate the incorporation of Blockchain and NFT technologies into art studio courses to promote transparency, equity, and diversification. The main aims of this research are as follows:

a) Examine the influence of Blockchain characteristics on the art creation and evaluation process.
b) Evaluate the efficacy of using NFTs for documenting and authenticating art studio outputs and student-instructor interactions.
c) Provide art students with knowledge and skills related to Blockchain and NFT technologies, thereby enhancing their digital literacy and adaptability.
d) Promote diversity in art education curriculum and teaching methodologies through the inclusion of new technologies.

To achieve these aims, a mixed method is used as a research methodology. The following sub-sections form the structure of the study:

a) A literature review is conducted on Blockchain and NFT applications in education and arts.
b) Data is collected from art students, art teachers, and educational institutions through surveys and interviews.
c) An experimental phase is undertaken to implement Blockchain-based NFT solutions for art studio outputs and critiques.
d) Educational interventions is designed and implemented to equip art students with Blockchain and NFT knowledge and skills.

Expected Outcomes

The research is expecting several results, including the following:

a) Insights into how Blockchain impacts the process of creating artwork and critiques.
b) An analysis of the practicability and efficiency of using NFTs to record and validate art studio outputs and interactions.
c) Improved digital literacy and adaptability among art students because of educational initiatives.
d) Useful insights and practical suggestions for incorporating emerging technologies into arts education to promote inclusion and diversity.

It is anticipated that this research leads to an understanding of how the characteristics of Blockchain technology influence the processes of artistic creation and evaluation. This study aims to evaluate the potential and effectiveness of using NFTs for recording and validating art studio outputs and interactions. Its purpose is to provide educational institutions with guidance on how to utilize these technologies effectively. Moreover, it is anticipated that well-designed educational initiatives are expected to result in a significant increase in digital literacy and adaptability among art students. Since students utilize these new tools, they will get more proficient in navigating the digital world, which will make individuals better equipped for the artistic industries, which are constantly

transforming. By emphasizing inclusiveness and diversity, these technologies can create a learning atmosphere that fosters student innovation and values others' opinions.

Discussion

The discussion section analyses the collected data and assesses the effects of incorporating Blockchain and NFT technology into art education. It evaluates the proposed system's potential to promote impartiality, transparency, and an enriched learning environment, as well as its implementation benefits and drawbacks.

Integration and Habituation

In today's progressively digital environment, incorporating Blockchain and NFT technologies into art education is not only advantageous but essential. As many academic and professional activities have migrated to digital platforms, consequently, a need for methods of art creation, distribution, and preservation. The technique of uploading work to secure online resources, such as a Blockchain-based platform, should be a learning fundamental for all art students and instructors. This practice prevents the loss of artwork and promotes an environment of secure, transparent, and unalterable recordkeeping. Blockchain technology provides the security and transparency required for fair evaluations and the assertion of ownership rights, while NFTs provide a unique method for authenticating each piece of digital art, thereby revolutionizing the way artwork is created, evaluated, and distributed. Inculcating the practice of using secure online resources for storing and sharing art is compatible with emerging digital trends in the art industry and provides a modern, interactive learning environment. Ignoring this digitization trend would mean missing out on the transformative potential of these technologies to improve learning outcomes, facilitate global collaborations, and open new channels for artistic expression and critique. Therefore, the routine act of uploading and preserving works on Blockchain or similar secure digital platforms should be incorporated into modern art education to prepare students for the changing realities of the artistic world.

Digital Portfolio Creation

Incorporating Blockchain and NFT technologies into art education can play an essential role in digital portfolio creation. Digital portfolios are a collection of digital artifacts that represent experiences, achievements, and learning. Using Blockchain and NFTs for digital portfolio creation enables artists and students to create secure, authentic, and immutable records of their work. Students and professionals in the art industry require a digital portfolio to demonstrate their work to potential employers or clients. Blockchain technology guarantees the security and authenticity of the digital assets included in the portfolio, as each digital asset (artwork) can be recorded on the Blockchain as an NFT, which verifies its uniqueness and ownership. This protects against imitation and unauthorized use of digital assets, while also providing a transparent record of the artist's achievements.

Moreover, the decentralized nature of Blockchain makes it possible for artists to share their portfolios globally without geographical limitations or the need for intermediaries, thereby creating new opportunities for collaboration, recognition, and development.

Challenges

Integrating Blockchain and NFT technologies into art education holds great promise, but several obstacles must be addressed. Among these are technical complexities, the need for adequate infrastructure, and financial investments. It may be difficult for institutions to adapt their existing systems to incorporate these technologies. Both educators and students must receive adequate training for these tools to be utilized effectively, as familiarity is crucial for maximizing their benefits. Educators and students must receive comprehensive training to successfully use Blockchain and NFT technologies in the context of art education cause proficiency in these technologies is essential for optimizing their advantages. Educators should be knowledgeable in both the technical aspects and the integration of these tools into the educational environment. Simultaneously, students require guidance to navigate these technologies, from creating digital assets to understanding the verification mechanisms of Blockchain. Strong training ensures that educators and students can utilize the maximum potential of Blockchain and NFT technologies, which will enhance the quality and effectiveness of art education.

Incorporating Blockchain and NFT technologies into art education raises ethical and legal issues. These include data confidentiality, proprietorship rights, and the possibility of plagiarism or illicit use of digital assets. To cultivate a culture of equitable practices, it is essential to address these concerns. Blockchain's transparent and immutable character can provide solutions for protecting ownership rights and authenticating artistic works.

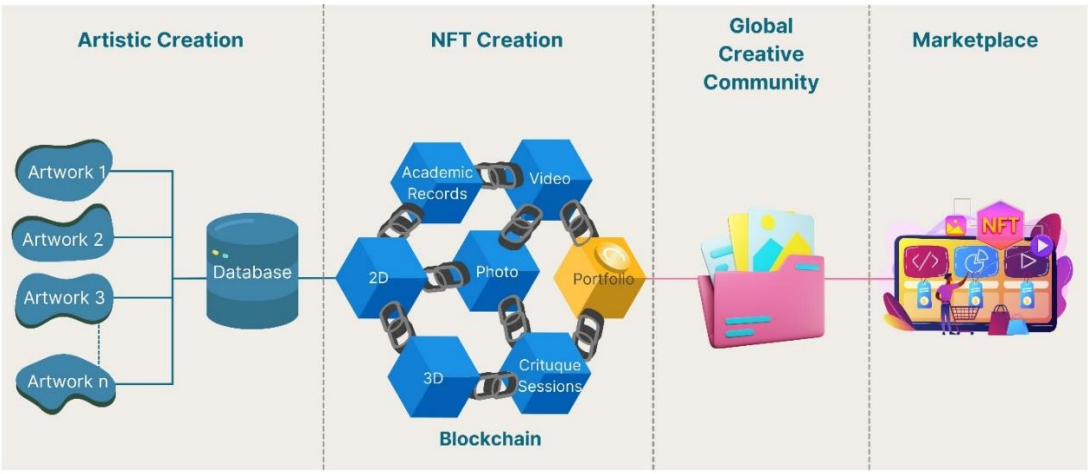


Figure 1 | *Process of art creation* (Copyright by the authors)

Conclusions

Integration of Blockchain and NFT technologies into art education has the potential to revolutionize the production, distribution, and consumption of art, as well as the art industry broadly. Blockchain offers a safe, transparent, and powerful platform for documenting, sharing, and verifying artistic accomplishments, consequently developing trust and authenticity in the creative process. This technology reduces fraud and builds confidence in the creative community by using tamper-resistant certificates, diplomas, and digital art portfolios. Furthermore, it offers a dynamic and interactive learning environment that stimulates student ownership and participation, which is likely to lead to higher learning outcomes. By facilitating decentralized and secure connections between artists, students, educators, and institutions, these technologies eradicate geographical barriers and intermediaries, thereby promoting collaborative projects and enhancing the learning experience overall. In addition, the rise of innovative business models and digital marketplaces offers artists new visibility and revenue opportunities. In addition, it is highly advantageous to prepare students for the digital environment of the future by providing them with the knowledge and skills associated with these technologies.

In conclusion, the incorporation of Blockchain and NFT technologies into art education is an essential step toward a more transparent, accountable, and inclusive artistic community. There will likely be obstacles in integrating these technologies, but the potential benefits exceed the drawbacks. Educators and professionals need to keep engaging in study to properly understand and take advantage of the potential of these novel technologies as the art environment evolves. Studying Blockchain and NFT technologies in art education opens new research fields, necessitating further study to refine implementation methods, address societal changes, and assess long-term impacts on students and the art industry. Encouraging professionals to keep researching will help us understand the potential and challenges of these innovative technologies.

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Enhancing Student Learning in Curatorial Practice through Emerging Technologies and Project-Based Learning

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Abstract

Because of the rapid development of digital technologies and the changes in university students' study habits, the applications of emerging technologies in education are receiving increasing attention. To enhance student learning in curatorial practice, this study developed a strategic program to integrate augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) into project-based learning (PBL). It explored students' performance in PBL in the 2021 and 2022 academic years. Based on college students' visual culture, the curriculum design emphasized the connection of students' daily life experiences. The research participants were junior and senior students enrolling in the "Exhibition Planning and Design" course at the College of Art Design, with 20 students in 2021 and 18 in 2022. The study results revealed that although the strategic program did not solve all problems related to underachievement and low learning motivation, the program motivated students with high initial intrinsic motivation to improve their learning. The results demonstrated that students exhibited more effective planning and improved the curatorial practice's performance by integrating AR/VR into PBL. The students revealed a higher level of participation in PBL, and the program was determined to be feasible for curatorial practice education.

Keywords: project-based learning, curatorial practice, visual culture, augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR)

Enhancing Student Learning in Curatorial Practice through Emerging Technologies and Project-Based Learning

This study drew on the author's experience of integrating on-site practice into the course "Exhibition Planning and Design." Furthermore, it incorporated augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) into project-based learning (PBL). Students were encouraged to collaborate, engage in self-directed learning, and develop problem-solving skills through guided teamwork. The aim was to empower students as leaders in the project-based learning (PBL) process, culminating a final project where they planned a real-world exhibition. The study was designed to improve learning outcomes among students and equip students with essential exhibition planning skills that align with the present-day needs of society, emphasising teamwork in the practice of exhibition production.

The author of the present study has offered multiple courses related to the technical aspects of curatorial practice for students in the College of Art Design at Hsuan Chuang University (Taiwan). Student feedback and teacher observations have revealed the emergence of problems such as ineffective promotional activities, the uneven distribution of tasks among students, rigidity in the exhibition themes, and the static nature of exhibits. The researcher incorporated a learner-centred approach with the implementation of a PBL instructional model. This approach aims to empower students to develop course activities, leading to increased motivation to learn and more dynamic exhibition outcomes. However, educational outreach activities during the exhibition period are lacking in terms of audience engagement. Therefore, in 2021 and 2022, AR and VR were integrated into exhibition production activities. Students' practical skills in exhibition production were improved. Teaching quality was also improved.

Literature Review Exhibitions have undergone profound changes in the past 20 years due to changes in technology, new media, and globalisation. In particular, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) have been increasingly used in exhibition promotion and education. AR refers to technology that combines and interacts with the virtual world on the screen with the real-world scene, using the position and angle of the camera image precisely calculated and augmented with image analysis techniques ("Augmented Reality", n.d.). AR has become used in an increasingly wide range of applications as AR hardware becomes more powerful (Mallem, 2010). Several studies have investigated the application of AR in schools, museums, art galleries, and cultural centres (Azuma, 1997; Wang, 2016; Song et al., 2006; Guo, 2008; Pan et al., 2016).

Virtual reality (VR) involves the creation of immersive and interactive experiences. When applied to exhibitions, VR provides different learning environments, offering audiences unique sensations. Users experience a sense of presence as if they are in a natural environment, freely manipulating scenes and objects in the VR environment. This interaction

is facilitated by real-time feedback (Dong et al., 2006). In recent years, the focus on providing users with rich sensory experiences has resulted in the increased application of VR in different forms of creation, exhibition, and teaching (Brown, 2016; Shen et al., 2000; Song et al., 2006; Lin et al., 2016; Tseng, 2018).

In addition to integrating AR and VR technologies, this study adopted project-based learning (PBL) techniques based on the concept of situated learning. The curriculum includes semester-long practical exhibition projects that align with the themes of the course units. PBL originated from John Dewey's "learning by doing" philosophy (Bender, 2012) and is seen as a teaching method that engages students in creating and problem-solving (Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Greeno, 2006; Chou, 2003). According to Wahid, Lee, and Baharudin (2020), PBL provides students with a learning environment where theory can be applied to practice, allowing for knowledge transfer to real-life situations. According to Rees Lewis, Gerber, Carlson, and Esterday (2019), to guide PBL and encourage participation among students, teachers should arrange flexible projects, ensure students understand PBL methods, and invite other teachers to collaborate. These strategies help students understand exhibition planning fundamentals and develop proposal writing skills. Teachers with expertise in AR and VR technologies should guide students in curating exhibitions.

Social media and mobile devices have revolutionised the way we and especially how students consume content. In the past 20 years, several art education scholars have advocated for expanding the content of visual culture within existing curricula (Barnard, 2001; Duncum, 2001; Freedman, 2000; Freedman & Wood, 1999; Stankiewicz, 2000; Sturken & Cartwright, 2009). These scholars advocate independent thinking, critical reflection, identification with one's culture, and multicultural inclusivity when facing complex technological artefacts.

In the late 20th century, visual culture has been a prominent theme among researchers and practitioners in arts and design education. Several art education scholars (Yuan, 1996; Chen, 2005; Chen, 2000; Huang, 2002; Chao, 2004/2005) have observed a shift away from focusing solely on techniques and media in contemporary art and design education, with emphasis on the relationship between art and design education and the surrounding world increasing. These scholars have advocated for including visual culture in art and design education to develop interpretive skills for visual symbols, construct self-identity within cultural contexts, and enhance reflection on one's cultural identity. A curriculum with a visual culture approach requires interdisciplinary content, diverse cultural themes, a balance between high and popular culture, a coverage of both contemporary and historical developments, and the use of information technology (Freedman, 2003).

According to Freedman (2003), art is, by nature, interdisciplinary, and visual culture–based art education should reflect such interdisciplinarity. Correspondingly, the present

study suggests for teachers to first plan their curricula around the key concepts that ought to be taught rather than on the teaching activities that their students are to be engaged in. Several art and design education scholars have developed and taught interdisciplinary courses (Stockrocki, 2005; Irwin & Chalmers, 2007).

The present study adopts Bruner's (1960) spiral curriculum design framework. The framework involves progressively increasing the depth of and the amount of content related to a course's core concepts as the semester unfolds. The core concepts in this study's course were aesthetic perception and exhibition planning. The course cultivated curatorial practical skills through practical exhibition production. Therefore, the core conceptual framework for this course was keen aesthetic perception and exhibition planning. The course focused on developing observational skills, encouraging students to observe their lived environment and the design of everyday objects. The course also exposed students to art and cultural exhibitions and fostered an appreciation of art and cultural exhibitions among the students. The course incorporated AR and VR exhibition production concepts and practices and enhanced teamwork and problem-solving skills among the students.

Building on previous experiences with an end-of-term practical exhibition production, the study further integrated AR and VR into the curriculum, incorporating PBL into the exhibition production course. The study's findings provide insights for the future application of this teaching method in related courses or disciplines.

Methodology

The data collection method for this instructional practice research involved action research in the teaching. Learning outcomes, teaching processes, and reflections were recorded, and the instructional objectives were reviewed. The study investigated whether students and teachers benefited from PBL instructional strategies.

The study was conducted as follows:

- Establishment of a theme: Instructional objectives were defined, and a practical project that integrated AR and VR technologies into exhibition production was developed.
- Development of a plan: An instructional action strategy was developed. The curriculum included teaching curation practices, student group exercises, and collaborative AR and VR teaching.
- Implementation of instructional activities: The instructional action plan was executed. The study author acted as a guide in the classroom.

In addition to explaining exhibition production–related content and grading methods, the study author guided the exhibition production, providing real-time feedback and production direction. Each class was structured such that the teacher initially conducted project teaching and guided students in practical exercises and production, after which group

exercises were conducted, with the teacher providing explanations or clarifying questions for each group. Students then had group discussions and exercises after understanding the tasks for that class and submitted the assigned tasks to the teacher as the basis for learning assessments. In AR/ VR-assisted teaching, AR/ VR instructors conducted AR/ VR teaching and interactions in each class. Group operations were performed after the AR/ VR instructor provided instructions on the specific content for that class. The AR/ VR instructor led group activities, and students engaged in group discussions and AR/ VR production exercises after understanding the tasks for that class. Student assistants assisted in providing the necessary hardware and software for AR/ VR production and supported the students with practical AR/VR production.

- Collection of relevant data: The learning process of students was observed and recorded.
- Reflection: The study author reflected on, evaluated, and revised the student assignments and exercises based on learning feedback, peer assessments, learning surveys, and interviews.
- Presentation and sharing of results: Students presented their AR/ VR application results at the curation practice venue.

Teaching and Research Outcomes

According to student feedback, the students had varying perspectives on their experiences using AR and VR technology in the exhibition curation and design course. The following key themes were revealed:

Theme One: Learning Experience with AR/ VR Technology

Respondents tended to emphasise their positive experiences in learning to apply AR and VR technology in the exhibition curation course. They went through a learning process that ranged from learning about the basics of AR to the creation of AR effects in practical applications. The process of learning AR technology allowed them to simulate curation design, providing them with a wider range of tools and knowledge to meet the demands of exhibition production.

Theme Two: Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Fresh Perspectives

Collaboration and interdisciplinary interaction were essential components of the learning experience. Collaborating with peers from different disciplines led to fresh insights. This interdisciplinary collaboration enriched the overall learning experience.

Theme Three: Overcoming Challenges and Building Confidence

Challenges were often encountered when students learnt about AR/ VR technology. Respondents emphasised the importance of support from instructors and fellow students. Overcoming challenges gave students a sense of accomplishment, increased their confidence in using digital tools, and encouraged them to approach challenging topics.

These findings highlight the diverse experiences of the respondents in learning and applying AR/ VR technology, including technical learning, teamwork, and overcoming challenges. The findings underscore the significance of AR/ VR technology in exhibition curation and reveal how AR/ VR technology enriches the learning process and the perspectives of students. The experiences of the students contribute to integrating AR/ VR technology into more exhibitions and curation activities and promotes student learning of digital tools.

The study participants effectively developed proposals for their exhibition, incorporated the use of AR/ VR into their curatorial capabilities, and curated the physical space of their exhibition. Integrating PBL with AR/ VR technology enabled students to use popular desktop and mobile software to stimulate peer collaboration.

Most students had not previously been exposed to AR/ VR technology. Incorporating project-based learning (PBL) into the instructional strategy stimulated peer collaboration and assistance, enabling the students to face and overcome the problems they encountered in their project work and to ultimately present their results. This approach not only provided a sense of achievement for the project members but also cultivated confidence and courage among the students when they dealt with challenging projects.

Several students had low self-esteem or lacked interest or confidence in their ability to produce AR/ VR displays. The PBL instructional strategy did not significantly stimulate participation among these students. Moreover, the time allocated to learn about the background of AR/ VR technology and the integration of AR/ VR technology into physical exhibition spaces (3 weeks) was insufficient for students who lacked a sense of achievement or interest in learning about digital tools. Additional teaching time or more AR/ VR teaching assistants for practice may be necessary. Alternatively, additional AR/ VR production courses may be required to guide these students in learning about digital technology.

Conclusion

This study developed a curriculum that incorporated PBL strategies, taught students how to integrate AR/ VR technology in exhibition planning, and evaluated learning performance and outcomes among the students. Additionally, the study investigated the feasibility of applying this instructional approach to other related practical courses. The study findings revealed that students continuously consulted AR/ VR expert teachers and teaching assistants to enhance the presentation of their respective exhibits and virtual exhibition spaces. Students also actively collaborated within their groups, developing comprehensive and practical project proposals that integrated AR/VR in exhibition production. Therefore, the PBL approach proposed in this study holds practical value for students participating in practical courses related to exhibition production. The key findings are as follows.

By integrating AR/ VR technology and PBL, students who were initially uncertain and doubtful came to master their curatorial skills. The use of a group learning model required group members to complete the final curatorial project and collectively discuss the creation of AR effects and VR exhibition spaces. The PBL approach encouraged students with low self-efficacy or little interest or confidence in creating AR effects and VR exhibition spaces to seek guidance from AR/ VR experts. Through clarifying operations and practice in planning AR effects and VR galleries, students transitioned from exploring curatorial concepts in AR effects and VR galleries to producing physical exhibition spaces. The guidance and facilitation provided by the teachers and experts in AR/ VR were crucial for encouraging active engagement and collaboration among students, providing curatorial scenarios and diverse case studies, ensuring that each group member achieved the stated goals. With the guidance and collaboration of the teaching team, students could grasp the process of PBL combined with the creation of AR effects and VR galleries.

This study designed a four-stage curriculum and teaching activities. The curriculum included essential curatorial knowledge learning, AR/ VR technology, PBL methodologies, and curatorial case studies. Students ultimately produced physical exhibitions combining AR effects and VR galleries. Through the construction of basic curatorial knowledge in the classroom, guidance from the AR/ VR experts and teaching assistants, and autonomous data collection and practice within each group, students went through the process of discussing situational curatorial issues and planning curatorial topics and effectively coordinated and collaborated with each other. The students learnt that PBL with AR/ VR technology in actual exhibitions relies on a series of problem-solving and collaborative efforts by all members. Finally, the students submitted a project proposal aligned with the exhibition theme and produced an actual exhibition space that combined AR effects and VR galleries (Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Greeno, 2006; Zhou, 2003).

This study found that integrating AR effects and VR galleries by using PBL methodologies under specific temporal and spatial conditions was beneficial for students, who were primarily kinaesthetic learners, to explore the production of actual exhibition spaces. Moreover, the rapid advancements in AR/ VR technologies have enabled users to experience various environments (Dong & Huang, 2006), providing students with a better grasp of curating exhibitions in physical spaces. Therefore, this study recommends that relevant courses consider integrating curatorial activities with AR/ VR technology. With the guidance of AR/ VR experts, students can learn how to engage exhibition viewers more effectively in digital exhibition scenarios and understand the possibilities unlocked by the integration of AR/ VR into physical exhibitions.

With the rapid advancements in AR/ VR technology, creating immersive and interactive experiences for exhibition audiences and in exhibition-related education has

become an essential trend in curatorial education. This study found that integrating AR/ VR and PBL methodologies provided different sensory experiences for viewers. Future exhibition planning–related courses should consider collaborating with AR/ VR experts and planning more extended periods of learning and practice. This would provide students with more time to master digital tool production techniques, enabling the creation of higher-quality interactive experiences and immersive exhibitions. It would also allow students to develop exhibition plans and practice exhibition presentations more effectively.

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Twitch Streamers at the Fault Lines of Education: Exploring their Approaches to Engage Disinterested Students

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Abstract

Upon observing many broadcasts online, the authors noticed that some of the Twitch streamers' approaches utilized various aspects of co-constructivism (Reusser, 2001), zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978), emergent curriculum (Cassidy, Mims, Rucker, & Boone, 2003), and choice-based learning (Douglas & Jaquith, 2018), among others. Through examining the streamers' online broadcasting methods as embodying the pedagogical constructs mentioned above, the anticipated outcomes we offer are pedagogical best practices and approaches that classroom arts teachers may implement to heighten students' engagement with learning and materials, within the art classroom, and beyond the fault lines of education. Specifically, we explore the benefits of critical play, student-driven inquiry, and purposeful non-intentionality as key insights to improve teaching and therefore offer a positive impact on practice. This critical play approach allows for an interrogative perspective towards the events and experiences that happen within the game spaces. Leveraging its 'unintentional' implementation by the streamers for pedagogical practices allows examination of cultural appropriation as a core element of critical thinking in addition to how it is encouraged through classroom practices that the authors suggest.
KEYWORDS: Twitch Streamers; unintentional educators; critical play

Author note

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Twitch Streamers at the Fault Lines of Education: Exploring their Approaches to Engage Disinterested Students

As arts educators ourselves, we believe that gaming streamers can be seen as unintentional yet purposeful educators, who are teaching and learning in informal spaces such as Twitch and other online platforms. We posit that streaming is allowing gamers to transform their private play into pedagogical practices of informal teaching and learning. We understand that streamers may have no intention of being recognized as teachers, as much as other gamers or their followers/observers may have no intention of being recognized as students or learners; however, the similarities and overlap cannot be ignored, nor should they be dismissed. Though there may be many pedagogical concepts that can be overlaid on streamers' methods to better understand their approaches or to reveal a scholarly depth and complexity, in this paper, we focus on three specific pedagogical concepts that are almost immediately apparent upon watching gaming streaming videos through an educationist lens.

There are multiple online, imagined communities. In fact, users can access content to anything imaginable with a quick search which displays the array and depth of online subcultures. As a community-building tool, the time-based content allows forming more accessibility between people who share similar interests, especially with the introduction of websites that imbed interaction tools such as comment sections. These imagined communities can have a lot of depth with sub-subcultures embedded within them which can be formed through content makers who record themselves engaging in the activities that define their subculture. While there are multiple platforms that allow time-based content, Twitch is best known for real-time streaming and viewer participation. For example, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok are some of those time-based content platforms, but gaming is specifically centred around Twitch. Today, Twitch is one of the most popular live streaming services with 2,672,000 average concurrent viewers in 2022. Followers can watch live streams, subscribe to specific channels, participate in online chats, and even send gifts such as money and subscriptions through Twitch's interface.

Twitch users can access different content. First, if they are following a specific genre, the suggestions are shaped around their preferences like it is in every social media platform. Second, they can search for specific games and look at the current live-streaming content creators and choose one, which is organized based on view count, so it favours popularity. Third, viewers can search for, or subscribe to certain people and it will show when they are online, or if they are online – these people usually have clear schedules so that viewers know when to tune in. Finally, a user can go to the main page and select one of the categories such as just chat, recently released games, VR games, reaction etc. and start watching a live stream within the category.

All these user interactions, and activities streamers partake in, provide more than entertainment. Choosing who to watch or follow is not only determined by the subcultural relations to a specific game or genre. It is also closely connected to who the streamer or game content creator is, what they informally teach through their conversations, gameplays, and in some cases, how they approach play as more than just a juvenile, mindless activity. These interactions also help the performance of watching, and the act of play to become a way of socially, or para-socially, constructing knowledge through a topic of interest by following a chosen leader. In that sense, play becomes this vehicle of analysis and learning in safe spaces through examples that are not real life but can be transferred to real life instances.

In order to understand how these online interactions with time-based media and live streaming happen, it is important to look at the methods content creators employ. A major method that content creators use is think aloud. Think aloud is describing things while doing them and commenting on the overall experience. With this approach, users witness real time meaning making through different ways of interpreting the media. In a way, the game and think aloud allows for the identification and exploration of difficult topics which guides the understanding of the viewers. Another tool is live chat, which is a big component of live streaming. It allows constant real time connection between the streamers and the viewers. It further strengthens the community, social relations and shared interests, creates a more personally curated experience, and strengthens the feeling of belonging and collective presence within an imagined community–a subculture.

Whether these relations happen through synchronous or asynchronous communication with the viewers, these engagements create subcultures and communities within game genres, games, and game specific interests that viewers subscribe to. Therefore, the viewers observe and learn from the behaviour of the streamer/content creator in an extended amount of time, which in many ways is not dissimilar from taking an online seminar course or discussing the arts with an educator over Zoom. These approaches can be analysed and viewed from a pedagogical perspective. As we mentioned at the beginning of this paper, we focus on three specific concepts, which we use to explore streamers and content creators as tools to engage students.

The three specific pedagogical concepts we are discussing in this paper are constructivism, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and emergent curriculum or student-driven inquiry. To begin with a brief history for context, constructivism can be bifurcated into two separate but related perspectives, cognitive and social. Cognitive constructivism, viewing learning as constructing knowledge onto our existing knowledge, can be accredited to Piaget (1936), and social constructivism, viewing learning as occurring through social interaction (especially with help), can be accredited to Vygotsky (1962).

For our purposes, we will be highly considering Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective which "describe[s] joint construction of meaning through community activity and distinctly locate[s] the knower in the traditions, tools, symbols, artifacts, and language of the learning community," (Schrader, 2015, pp. 23-24). In this paper, the learning community is Twitch, or similar streaming platforms that users, gamers, and/or followers choose to access to learn more about the particular video game they are trying to successfully manoeuvre, as well as the streamers sharing their videos.

Video games and streaming sites are communities of learning with streamers taking a more unintentional approach to being the teacher of best practices by utilizing Vygotsky's (1920s) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) where "the disparities in knowing and learning are scaffolded by the expert other(s) who dialogically share their processes of activity to allow the knower to appropriate the better (more complex) knowing system," (Schrader, 2015, p. 25). It is assumed that the streamer already has experiential knowledge, or at the very least, gaming literacy of the game that they are narrating and sharing their experiences of successfully manoeuvring. In the context of ZPD, they are the expert other who shares their processes of activity to the gamers who choose to watch their streamed/ing commentary. The Twitch streamer is assisting in minimizing the space between what a gamer can do without assistance and what a gamer can do with guidance from a more capable gamer-peer. In order to learn the most from a streamer, the gamer would most likely already need to have interacted with that particular game in some way, possess some existing or elementary playing abilities, have a semblance of knowledge of the game itself, recognize some of its specific traditions, or harbour a level of gaming literacy regarding the subcultural context. This informal learning exchange can take place for any amount of time as the gamer grows in joint construction of meaning through this community activity and builds on their current abilities, which may in fact be minimal at the onset. Then as gamers/streaming viewers mature with the specific knowledge they are seeking and "are brought into their cultures, their cultures are also brought into them as they appropriate the semiotic legacy of their predecessors" (Xi & Lantolf, 2021, pp. 29-30). It is this semiotic legacy of any particular, successfully advanced gamer that Twitch viewers are aspiring to embody and embrace in hopes of improving their own more successful independent gameplay.

A third pedagogical theory is that of utilizing emergent curriculum or student-driven inquiry, which is being responsive to learners' (gamers) interests. In this sense, gamers who choose what streams to watch not only stand the chance of becoming "formidable experts on topics important to them, but they also become knowledge producers based on their interest in and capacity for digging deep into the topics they have chosen to explore and problems they are seeking to solve" (Schulz & Pearson, 2021, p. 11). Streamers will also

react to users/viewers' likes, views, and comments as indicators of what material to produce and stream in the future. In a nearly instantaneous feedback cycle, both streamers and gamers/viewers are exploring problems they seek to solve based on the other entity's perceived interest and skill level. Streamers are producing content at varying levels of expertise and viewers are exploring the content available to dig deeper into their topics of interest at varying levels just above their current achievement status. The streamed content (i.e., curriculum) that is watched and learned from is motivated by the viewers' choices. The learners get to choose what they get to learn. To return to our original purpose, the reason that we focused on these three pedagogical concepts as demonstrative of some of the approaches that some Twitch, and similar platforms, streamers inadvertently and/or unknowingly use is because as arts educators, we are familiar with these approaches already, as many of us in arts education employ these same ideas in our daily teaching.

When it comes to video games, it is crucial for players to approach the environment they operate in with questioning in mind. This is particularly important with the narratives and how the game directs its players through its designed elements, as this can be [in]directly related to players' real life social and political worlds and life choices. To further explain, Flanagan (2009) states that:

> Games ultimately create cognitive and epistemological environments that position the player or participants with the experiences previously described in meaningful ways. So what does it mean to "play critically"? Critical play means to create or occupy play environments and activities that represent one or more questions about aspects of human life. (p. 6)

Besides recognizing that playing video games and engaging in artmaking are both sites of critical work that are intertwined with our human lives, we also recognize that arts educators can learn from streamers.

We posit that arts educators can learn from streamers' approaches to unintentional yet purposeful teaching to then implement into their arts classrooms. We see arts educators and streamers as the more expert other in their respective educative spaces. Herewith, we are not setting up a hierarchy between the two teaching entities, but rather are approaching both arts educators and streamers as teachers who can learn from each other's best practices, though for sake of time, we only address what arts educators can learn. We transition to what arts educators can learn from gaming streamers, as many practitioners are keen on personal professional development.

One of the significant outcomes of this paper is our suggestion for arts educators on how they can leverage the strategies that are employed by game content creators. While some of the values of streamer practices come from their unintentionality of teaching

practices, those can be employed in more formal settings to simulate those stress-free, playful teachable moments streams offer.

First, variable pacing is a crucial element streamers provide for their viewers. The content creators allow for multiple speeds/types of interactions with their gameplay and imagined community by offering multiple modalities on their user platforms. For instance, they live stream where viewers can watch their gameplay in real time. On the other hand, they also upload their streams or create videos allowing their followers to engage with their content at their own pace or revisit it asynchronously. This time-independent approach can be echoed in the classroom, where additional audiovisual materials and recordings of various levels of instructive videos are available on their classroom website. Similarly, streamers provide different tools of engagement with live and prerecorded content. If viewers choose to, they can join the live chat and continue engaging with the streamer in real-time; however, they can also choose to engage in other outlets provided by the streamer, such as the comment sections. While providing multiple communication outlets allows for accommodating different ways of engaging with the community, it also creates various options for the viewers.

Therefore, creating spaces for different types of student engagement and allowing students to choose is another tool for involving students in the class where they do not feel pressured to communicate in a specific way to get good grades. For example, educators can provide multiple spaces such as online and offline discussions, collective mind map boards, and drawing boards. They can use free platforms like Padlet or Miro where they can produce a variety of collaboration tools that students can add, remove and share work. Finally, engagement with the content creators is closely related to how they react to the game and game elements. As we have previously addressed, streamers perform think aloud as they play. Doing think aloud while working through complex topics/techniques can help contextualize the teachable critical play moments in regard to the previous class content.

The second approach we suggest for educators from streamer practices is mimicking the unintentionality of streamers to generate interest and motivation. While the players do not directly engage with the game when watching a streamer, often, streamers start with a level of knowledge and skills that they develop as they play. Unintentionally, these content creators become both a guide to help develop others' skills through demonstration, and in turn, they get better themselves. In this case, the engagement is created through the streamer's knowledge and skills and unintentionality in the ways of their demonstration and interpretation where they accept that they can learn more and learn together with the audience to rise to the challenges of the game. A way of bringing this effortless and honest way of claiming expertise (or lack of it) to the classroom can be through playfulness. For example, teachers can co-create new methods of making art and designing artifacts with

their students. Similar to content creators, such creative engagements will inevitably be tied to existing skills and knowledge. This can also create a playful way to reinforce previous learnings in the classroom. Therefore, educators can benefit from reacting to what they encounter, be intentionally unintentional and playful to keep their students engaged and interested in longer periods of time.

Previously, we discussed the importance of having a variety of spaces for students to engage with the class materials and with other students. While that is invaluable for individual pacing, it is also an essential concept for creating and strengthening the overall class community. Therefore, having a [virtual or physical] space where students can asynchronously chat with the instructor about a concept, misunderstanding, or request more information, can help with making students feel they belong, are heard/validated, and are not alone.

These spaces can also encourage students to discuss their personal interpretations and commentaries on course readings, projects, and/or art they may see and interact with in society. Similar interpretations amongst students could build and strengthen imagined communities and would also help them (re)consider shared student experiences that then further shape their developing perspectives. Additionally, these alternative engagement spaces can encourage students' deliberate involvement in class decision-making. For example, streamers use polls and chats as collaborative decision-making tools where viewers feel involved in the process. This approach can be mirrored in the classroom, where students can be presented with options regarding themes, materials, expected outcomes, etc. Moreover, as we discussed, streamers represent various subcultures that their imagined communities form around. Allowing students to make decisions that impact the class can help tailor the emergent curriculum according to their interests. For example, groups of students can work on topics they are all interested in to strengthen imagined communities.

The final approach that arts educators can borrow from streamers is playfulness. Playfulness should not be confused with gamification in which existing content is presented through game jargon (such as calling an exam a *boss fight*) without actually changing the content and its delivery. The playful learning that we address here integrates play elements into the classroom. For instance, we mentioned involving student interests in the classroom and allowing space for students to express and learn through these interests by choice-based learning. These concepts and choices can be game-like elements where students learn while playing. For that, educators can create small games such as puzzles, trivia games, and treasure hunts where students can actively engage with and think more about the materials. Arts educators could also bring existing games into their classrooms. With a quick search engine entry, they can find games that can be used for different educational goals.

Another important aspect while creating these playful learning environments is to allow for failure and be careful not to punish students who cannot succeed the first time. It is essential to encourage students to practice, whether they are encountering an entire game or a singular task. When streaming gameplay, content creators fail in their game multiple times. Since failure is expected, success is also probable. If they just continue playing, they will certainly pass that challenge in the game. This approach for allowing failure on tasks can create a reduced-stress environment for the students, allowing them to experiment and engage with the material more freely and in a playful manner**.**

And while there is much more that arts educators can learn from streamers' approaches, we believe the concepts mentioned here are great places to start with intentional implementation in the arts classroom. While our focus is on the arts, as educators in that area, these methods can be embraced by anyone who wants to understand how play and playfulness can be implemented in formal and informal learning spaces and for individuals who want to create online content.

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Section III:

Art Education in Social, Cultural, and Community Contexts

Unearthing the Future: Art Education on the Shore of the Great Salt Lake

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Abstract

Issues of water use and land rights are foregrounded in the Western US due to a dramatic spiking population growth coupled with the ecological impact of a decades-long drought. My research and accompanying workshop presented at the InSEA World Congress 2023 demonstrates how student-lead place-based arts education contends with these issues through a university/public-school partnership. In 2021, I began a three-year project with my undergraduate students enrolled in the University of Utah's Art Teaching program. We partnered with a high school 40 miles from the University but just steps from the shore of the imperilled Great Salt Lake (GSL). The GSL watershed is in crise–dropping to its lowest-ever recorded level in 2022, it is on the brink of total collapse. Working collaboratively across institutions, my students and I designed and implemented placed-based arts curricula with high school students on the shore of the lake. My presentation and workshop at the InSEA World Congress 2023 introduced participants to the specifics of the project and gave them strategies for building bridges across institutions. We created personalized maps that explored hidden ideologies of demarcation and discussed our relationship to place and the role of art in understanding local ecologies.

Keywords: place-based education, ecology, sustainability, community-engaged learning

Author note

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All photos courtesy of the author.

Unearthing the Future: Art Education on the Shore of the Great Salt Lake

In November 2022 the Great Salt Lake fell to the lowest surface elevation ever recorded, 4,188 feet above sea level. New research shows that if nothing is done to return more water to the lake it will dry up in less than five years (Abbott et. al., 2023). This has catastrophic implications, not only for my home state of Utah, but also for the Western United States at large. The Great Salt Lake (GSL) is what is known as a keystone ecosystem, a habitat for over 10 million migratory birds, it increases precipitation while suppressing toxic dust (Baxter 2020; Wurtsbaugh, 2017). It is also an economic engine; providing $2.5 billion per year in economic activity through extraction industries that employ thousands of Utahns (Leaver 2017; Wilkins 2021).

If we continue to redirect water away from the lake the ecosystem will collapse, resulting in widespread air and water pollution, species extinction, and job loss. Research clearly demonstrates that education holds the key to grappling with these and other environmental issues (Reid 2019; Sippel 2023). However, despite excellent political and educational initiatives, most people do not realize the urgency of the crisis.

My project, *Unearthing the Future: Art Education on the Shore of the Great Salt Lake*, contends with this gap, the gap between understanding and action, by bringing young people out of the classroom and into a closer correspondence with the ecology at their doorstep. Simultaneously both foreign and intimate, this dialogue with nature aids in the development of what educator Brooke Ann Hofsess calls a “craftsmanship of attention with the world” (Hofsess, 2021, p. 31). Questions of observation, communication, and connection arise as student and teacher become united in a shared quest for understanding as they attend to the world anew. We ask, instead of acting as surveyors of our surroundings, might we approach the environment with more collaboration and care?

This is site-specific student-led art education designed to personalize the abstract through creative action and dialogue. It gives meaning to the death of an ancient ocean by localizing it within contemporary discourse, transforming both student and site through a renewed understanding of one’s relation *in relation* to another. Art is the conduit for this exchange, a facilitator for the real-time renegotiation of roles, offering new modes of interaction that arise from agitating these distinctions (Hofsess, 2021; Kimmerer, 2013), transforming a teacher into a student, students into artists, and environment into educator.

What follows is a series of photographs, prompts, artwork, and ideas from the prestation and workshop I gave in Çanakkale, Türkiye at the InSEA World Congress 2023. I consider them fragments or artifacts, bits and pieces of a much larger body of research.

Figure 1

Photograph of the Great Salt Lake, Tooele County, Utah. 2021



Figure 2 & 3

Retention ponds and the US Magnesium Corporation, Southwest shore of the Great Salt Lake



Note: Since 1972 US Magnesium Corp. has harvested brine from the Great Salt Lake to produce magnesium, alloy magnesium, and chlorine. The plant is responsible for as much as 25% of Northern Utah's air pollution. During winter months the air quality above Salt Lake City plumets as toxic cold air is trapped beneath warmer air, forming what is known as an "inversion." US Magnesium is the nation's only magnesium producer. Because magnesium is lightweight and incredibly strong it is a key component in almost every electronic device we use, including smartphones, laptops, tablets, and other devices.

Figure 4, 5, & 6

Shotgun shell, concrete water trough, and dead mule deer, Stansbury Island, Tooele County, UT



Note: Stansbury Island is the second largest island within the Great Salt Lake. It is an ecologically and culturally diverse island. Home to coyote, jackrabbits, mule deer, kangaroo rats, gophers, badgers, bobcats, and red-tail hawks, amongst others. There are cattle on the island too. Like many areas in the Western United States the island is a checkerboard of private and public parcels of land. As such, it has become a mixed-use site, bringing together ranchers, machine operators, businessmen, hikers, climbers, and gun enthusiasts. It is a place that vibrates with tension as various cultural ideologies encounter one another. It is also just a few minutes' drive from Stansbury High School.

Figure 7 & 8
Students on the shore of Stansbury Island collecting objects and creating cyanotype prints





Note: For the past three years my Art Teaching Students at the University of Utah have organized the Stansbury Art Fair on Stansbury Island. Each year in April students, teachers, family, and friends, gather on the island to participate in workshops designed by members of my Art in the Community class. The day-long fair is both a celebration and an exploration. It brings students into closer correspondence with nature as they strengthen their connection with the University of Utah students with whom they have been working with for months in advance.

Figure 9 & 10

Students under cyanotype prints and exploring the brine-heavy water that turns the lake pink.





Note: The lake gets its pink hue from halophiles, microorganisms that thrive in hyper-saline environments. As the lake shrinks it becomes increasingly saline, limiting the number of species it can support. The north arm of the lake which is cut off from the south by a causeway recently reached 330 grams per liter (27% salt), for comparison ocean water has a salinity of around 35 grams per liter. At 330 grams per liter even the salt loving brine shrimp cannot survive.

Figure 11, 12, & 13

Students create sculptures out of clay harvested from the lakebed.



Note: The soft sediments commonly referred to as clays, or "oolites," occur under shallow water in embayments protected from wave action. The clay is exceptionally smooth and plastic. As the water recedes the clay can be harvested. However, when the lakebed is exposed to the air it dries, and the erodible materials are picked up into the air – forming toxic dust clouds. The lakebed contains levels of arsenic, lanthanum, lithium, zirconium, copper and other metals above the Environmental Protection Agency's residential and industrial standards.

Figure 14 & 15

Stansbury H.S. art teachers help students pit fire their clay vessels and examples of student work.





Note: The Stansbury Island Art Fair is one component of this ever-evolving project. Student-led and community-centred, it changes shape as new voices enter the fray. At its core it is action-based research designed to explore the possibilities of art education when students move outside the walls of their schools and universities and into closer proximity with the natural world. They work in unison as a community of curious artists, learners, teachers, and explorers.

Figure 16

Maps created by InSEA 2023 participants during my presentation and workshop in Çanakkale, Türkiye.



Note: Participants who attended my presentation and short workshop, *Research through Artmaking on the Shore of the Great Salt Lake,* created maps in response to the prompt "Where are you? Draw a map." This experiential component of the presentation accompanied my remarks on the hidden ideologies embedded in maps and the demarcation of space. It was a creative exploration of how we relate to the environment around us and our understanding of local cultural ecologies.

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The Role of Art in Mitigating the Negative Effects of the Earthquake 2023

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Abstract

What is the role of art in handling a crisis such as earthquakes, pandemics or war? Can the negative effects of the earthquake be alleviated by using the opportunities of art? These questions will be addressed by focusing on the role of art in mitigating the negative effects of the earthquake in the southern region of Türkiye in February 2023. After the earthquake, several artistic activities organized by many people, institutions and organizations, earthquake-related works of artists, mobile art studios, educational and collaborative works of art educators formed the focus of this research. Using document analysi, artist drawings, artistic activities with children, news and images in newspapers and social media were scanned. It is possible that the artistic activities organized after this disaster will have a psychological, social, economic, material and moral impact on people. This study provides rich content on how opportunities and activities with art making can be used in times of crisis. It also questions what can be taken into consideration to practically produce solutions in many crises that may occur in the future, while benefiting from the opportunities of art.

Keywords*:* art, art activities, art in earthquake, crisis

Author note

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The Role of Art in Mitigating the Negative Effects of the Earthquake 2023

Crisis that require survival, such as pandemics, wars, hurricanes, floods and earthquakes, negatively affect the lives of many people. For example, approximately 8 million Ukrainians have been displaced, and five million children had their education disrupted by the war in Ukraine (Lukito et al., 2023). In 2015, the 7.8 earthquake displacing over 450,000 people in Nepal (Baumann et al., 2021). More than 455,000 thousand people had to leave their region during Hurricane Katrina, one of the largest and most destructive hurricanes in the history of the United States in 2005 (Adams et al., 2011). In Türkiye, thousands of people lost their lives, and many buildings were destroyed or severely damaged by two earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.7 and 7.6, which took place in the southern region of Türkiye on February 6, 2023. 17 Turkish cities were considered disaster regions, and the state of emergency was declared in those regions. According to official figures, 50,783 people lost their lives and 115,353 people were injured. It was reported that 37,984 buildings were destroyed (*Disaster and Emergency Management Authority* -AFAD, 2023). Therefore, hundreds of thousands of people became homeless and approximately 15 million people were directly affected by the earthquake. Approximately 4.6 million children in Türkiye and more than 2.5 million in Syria were negatively affected by the earthquake (UNICEF, 2023). The damage caused by this disaster, which had such a devastating effect, on people and children was quite great. It is stated that the effects of earthquakes cause physical destruction, loss and negative mental health consequences in families and communities (Baumann et al., 2021). This is because it can be very time-consuming and exhausting for survivors to leave their place of residence and rebuild a life for themselves. The results obtained by WHO from more than 3000 studies have revealed that art plays an important role in prevention of ill health and promotion of health (Fancourt & Finn, 2019). A growing number of studies show that arts-based approaches, from writing to painting and drawing and dance and music, can have positive effects on health, including stress relief, emotion, social adjustment and healthy behaviours (Baumann et al., 2021; Clift, 2012; Fancourt & Finn, 2019; Stuckey & Nobel, 2010). After such disasters, people may constantly remember the bad moments they experienced, some may experience emotional collapse due to the loss of their loved ones and may despair as a result of material and moral losses. However, the negative effects of the resulting damage can be mitigated by using the opportunities of art. In *Americans for the Arts* (2017) it is stated that it is difficult for society to recover after disasters such as major hurricanes, earthquakes and floods, but arts-based activities can reduce depression and anxiety rates and increase hope and general confidence. The association says that art is a vital component in the revitalization of disaster-affected communities. It also emphasizes that practices such as art centres and art therapy are important in the planning of mobile art schools, art studios and temporary settlement areas.

Art is known to have many purposes, such as healing after natural disasters, spreading a message, creating meaning collaboratively, and encouraging members of society to gather in public spaces and engage in dialogue with each other (Semmens et al., 2023). Perhaps, in times of crisis such as earthquakes, people's minds can be healed by occupying them with art, even for a short time. The impact of the trauma experienced by those who lost their loved ones can be reduced. While parents are in a rush to find a safe home and meet their needs, children can be helped to get away from the chaos created by the earthquake by directing them to useful and rich artistic activities. Therefore, this research reveals how the opportunities of engaging with art were used and what the role of art was in mitigating the negative effects of the last earthquake in Türkiye.

Method

A document analysis method was employed in this study. The earthquake-related works of the artists shared online regarding the earthquake that took place in the south of Türkiye on February 6, 2023, and artistic activities with children were examined. News and images in newspapers and social media were scanned. Primarily, a search was made by entering the keywords "earthquake and art", "artistic activities in the earthquake regions", "artists' paintings about earthquakes", "artistic activities earthquake in Türkiye", "art studios after the earthquake" into the internet search engine. Activities such as theatre, concerts and cinema before February 6th, 2023, and other than visual arts were not included in the scope of this study. A total of 153 websites and social media accounts were accessed. 127 web pages (33 news, 38 public, association and private organizations, 11 online magazines, 27 university official websites, 18 social media accounts) belonging to public or private institutions, organizations or an artist, which were confirmed to be reliable and real news, were examined. Within the framework of the limitations of the research, artistic activities are categorized and presented under three headings according to their purpose and content.

Findings

The findings are presented under four themes (see figure 1). The subject was discussed in the context of the research by giving a few examples and visuals under each heading.

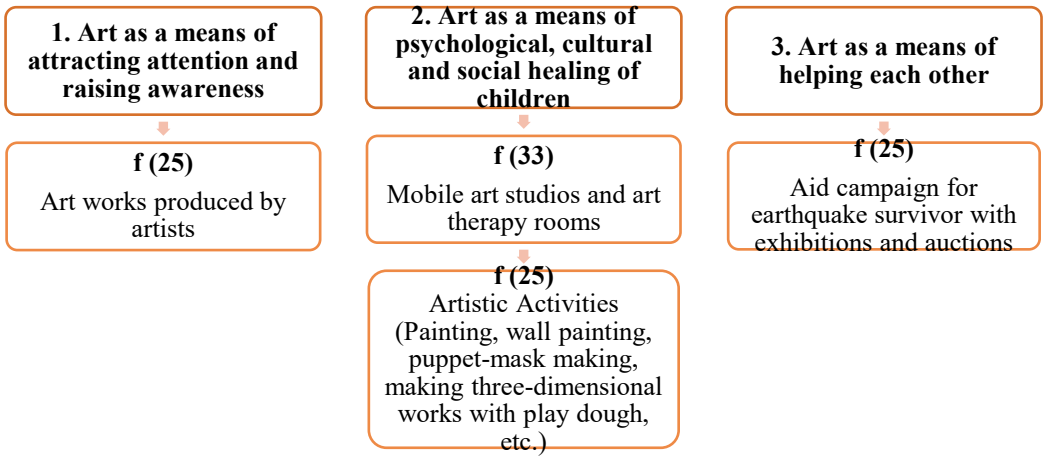


Figure 1 | *Ways to benefit from art during the last earthquake in Türkiye* (Copyright by the author, 2023)

Art as a Means of Attracting Attention and Raising Awareness: Artists' Works About Earthquakes

Earthquake-related works of two artists, one Turkish and the other foreign, were discussed. Firstly, the work of Professor Mehmet Kavukçu, who is the dean of the faculty of fine arts of a university in the east of Türkiye and also an artist who deals with the events surrounding his environment and the world in his works, was examined.



Figure 2 | *Mehmet Kavukçu collecting materials from collapsed buildings in Hatay, Türkiye, 2023* (Copyright by Mehmet Kavukçu)

Mehmet Kavukçu created an installation by placing objects collected from the debris on a pyramidal construction in order to draw attention to the earthquake and raise awareness in the central park of Erzincan, his hometown (Figure 3).



Figure 3 | *Installation in Erzincan, Türkiye, 2023.* (Copyright by Mehmet Kavukçu)

At the same time, he held a performance in which he reproduced the sound of objects hitting each other in an earthquake by hitting objects bearing the traces of the earthquake against each other for 45 seconds. In this context, the fact that the sounds coming from the objects refer to a tragic reality, in contrast to the natural sounds of the park where the installation is located, has a warning effect so that the pain experienced is never forgotten (Kavukçu, May/August 2023). With this performance, he invites the audience around him to remember the earthquake again and pay attention to what happened.

Secondly, the interactive works of American artist Erin McGee Ferrell, in which QR codes transferred earthquakes and their traces to the canvas, were examined (Figure 4). She explained that there were no words to describe the disaster that would shake our minds with amount of grief and loss, and that she had to express it in some way. She stated that her studies involving QR codes emerged (Rogers, 2023).



Figure 4

Artist Erin McGee Ferrell's interactive paintings, 2023. (Copyright by Erin McGee Ferrell)

The artist could not remain silent about the human tragedy in Türkiye and wanted to be the voice of those living in the earthquake regions. Her paintings (Figure 5) have QR codes that can be scanned by smartphones and show news videos and articles on stories of rescue, hope, and survival (News Centre Maine, 2023). Thus, she said that she wished people would interact with this disaster and create empathy instead of walking along the paintings in a gallery (Rogers, 2023).



Figure 5 | *Erin McGee Ferrell's interactive paintings embedded with audio and video, 2023.* (Copyright by Erin McGee Ferrell)

Art as a Means of Psychological, Cultural and Social Healing of Children: Mobile art Studios and Art Therapy Rooms with Artistic Activities

During the last earthquake, many public institutions, associations, art and social aid platforms organized art studios and activities for children in earthquake regions where schools were destroyed. For example, *Mordem and the Children's Art Space Platform*, an independent charity organization, aim to reach village children in rural areas affected by the earthquake. In order to alleviate the negative effects, they have experienced/will experience, they came together with expert groups and created child-friendly areas (play and activity tents) (Figure 6) and organized artistic studios and art therapy rooms (B. Işık, personal communication, November 28th, 2023).



Figure 6 | *MORDEM's artistic activities with children in the earthquake regions* (Copyright by Barış Işık, founding art director of MORDEM Art Centre)

However, the earthquake hit a huge area and the number of people affected by the earthquake was quite high. Therefore, it has made it difficult to deliver aid and facilities to many regions. The idea of mobile art studios created in this context is remarkable. *Mother Child Education Foundation* (ACEV) has created mobile vehicles to reach children living in districts and villages far from the centre and to compensate for the learning losses of children affected by the earthquake. With the experts' support in these tools, a scientific, art and game-based education program was developed according to the needs of those affected by the earthquake. The program includes activities such as active activities, art activities, and free play that can be implemented with children aged 3-9 (Figure 7). The program aims to support all developmental areas of children, especially their socio-emotional, cognitive and language development (C. Önder, communication coordinator at ACEV, personal communication, 8 November 28th, 2023).



Figure 7*Mobile Art Studios* (Copyright by Cansen Önder, Communications Coordinator in ACEV) Using art-based activities to explore the emotions that children have difficulty expressing after many crises such as earthquakes, wars and floods helps to initiate the healing process (Mutch & Latai, 2019, p. 253). The "Children's Street Project", developed by a graffiti artist with volunteers to heal children's earthquake-related fears and traumas during the earthquake in Türkiye, is one of the healing examples of art. He said that they tried to distract children from their fears by visualizing and colouring the characters (Figure 8), they would draw on the wall in their imagination (Hamit, 2023).



Figure 8 | *Murals painting by graffiti artist with children* (Copyright by Özgür Tiran)

In another region affected by the earthquake, the words of a 15-year-old high school female student at the art exhibition she opened after the earthquake with the support of her visual art teacher are another example of the healing power of art (Daily Sabah, 2023): "She expressed that art has always been her primary interest and, in the face of the earthquake and the challenges it brought, it became something she held onto."

Art as a Means of Helping Each Other: Aid Campaign for Earthquake Survivor with Exhibitions and Auctions

However, it is stated that artmaking can be used as a tool for people to heal both mentally and materially, and to rebuild a community's sense of place-making even in conditions in the ruin and despair created by disaster (Puleo, 2014). Turkish and foreign artists and visual art teachers, who wanted to provide aid to both Türkiye and some parts of Syria after the earthquake, provided financial support to the earthquake survivor by selling the artworks they produced through galleries and auctions and starting an aid campaign (Echavarria, March 2nd, 2023; Art50net, March 8th, 2023; Artsy Editorial, March 28th, 2023).

Discussion and Conclusion

Although art may seem far removed the basic needs for those struggling with the dire physical conditions created by war or natural disasters, it is stated that interventions involving arts are particularly useful in increasing the resilience of society (Huss et al, 2016, p. 286). This research has shown that the artists conveyed the earthquake and traumas that affected Türkiye and Syria in their works and became the voice of the people living there. They used art as a means of communication and wanted to empathize with the audience and remind the people who experienced this disaster that there is hope. Thus, it has once again been revealed that art can be used as a tool of intergenerational information transfer and communication (Huss et al, 2016).

In addition, in this study, it was seen that many public, private or independent institutions and organizations organized artistic activities and art studios, especially to support the psychological, cultural and social recovery of children. Art studios were also held with children who experienced the Ukrainian war, and it was reported that most children socialized more and experienced self-confidence after the art studios (Lukito et al., 2023). In the activities carried out in this research, children expressed their feelings by drawing and explained their fears and dreams with the pictures they drew and painted on the wall. It is very important for the development of children that ACEV creates a scientific, art and game-based education program with mobile art workshops, with the support of expert staff, in order to compensate for the learning losses of children in rural areas affected by the earthquake. Furthermore, it is thought that mobile art workshops are an important finding in terms of being able to produce practical solutions and ensure the continuity of activities in many crises that may occur in the future. It is very important for the development of

children that ACEV creates a scientific, art and game-based education program with mobile art studios, with the expert's support, in order to compensate for the learning losses of children in rural areas affected by the earthquake. In addition, it is thought that mobile art studios are an important finding in terms of being able to produce practical solutions and ensure the continuity of activities in many crises that may occur in the future. Because art has the potential to be a cultural, contextual and sustainable intervention for adults and children after a war or disaster (Huss et al., 2016). Earthquakes also negatively affect the social, economic and cultural aspects of the regions where they occur (Topaloğlu Uzunel, 2023). The great disaster experienced in our country has shown that the society can be supported in rebuilding their lives through aid campaigns by using the opportunities of art.

As a result, the power of art is important in mitigating the negative effects of the earthquake on people. Art can also help with psychological healing and alleviating traumatic effects. For this reason, while taking advantage of the opportunities of art, the process can be better planned, art studios can be created in many branches of art (sculpture, ceramics, painting, etc.) and artistic activities can be enriched with educational activities. The health benefits of artistic works can be observed by receiving expert support. Artists and art educators can act together and organize large-scale activities in order to make their works known by more people and to provide earthquake survivors with more support to.

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What Can Art Do? Exploring the Visual Culture of Social Justice as Studio Curriculum

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Abstract

Artists the world over are leading the global conversation in response to our extraordinary challenges and social uprisings. As artist educators, we stand at a dynamic intersection between social justice protests, vernacular visual and material culture, and the professional art world, and we have the compelling opportunity to utilize this living contemporary culture as rich and relevant curriculum for studio art classes. This article outlines a newly devised course curriculum called 'What Can Art Do?' in which art students are challenged to engage with the visualization of protest art, social justice issues and the aesthetics of antiracism. Visual culture (protest signs and props, memes, and photographs) and historic artworks (monuments, statues) have a powerful role in the global struggle for social justice as a catalyst for change and an expression of the human experience. Here, art educators can glean strategies for critical equity-driven, anti-racist pedagogy by applying James Banks' Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum (2014) to their curriculum. They will gain insights for utilizing visual culture to develop an intentional approach to cultural studies, strategies for researching diverse perspectives and authentic visual culture, and inspiration from the courage and creativity of others to demonstrate how art really can change the world.

Key Words: antiracism, art education, visual culture, multicultural, Black Lives Matter

What Can Art Do?

Exploring the Visual Culture of Social Justice as Studio Curriculum

Artists the world over are leading a global conversation in response to our current extraordinary challenges and social uprisings. The tremors and quakes of the twentieth century civil rights movements are amplified in the 2020's by upheaval that feels at times as catastrophic as breaking of the earth's crust along society's fault lines. As artist educators, we stand at a dynamic intersection between social justice protests, vernacular visual and material culture, and the educational art world. As educators, we have the compelling opportunity to utilize this living contemporary culture as rich and relevant curriculum for studio art classes.

This article will discuss a newly devised course curriculum called 'What Can Art Do?' in which art students are challenged to engage with the visualization of protest art, social justice issues and the aesthetics of antiracism. Visual culture (protest signs and props, memes, and photographs) and historic artworks (monuments, statues) have a powerful role in the global struggle for social justice as a catalyst for change and an expression of the human experience. Here, art educators can glean strategies for critical equity-driven, anti-racist pedagogy by applying James Banks' Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum (2014) with insights for utilizing visual culture to develop an intentional approach to cultural studies, strategies for researching diverse perspectives and authentic visual culture, and inspiration from the courage and creativity of others to see visual culture as a potent tool for social justice.

What can art really do to change the world? A painting cannot stop a bullet. A figurative sculpture, no matter how lifelike, cannot vote. A photograph cannot restore a glacier, feed the hungry, or protect the defenceless. Often economic and political power structures--institutions and individuals--seek to demean the importance of art, to dismiss art making as a less-than-worthwhile career or relegate artwork to mere entertainment. Fascists and totalitarian governments consistently arrest or banish artists, writers, and film makers, outlawing free speech as they ascend to power (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2023). Art is seen as a threat when even a suggestion of critical thinking is viewed as dangerous to the grip of the wealthy and powerful. The attempt to silence us acknowledges our power to influence, to inspire empathy and change minds. Therein is the power of art, and the vital influence it can have to transform society.

Inspiration

The spring of 2020 launched a season of global upheaval and suffering as the Covid19 pandemic devastated the world population and impacted every aspect of daily life. It was from our lockdown positions that we viewed the horrific murder of George Floyd on May 26, 2020 by a Minneapolis police officer who leaned his bodyweight onto Floyd's neck

until he asphyxiated and died. Floyd's last minutes on earth were recorded by a terrified teenager named Darnella Frazier who livestreamed the event, thereby creating a visual testimony that circled the world instantly. Protests in Minneapolis were supported across the United States and around the globe as thousands of people took to the streets to rally against police brutality and racial injustice.

That summer my own children were coming of age alongside my university students, and I was struck by the profound role that visual art was taking in the global conversation. With my family, I attended several rallies and Black Lives Matter marches in our area. As a White family in a radically conservative state, we believed it was vitally important to show up in person, in our White bodies, to support our neighbours of colour. We carried handmade signs and were joined by thousands of others holding posters and props expressing their personal views, demands, and messages. Floyd's last words, I Can't Breathe, were visually repeated on posters, signs, T-shirts, and chants. In such vital moments of anger and outrage, visual culture is a ready and effective tool for communication. Memes and social media messaging likewise are delivered visually.

Monuments and civic sculptures are freshly scrutinized by our contemporary generation of activists with anti-racist perspectives. Monuments to leaders of the U.S. Confederacy promote institutionalized racism. Pressure to remove such objects in the United States has been growing over the last decade and was amplified significantly in 2020 (Burnett & McDaniel, 2020). Across the world came insistent demands to take down such sculptures. In Belgium, monuments to the 19th century brute Leopold II, who ordered genocidal abuse and murders in the Congo, were splashed with red paint, burned, and torn down (Rannard & Webster, 2020). In Bristol, England, protestors knocked down a statue of a 17th century enslaver and soon replaced it with a sculpture of a Black protestor (Elfrink, 2020). In New Orleans, Louisiana, the landmark Lee Circle was centred around a tall column topped with a sculpture of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. This traffic circle is closed every Wednesday in the summer for free concerts in this community that historically invented jazz music, persistently injecting this racist heritage into the lives and minds of local residents. Included in the curriculum material for What Can Art Do? is a set of articles that provides a narrative for the protests in Lee Circle, a 2017 watershed speech by the mayor of New Orleans in support of removing this sculpture, a news article detailing its removal, and the replacement artwork for the newly named Harmony Circle.

Guiding students through this collection of resources provides a model for researching related monuments and other issues in their own cities and regions. As protests and demands for social justice and equity continue, visual and material culture is continuously utilized to challenge authority, to change minds, and to go on speaking when our collective breath is gone.

A Rich Source for Studio Art Curriculum

The dynamic role of visual art in the contemporary culture fascinates me and is highly relevant to our students. It is worthy of a prominent and relevant role in our classrooms where we can delve into the images and the events that contextualize meaning. Through this article and my website are resources for art educators to implement in their own classes, including a sample syllabus, articles, discussion guides, and studio art projects.

In our increasingly global society, artworks can have varied interpretations that change over time and inspire differing viewpoints. Implementing issues of equity and social justice includes opportunities to research and discuss visual and material culture created in response to contemporary issues on a global scale. Such living curriculum cultivates a sense of place and belonging within a cultural context (Gradle, 2007) and traces ideas across boundaries of language, distance, and culture. This list of course topics is a starting point for enhancing equity and anti-racist art curriculum:

1. Global artists addressing BlackLivesMatter, anti-racism, and other social justice issues.
2. Protest related visual and material culture (handmade signs, painted murals, props and costumes).
3. When art is protested (removal of certain images by crowds; issues of censorship).
4. Contemporary global artists (regional indigenous visualization, gender and equity).
5. Digital Dissent: new media artists, imagery, and digital visual culture.
6. How museums are addressing the BlackLivesMatter movement & other issues of diversity and representation.
7. How gallerists are addressing these issues and representing diverse artists.
8. Equity in art education (traditional cannon vs. diversity; approaching social issues through school art).
9. Biennials, Art Fairs, and the global art market in terms of diversity and equity.

As art educators, we can examine unique cultural expression while respecting authenticity, avoiding the superficial 'food and festival' risks of cultural appropriation (Kraehe & Acuff, 2013). Anti-racist and equity-driven teaching requires thoughtful research on the history of artworks, identifying named people groups, and placing specificity over generality (Andrus, 2001). Guiding students through the research process is key to developing a knowledge base about the aesthetics and messaging of any social justice issue. Learning outcomes will yield improving research skills, interpreting and critiquing contemporary artwork, and developing the ability to lead a dialogue and engage with peers about art and the aesthetics of activism. Students will investigate and analyse visual responses to global issues of race, equity, inclusion, and other social justice issues from the international art

world (museums, galleries, art fairs, biennials). And through it all, they will design and create their own compelling artwork in a visual response to issues discussed in your classes.
As we investigate cultures like and unlike ourselves, we can and should develop empathy with shared struggles, admire creative artistry, and reflect upon injustice. James Banks (2009) outlines a useful model for implementing anti-racist pedagogy with the four Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum that have rising levels of engagement: Contributions, Additive, Transformative, and Social Action (pp. 18-23).

The *Contributions Approach* is a baseline inclusion of diverse holidays and the achievements of a few well-known (non-Eurocentric) figures. In the Additive Approach curriculum has a wider range of racially or culturally diverse content, usually with a greater depth of research and reflection, but without changing the overall structure of the course. Teaching about a Black Lives Matter rally using the Additive Approach would focus on created objects of visual and material culture with some historical context as an individual supplement to a curriculum that remains primarily rooted in the Western cannon of art history and European studio practice.

The *Transformative Approach* for visual art curriculum reforms the cannon and seeks a multi-perspective pedagogy, inclusive of differing races, cultures, languages, genders, ages, time periods, and so on. Kraehe & Acuff (2021) describe such goals for anti-racist pedagogy as seeking to "tear down educational systems that maintain racial inequality and replace them with new ways of teaching and learning that support an egalitarian society, thriving communities, and education as a practice in freedom" (p. 137). This approach would investigate the rich history of protest and anti-establishment artists, including the perspectives of the marginalized and overlooked artists of the past, leading towards comparison with contemporary voices and art objects. Seeking the point of view from a variety of perspectives is key. In these examples, primary students can easily engage in the Contributions and Additive Approaches, while older elementary and secondary students (teenagers) could engage in research and critical inquiry.

Banks identifies the Social Action Approach as the most advanced and the most radical. Studying the social justice work and experiences of a particular community can become the inspiration for creating anti-racist and socially compelling artwork and taking on societal challenges. Visual culture curriculum can thus be used to "trouble the racist, biased, and exclusive ideologies perpetuated by the cannon of art history" (Farcus, 2021, p. 50). Incorporating social justice curriculum informs students and their audiences and empowers them with vital tools for visual communication of information and inspiration.

Studio Projects

Instructional goals and studio projects can be adapted to address the needs of your students, your school community, and their individual capacity for activism. Young art

students may benefit most from researching and developing art projects that raise awareness of issues. Older or adult art students may seek vivacious activism, designing props and signs to carry to rallies and marches, or developing digital designs that visually carry information and inspire change. The open access resources presented on *What Can Art Do*? are intended as a starting point for equity-driven curriculum. You will find articles, discussion guides, featured artists, and a list off additional websites, books, and articles.

Box Kites for Social Justice (Figure 1) provide an opening for students to design text and pictorial messaging on a 3-D project that taps into the vibrant aesthetic of activism. Each box kite has at least eight surfaces to fill with text and image, and the colours and materials can be selected to reinforce the desired message. They can be displayed on a tabletop or attached to a lightweight pole to carry to a rally. Those pictured here (Figures 2-3) were designed by art education preservice teachers. They collaborated to select a theme, research visual imagery and symbols, then designed and created the kites.

Umbrellas are ubiquitous, portable, and possess rich creative potential. Inspired by New Orleans parade tradition, I created an environmental awareness umbrella for a pro-science march by adding images and messaging on each of the eight sections. (Figures 4-6). Enhanced with gold fringe, I carried the umbrella in the march, lifted it in rhythm with various chants, and appreciated the shade it provided in the Texas heat. In summer of 2020, I attended a Black Lives Matter rally where the organizers painted yellow umbrellas with the names of unarmed Black people killed by Dallas and Fort Worth police. They handed these out at the march, and we carried them through the streets in a vibrant yet stark display (Figures 7-8).

Portable and visible, umbrellas and hats hold great potential as studio media. They are mass produced and usually inexpensive to obtain. Umbrellas have eight sides that can be painted or designed with a wide range of media. Messaging can be satirical or rather somber, as in the two examples presented here. It is easy to carry for public events or to display in a gallery or school hallway. Hats likewise come in a huge range of materials and designs that can be creatively manipulated.

Conclusion

Rebecca Solnit advocates for hope as an incentive to get up and continue the struggle towards equity, climate recovery, and global justice. In Hope in the Dark (2016), she connections the capacity to imagine a better future with the inspiration to work to bring it to fruition:

> Hope is not like a lottery ticket you can sit on the sofa and clutch, feeling lucky…hope is an ax you break down the doors with in an emergency; because hope should shove you out the door, because it will take everything you have to steer the future away from endless war, from the annihilation of the earth's treasures and the

grinding down of the poor and marginal. Hope means another world might be possible, not promised, not guaranteed. Hope calls for action." (p. 4)

As artist educators, we have the honour and obligation to equip our students with the uniquely visual tools of art making to process distress, address personal and global challenges, and construct their most compelling messages. The fault lines of injustice will continue to give way to the pressures of hope in the unsteady terra of human society. Visual art is a uniquely powerful tool for building resilience in challenging times, for art can deliver far more than a thousand words. Art informs, inspires empathy, cultivates compassion, and energizes us in the fight for equity and peace.

Figures

All image ©Lucy Bartholomee



Figure 1 | *Immigration rights themed box kite. Student work from the University of Texas at Arlington, Texas, USA* (2023)



Figure 2 | *Women's rights themed box kite. Student work from the University of Texas at Arlington, Texas, USA* (2023)



Figure 3 | *Banned books themed box kite. Student work from the University of Texas at Arlington, Texas, USA* (2023)



Figure 4 | *Umbrella designed with anti-global warming messaging for pro-science march, Dallas, Texas, USA* (2018)



Figure 5 | *Umbrella designed with anti-global warming messaging for pro-science march, Dallas, Texas, USA* (2018)



Figure 6 | *Umbrella designed with anti-global warming messaging for pro-science march, Dallas, Texas USA* (2018)



Figure 7 | *Black Lives Matter protest (2020): Yellow umbrellas painted with the names of unarmed Black residents killed by police in the North Texas region* (USA)



Figure 8 | *Black Lives Matter protest (2020): Yellow umbrellas painted with the names of unarmed Black residents killed by police in the North Texas region (USA)*

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CSEA/ SCÉA: Transversive Provocations through Service

Jennifer Wicks | Université Du Québec (Canada)
Peter Vietgen | Brock University (Canada)
Joanne M. Ursino | University of British Columbia (Canada)
Kathy Mantas | Nipissing University (Canada)

Abstract

The field of education has faced significant challenges in the past few years - with constant shifting back and forth as we adapted to difficult times. We offer on behalf of the Canadian Society for Education through Art/ Société canadienne d'éducation par l'art, an iterative reflection of CSEA/SCÉA's service in moments of vulnerability and uncertainty. Through service, we support art educators and extended communities in Canada and globally, in the struggle for social justice and equity. The visual arts are implicit in and expressive of culture. Engagement in the visual arts has the power to transform who we are individually and collectively. CSEA/SCÉA believes students, artists, researchers, and teachers must engage in visual arts conceptually, analytically, critically, reflectively, historically, culturally and creatively. In moments of division and vulnerability, words are not enough. As educators, we hold the imperative to address issues of concern in our communities. Learning and unlearning are catalysts for change. In solidarity, through art and education, we contribute to generative and generous possibilities for change in creating a better world. This presentation offers a myriad of visual and social projects created by the CSEA/ SCÉA from 2020-2023 that fosters efforts to unify members across social fault lines.

Keywords: provocations, social justice, COVID-19, community building, art education in Canada

CSEA/ SCÉA: Transversive Provocations through Service

The field of education has faced significant challenges in the past few years - with constant shifting back and forth as we adapted to difficult times. We make this offering on behalf of the Canadian Society for Education through Art / Société canadienne d'éducation par l'art.

As an iterative reflection of CSEA/ SCÉA's service in moments of vulnerability and uncertainty. Through service, we support art educators and extended communities in Canada and globally, in the struggle for social justice and equity.

The visual arts are implicit in and expressive of culture. Engagement in the visual arts has the power to transform who we are individually and collectively. CSEA/ SCÉA believes students, artists, researchers, and teachers must engage in visual arts conceptually, analytically, critically, reflectively, historically, culturally and creatively. In moments of division and vulnerability, words are not enough. As educators, we hold the imperative to address issues of concern in our communities. Learning and unlearning are catalysts for change. In solidarity, through art and education, we contribute to generative and generous possibilities for change in creating a better world.

This paper offers a myriad of visual and social projects created by the CSEA/ SCÉA from March 2020 to March 2023 and beyond - that fosters efforts to unify members across social fault lines. This includes the online juried exhibition *Navigating & Creating* as well as *Start with the Seed*, a professional development workshop for educators on Indigenizing their art curriculum and, our online conference - *Encounters: Art Education, Social Justice, and Democracy*.

On May 25th, 2020, George Floyd was killed by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In response to this brutality and the community grief that was exasperated by this horrific event and compounded with the injustices and struggle felt throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the CSEA/SCÉA felt the need to reach out and support its members and the larger art education community. Below are the communication and resources that we shared, along with an invitation for additional resources and responses to this troubling event.

> **June 9, 2020**
>
> Dear CSEA/SCEA members and supporters,
>
> On behalf of the Canadian Society for Education through Art / Société canadienne d'éducation par l'art, we would like to express our desire and commitment to supporting art educators, and extended communities, both here in Canada and abroad, in the struggle for social and racial justice and equity.
>
> The current pandemic has illustrated how deeply connected we are as human beings. Recent atrocities committed by the police in the United States and Canada have intensified the unbalanced damage Covid-19 has explicitly had on communities of colour; amplifying already existing hardship and losses. We are saddened and angry. Our compassion and support are with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) communities across the world.

At this moment, words are not enough. Our anger and sadness must give way to action. As educators, we hold the responsibility to address the current crisis, in our homes and classrooms, as well as in our communities. For those of us who are white and have privilege, we must practice self-reflection, and educate ourselves in order that we can begin to understand and participate in the advancement of racial justice. Learning and unlearning are a catalyst for change, and we can play a valuable part in the shift underway.

As a show of support, we've begun to compile a list of resources for learning about race and social justice and connecting with your students about these important issues through art, which can be found at the following link on our website: https://csea-scea.ca/talking-with-students-about-race-and-social-justice-through-art/. Please feel free to share this link with your colleagues and communities, and if you know of links to resources you would like to see added to the list, please send them to office.csea@gmail.com.

The time for action is now. If any of you have engaged in research or published around the area of art education and social justice, or art education and anti-racism, please e-mail us a link to your paper or chapter (to office.csea@gmail.com) and we will post it on our website alongside the resources being gathered. Through art and education, we will impact positive change.

In solidarity,

The Executive of the CSEA/SCÉA 2020: Naheed Gul Ali, Joanna Black, Adrienne Boulton, Agnieszka Chalas, Miriam Cooley, Mary Ann Dobson, Mary-Jane Emme, Sandrine Han, April Mandrona, Peter Vietgen, Boyd White and Jennifer Wicks.

On June 4, 2021, Canadians and the world bore witness to the mass graves of 250 children buried at the Kamloops Indian Residential School - as time goes on, more and more of these sites have been unveiled across the country. The CSEA/ SCÉA was moved to connect to members and respond to these traumatic events in our collective history. The executive committee drafted the following Statement on Anti-Racism and Art Education:

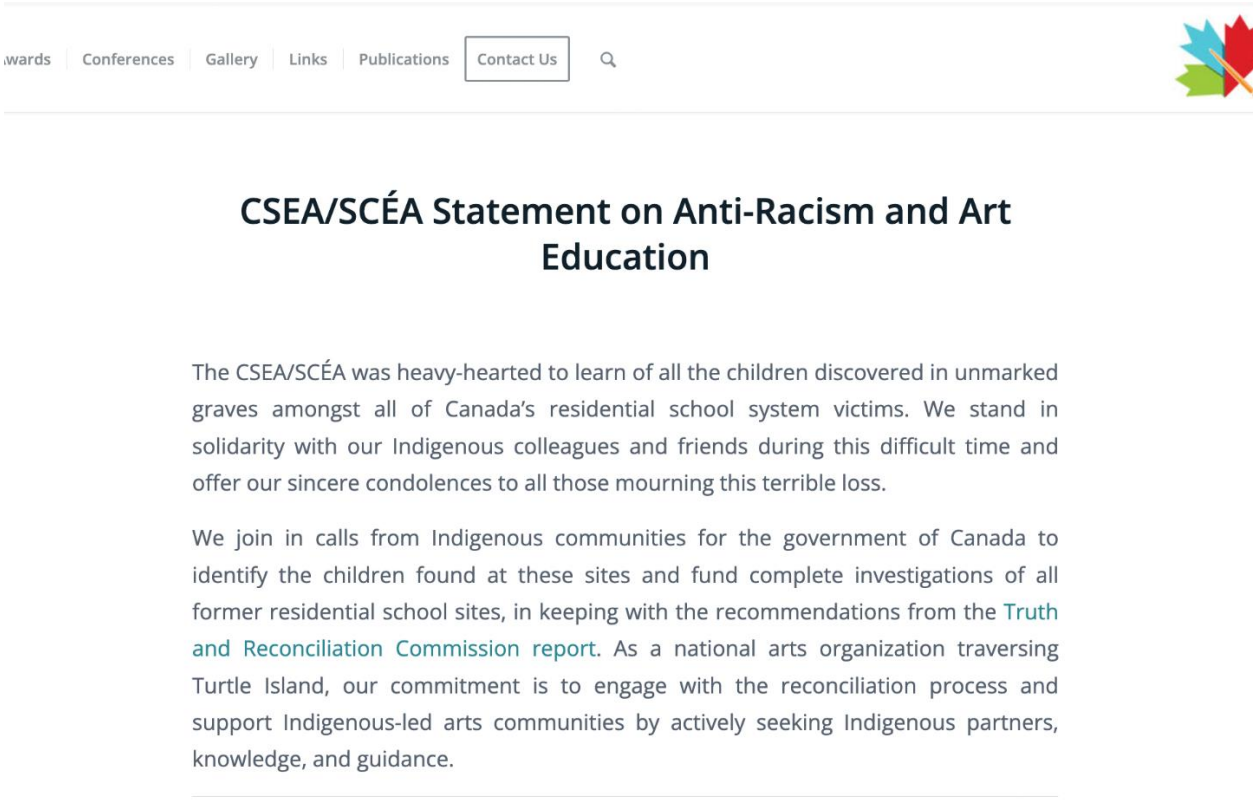


Figure 1 | CSEA/ SCÉA *statement on anti-racism and art education* (CSEA/ SCÉA, 2021)

From Communications into Actions

Following the Statement on Anti-Racism and Art Education, the executive unanimously recognized the absence of Indigenous voices at the decision-making table in our community and moved to create a new position on the CSEA/ SCÉA executive board. In concert with our Indigenous colleagues, the Director of Indigenous Culture position was introduced with the position description found below.

CSEA/ SCÉA Indigenous Executive Position Description

- serves in an advisory role to the CSEA-SCÉA Executive pertaining to Art Education and Indigenous issues
- assists the CSEA-SCÉA Executive as required (i.e., participate in partnerships in various initiatives)
- takes on projects relating to Indigenous Art Education and/or in partnership with other CSEA-SCEA Executive members and the CSEA-SCÉA membership at large
- assists Directors of other portfolios as required walking side-by-side in respectful partnership with one another
- expand on the portfolio of Indigenous matters
- working with the CSEA-SCÉA Executive and the CSEA-SCÉA membership at large to address the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action (2015), specifically pertaining to education (# 62, #63)

With continued global turbulence, the CSEA/ SCÉA embarked on a series of National Conversations that invited the sharing and debate of topics directly affecting the art education community. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, these conversations were held online. This initiative not only helped us confer and consolidate our shared understandings but also gave us a moment to connect since we had been separated from our colleagues for over a year. The first National Conversation was held on Canada's first anniversary of the COVID-19 shutdowns.



Figure 2 | CSEA/SCÉA *national conversations: Possible dreams of art education, social justice and democracy* (CSEA/ SCÉA, 2021)

Following the National Conversations the CSEA/ SCÉA continued to support our community by presenting a series of online workshops and creating an online art exhibition. Below is an example of one workshop that involved participants exploring how to Indigenize their art curriculum.

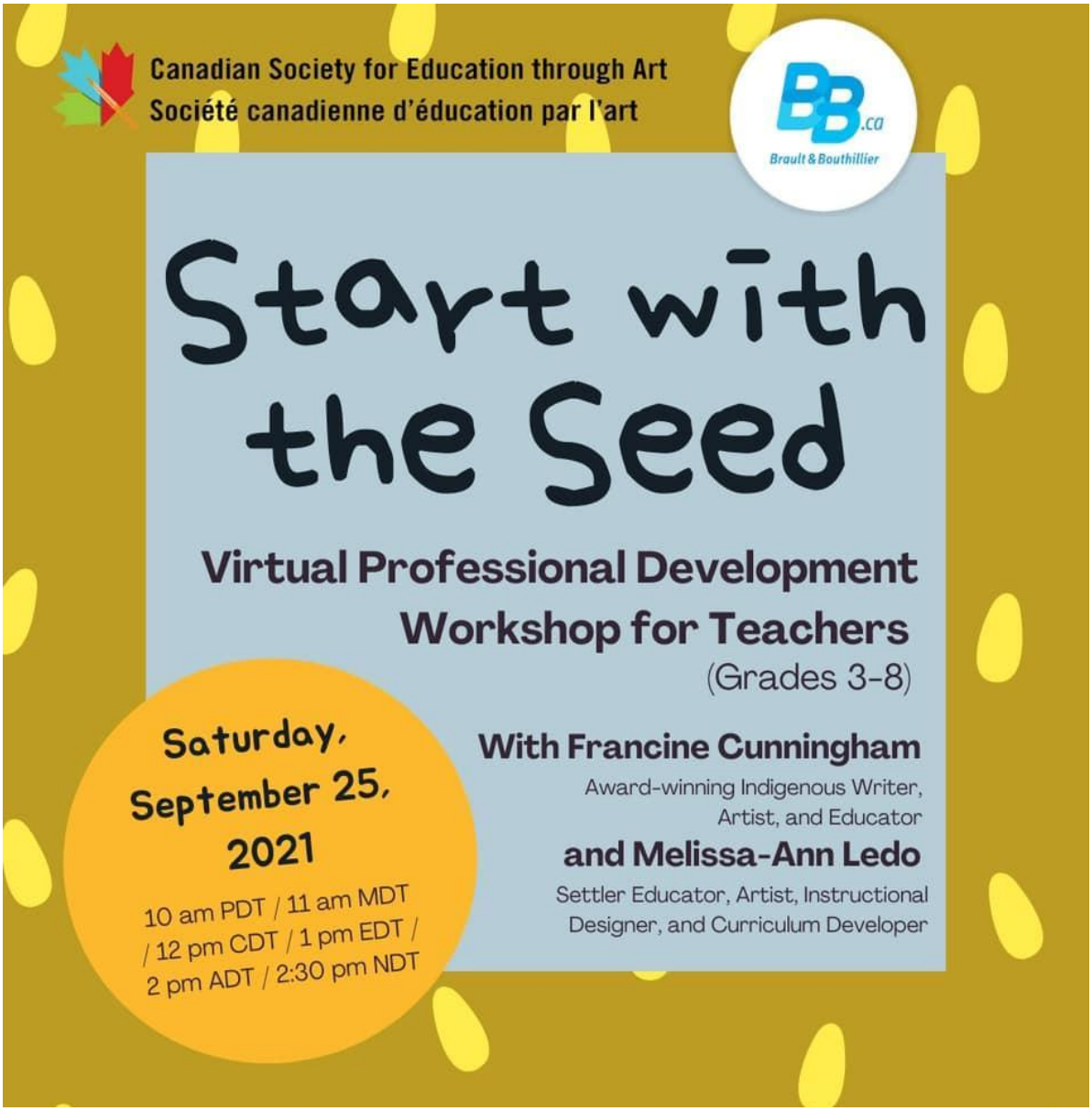


Figure 3 | CSEA/ SCÉA: *Virtual Professional Development Workshop* (CSEA/ SCÉA, 2021)

This (sold-out!) workshop assisted educators to begin their journey on Indigenizing their art curriculum in the elementary grades and was delivered by Francine Cunningham, an award-winning Indigenous writer, artist, and educator, and facilitated by Melissa-Ann Ledo, settler educator, artist, instructional designer and curriculum developer. Many thanks to Vice-President Dr. Julie Etheridge for organizing this event and to our workshop sponsor, B&B, who provided the materials for the workshop.

July 2021

The CSEA/ SCÉA sought to provide a forum for our members to share their creative endeavours as they processed and navigated the continued isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic. We put a call out for a national juried virtual exhibition and were thrilled to receive many submissions. The call can be found below.

> The Canadian Society for Education through Art (CSEA/ SCÉA) would like to invite you to join us in a **Juried Virtual Exhibition** this July 2021. During this global pandemic, arts have been a key factor in connecting communities. This exhibition will look at how the global pandemic impacted our lives, sense of self, values, experiences with isolation, or incited new experiences. The call invites members of all artistic backgrounds to submit work shaped and created during the past 12 months. This online exhibition will be hosted on the CSEA/ SCÉA website from July until October and shared on our social media platforms.

Artists were asked to send in a photographic image/video of their piece(s). Jurors included executive members from the CSEA/ SCÉA as well as from provincial associations. The competition was open to artists, teachers, educators, and graduate students who were members of the CSEA/ SCÉA. The intention was to bring our Canadian Art Education community together and share our experiences and our anticipation for the future.

> **Call for artworks: Juried Visual Exhibition**
>
> **Who:** The competition is open to artists, teachers, educators, and graduate students. [All participants entering the juried exhibition must be CSEA/ SCÉA members at the time of submission.]
>
> **Artworks:** The competition welcomes all media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, applied arts, printmaking, textiles, video, digital art, and installation art. Each participant may enter up to three artworks and must include a 120-word (max) artist statement.
>
> **When:** Open now until **May 1, 2021**
>
> **What to submit:** Digital images (JPEGs - min 300 DPI) or video files (web links)
>
> **How:** Complete the form

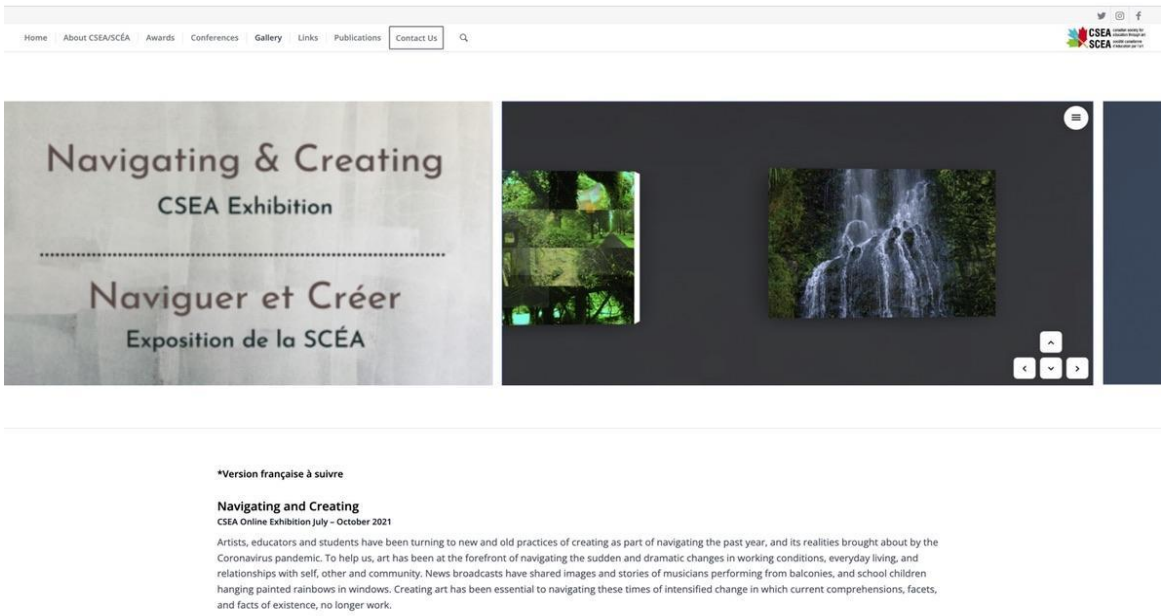


Figure 4 | CSEA/ SCÉA: *Navigating and Creating, exhibition statement by Valerie Triggs.* (CSEA/SCÉA, 2021)

Waterfalls, bark, mountains and tree roots seem to have something to teach us about adversity. There is an awareness that humans are not the only ones on the planet and perhaps we are, after all, the slowest learners of change. Attuning to nature's creative processes and the resilience of other species in the midst of adversity and harsh environments is important in terms of pressing on with courage and determination. There is new mapping of relations with lakes and trees, gutted cars and wrecks, in ways that teach humans something about reacting to internal and external stresses and about exchanging experience and knowledge across social domains. The mapping encourages more thoughtful social accountability. Creative navigating seems to harbour its own realities in the artmaking so that becoming familiar with oneself in one's place and time is to navigate oneself into becoming part of it. This exhibition was offered online and later documented in the CSEA/ SCÉA journal, *Canadian Review of Art Education* (2022). We are grateful to Dr. Julie Etheridge for curating this exhibition, Dr. Valerie Triggs for the curatorial statement and, to all the CSEA/SCÉA members who offered their artwork.

The summation of our National Conversations (alongside the online workshops and art exhibition) resulted in the development of an online conference held in November 2021. *Encounters: Art Education, Social Justice, and Democracy*. This conference provided a forum for artists and educators to gather and connect. The structure of the forum can be found below.

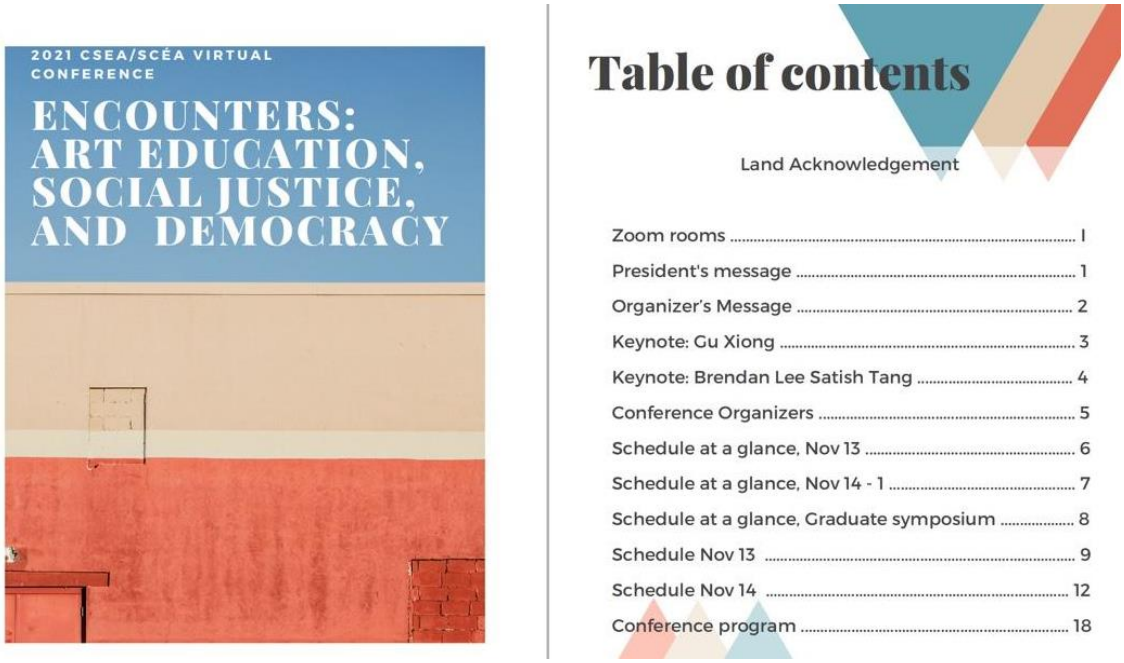


Figure 5 | CSEA/SCÉA: *encounters: art education, social justice and democracy* (CSEA/SCÉA, 2021)

Emergence 2022

As the COVID-19 restrictions for gathering drew to a close, CSEA/ SCÉA resumed its partnership with the Ontario Art Education Association (OAEA) and planning began in earnest for our first in-person conference in recent years. There were many highlights of this co-hosted conference. Most notable were the diverse, inspiring and thought-provoking speakers that anchored the Program alongside interesting workshops, plenaries and the 2022 CSEA/SCÉA Graduate Symposium.

Ekow Nimako was the keynote speaker. Ekow is a Toronto-based, internationally exhibiting LEGO® artist who crafts futuristic and whimsical sculptures from the iconic medium. Rooted in his childhood hobby and intrinsic creativity, Nimako's formal arts education and background as a lifelong multidisciplinary artist inform his process and signature aesthetic. His fluid building style, coupled with the Afrofuturistic themes of his work, beautifully transcend the geometric medium to embody organic and fantastical silhouettes (see: https://www.ekownimako.com/). Cara Tierney (they/them) is a transdisciplinary artist, PhD candidate and part-time professor, curator and consultant (see: https://www.caratierney.com/). Cara opened the conference, where the piece *They* (2019), was on permanent display at the Ottawa Art Gallery. The conference concluded with Don Kwan, whose exhibition *Landscape, Loss and Legacy* (2022-2023), was on display at the Ottawa Art Gallery. Kwan is a queer third-generation Chinese-Canadian artist, whose work and his presentation at the conference explored place, identity, representation and family memory across time and, of particular note during COVID-19 (see: https://www.donkwanart.com/). Collectively, the conference speakers cut across themes,

issues identities and came to embody in text and art alongside the provocations of emergence and the visceral implications and power of art education.



Figure 6 | CSEA/ SCÉA: *Emergence conference* social media posts (CSEA/ SCÉA and OAEA, 2022)

In recent correspondence with our members, we turned our thoughts to the extreme weather conditions that many in Canada were facing, most notably as a result of forest fires and floods. Below, is the letter marking the return to classes in September 2023. In this correspondence we acknowledge the importance of holding students and teachers as well as their communities in a caring way and, acknowledge that art education has a place in assisting those impacted by loss and tragedy. We offer excerpt of the text of the correspondence (CSEA SCÉA, 2023) here:

> As this moment unfolds with students who are able to return to school, students who experience some disruption, are displaced and, those who are experiencing profound loss – we recognize that students in particular will look to their teachers for support and guidance as they attempt to make sense of the events of Summer 2023. Language alongside visual art is important and students will be grappling in their efforts to story this moment in our history.
>
> …In relying on the power of art and art education in these difficult moments, we can connect, learn through, and share in creative practices with each other. In the days ahead, artful experiences may impart tangible and meaningful opportunities for reflection and nurturance. At the heart of this is a deep and abiding respect for Indigenous knowledges and the land, as well as our collective gratitude for the first responders and wildfire personnel…

Conclusion

At the conclusion of this offering, we invite others to grapple with these questions as we continue to do so. Both as individuals and in community in art education. We are grateful for the opportunity that InSEA continues to provide for us to share our work and commitment to advancing art education.

- How are other art educators engaging with their membership in difficult times?
- What fault lines are you transversing?
- How does the InSEA theme resonate with the work you are undertaking in your respective communities?

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The Defining Contours of Performing Arts in Pakistan: A Post-Modernist Perspective

Sana Noor | Nightingale Arts (Pakistan)

Abstract

Dynamic creative industries are tools for inclusive economic and social development, creating jobs, improving skills, reducing inequalities, and improving quality of life and well-being. In this increasingly globalized world, Pakistan possesses a unique opportunity thanks to both its established and emerging creative sectors. Among other sectors, performing arts has undergone many highs and lows. The performing arts industry in Pakistan has enormous potential, but the regulatory environment in which it operates has to better reflect the sector's requirements. However, the current arrangements do not give this sector the flexibility, it requires realizing the potential. The legal framework which governs issues like structure, tax, copyright, and host of others, does not accurately reflect the reality of these businesses; as a result, it runs the risk of becoming a story of missed opportunities, when it could actually be a win-win situation for both economic and social development. This sector requires a postmodernist approach to bring about the necessary change, where more individualized and diverse approach addresses the problem of redundant themes in execution of a story. The offer of more choices of subjects, learning pathways to learners, more hyper real and certain credibility to metanarratives, solves the problem of restrictive environment of performing arts. The continuation of flexibility and freedom to every individual to explore their own learning path which culminates at a common goal is a path which contributes to the better contours of performing arts in Pakistan.

Keywords**:** performing arts, contours, post-modernism, social and economic development

The Defining Contours of Performing Arts in Pakistan: A Post Modernist Perspective

The most important challenge for developing countries is social and economic inclusion. In this regard creative industries hold a strategic position and can be positioned as contributor of job creation, increased competitiveness and to generate economic activity. Creative industries can be enhanced, starting from domestic level where micro enterprises have consistent access to resources and distribution channels. Most importantly, copyright and intellectual property rights, in developing countries, are not mandated to an extent which is necessary to protect creative property. The laws have to be enforced for the complete financial benefit of the creator. Not only this global creative market is expanding technologically, and the rapid evolution has put much pressure on the creator from the developing world. This rapid evolution has created multi-dimensional opportunities for the creative individuals, but it is of no use if the creators do not have access to such technology or cannot receive payments (royalties or other) for their creations. Until the real barriers to growth in creative sector are not identified the boost in economy will not be experienced.

There is no doubt that Pakistan's creative sector is based on rich and diverse artistic heritage. Visual arts and crafts, books and press, performance, audio-visual and interactive media, and design and creative services are all well represented nationally and provincially but are not represented as one Pakistani brand. The individual efforts on provincial and national level are noticeable but these efforts are not coordinated and centralized. Similar to many developing countries the urban centres of Pakistan are main activity hub for creative activities. On the other hand, rural areas are adding value to creative sector with their unique literary, musical and performance activities. In both cases it is the youth who is at the receiving end for benefits of the creative endeavours. The woman representation in creative sector is through crafts and designing, and also in script writing, acting and modelling. The woman representation in performing arts sector requires attention. Despite technological advancement in urban areas, wider sections are yet to be engaged, most importantly creative individuals from rural areas.

Performing Arts in Pakistan

South Asia has been a culturally rich region for the origin of performing arts. It can be traced all the way back to third century BC. In the subcontinent, initially performing arts were dominated by tales from Hinduism and were mostly written in Sanskrit. However, it also continued to develop with the themes related to the customs and creative articulation of the Subcontinent. In the 19th century, dramas in Urdu language also rose to prominence (Baig, 2020).

The local theatre scene of Subcontinent underwent change, when East India Company brought British themes, ideology, culture and literature to subcontinent. Where

other sectors of subcontinent were influenced, the theatre industry was also not an exception (Baig, 2020). After the end of British rule, Pakistan was left with two different forms of theatre: one which relied on English adaptations made to be performed for the crowd from the upper class at art councils and the other which offered local content for the masses in the form of slapstick comedies. With the changing times, the theatre evolved into a medium of entertainment and protest. The changing political situation in the country changed the themes of the theatre and a new zenith was observed in the theatre growth. Theatre amassed literate class of society and much meaningful commentary, regarding a change in Pakistan, was disseminated through theatre. Karachi and Lahore became the hub of stage dramas, and Tehreek Niswan and Ajoka Theatre emerged as a new kind of protest theatre (Mundrawala, 2009). In addition to these a more improvised form of theatre emerged; the 'Rafi Peer Theatre' which covered almost every part of creative industry, for example puppets, music, dance, theatre and film. They were youth oriented and amassed a popularity among educated class (Taylor et al., 2014). Recently 'Kopy Kats' are renowned for their commentary on the current social and political issues especially the use of satirical humour adds a value for easy comprehension (Ahmed, 2016).

Pakistan's music industry has thrived and is thriving despite all the detrimental affects of socio-economic and political problems. The music industry in Pakistan is rich with folk songs and contemporary songs. Despite this distinctive grouping the music industry has produced a number of songs comprised of folk themes and contemporary themes, which have been popular not only in Pakistan but have been critically acclaimed across the globe. The Pakistani music can be broadly divided into: folk groups, pop bands, solo singers and play back singers. It is important to note that film and drama industry of Pakistan do not have separate mechanism to hire play back singers they are mostly the individuals from each group, who have acquired popularity over the years. The influence of Indian music to an extent affected the growth of Pakistani music however it grew side by side the Indian music. Atif Aslam and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan not only brought boost to music industry in Pakistan they benefited Indian music industry with their powerful voices and impactful poetry (Tribune, 2019).

Primarily Pakistan's dance sector is defined by folk dance. Folk dances can be found in rural settings and occasionally they are showcased in urban cultural festivals. These dances are depiction of their regional, social and cultural identity. The Pashtun community's Khattak dance, the Kalash community's dance, the Sindhi community's fishermen dance, Bhangrā and Jhoomar from Punjab, are the few dance forms (Hemani, 2011). Pakistan choreographed folk dances on the art scene to establish the identity of Pakistan as a cultural hub or for cultural diplomacy. As part of state's national interest, dance enjoyed a pseudo boom, but it flattened in the absence of specific framework and policy (Hemani, 2011).

Contours of Performing Arts in Pakistan

Structure

Performing Arts in Pakistan faces the challenge of fragmentation. Fragmentation in the performing arts sector in Pakistan manifests in various ways, and it ranges from lack of coordination, regional disparities, limited government support and lack of education and training. The landscape of performing arts operates with an approach of individualism where limited collaboration and coordination between different performing arts organizations and artists has led to distorted efforts to bring about necessary change in this sector. Disparities in resources and opportunities between urban and rural areas have resulted in uneven development of the performing arts. Not only this, the inconsistent government support in promoting digital literacy has resulted in failed cohesive marketing strategies and has become challenging for performing arts to reach wider audience.

Copyrights

It has been discussed that modern day entrepreneurship shoots out of forming a business on the basis of creative idea, a plan of execution which ends on social and cultural activity for economic benefits (Shumpeter, 1934). The modern entrepreneurship based on creativity requires that it is legally protected. The system of copyrights and intellectual protection has become more complex in the current globalised world, where impact of social media and digitization has enabled many to remake and reuse content of others. The situation becomes worse in underdeveloped countries where weak economic and social vulnerabilities do not allow prioritizing creative industry. Pakistan is facing the same challenge, although the Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPO) provides the legal framework for the creative industry. The expression of ideas has not gained much significance in Pakistan. The musicians and producers have been vulnerable to infringements, despite the presence of legislations and institutions for protection and regulatory measures. The situation is generating lack of economic activity within the music industry (Music Copyrights in Pakistan, 2022).

Acceptability

Pakistan's national banking system, investment and financial sector have no clear policy for the performing arts. Accelerating investment in the performing arts will help convert them into one of the most impactful economic sectors for Pakistan, keeping in view the urgent need of creating jobs. Pakistan has two distinct features: it is home to the youngest population and its economy remains partially informal. The reliance of Pakistan on traditional economic structure has undermined the importance of performing arts in generating revenue at micro and macro level. On the other hand, religious and social unacceptability for the performing arts has not allowed this sector to flourish. The creative individuals either adopt other career paths or adopt universal story lines narrated in local

contexts and are catapulted to global success due to social media. The lack of coordinated efforts makes it extremely difficult to bring innovative investment and policy. The operational environment of current structure of performing arts has not enabled young people to utilize it for the projection of their talent.

Post-Modernism and Performing Arts of Pakistan

Auslander (2004) has described post modernism related to performing arts in three ways a "periodizing concept, a way of describing the contemporary culture where performance occur, and a stylistic descriptor" (p.98). A post-modernist approach reflects that characters are made up of fragments, where probability of words and actions contributing to a psychologically consistent entity is highly unlikely (Shepard, 1976). The post modernism opens doors to think and analyse beyond the established realties and narratives. Performing Arts in Pakistan has become stagnant and is revolving around the conditioned situation which is not reflective of the real world. The post modernism treatment to performing arts in Pakistan is not limited to merely understanding the evolution or describing its operational environment it is to develop another narrative which is conducive of the current themes or realities. For instance, it is pertinent to think and develop a framework for the inclusion of performing arts in traditional economic structure. The analysis of might in the United States of America indicates that major economic benefits have been derived from the creative industry and performing arts is one of them. (Khan et al., 2019) Table 1 shows a definitional explanation of postmodernist approach to performing arts sector in Pakistan.

Table 1 | *Explanation of a post-modernist perspective*

Theory	**Practice**
Individualized and Diverse Approaches	• Profile • Brand Identity
More Choice of Subjects	• Technological Infrastructure • Digital platforms
Learning pathways for learners	• Career entry points • Development
Theory	**Practice**
Hyper real and credibility to meta narratives	• Business Environment • Business Startups
Flexibility and Freedom	• Skills and Talent • Finance and Growth • Investment

Individualized and Diverse Approaches: Profile and Brand Identity

The individualized and diverse approaches indicate having a unique brand identity or profile for Pakistan's creative sector. The individualism, here, is being used as a reference to a certain group of creative arts and for this analysis it is Performing arts. Pakistan does not possess an international brand identity or profile for its performing arts, despite some success in securing international contracts in music. Some activities such as theatre and dance have little international cultural visibility and recognition. In national market music and theatre have a public recognition but it does not extend to the broader scope of creative industries. The brand identity of Pakistan's talent can be established by not going for short term quick money; it can be achieved through long term investment brand building.

More Choices of Subjects: Technological Infrastructure and Digital Platforms

The advent of 3G and 4G has provided access to a digital world to large part of population in Pakistan. The true usage of this technology can enhance performing arts sector through online distribution and streaming. The online presence will enable performing arts organizations to reach global audience and will increase the flexibility for audience who may not able to attend physical events. During the Covid-19 the importance of digital platforms became more prominent. The theatre actors can have online rehearsing sessions whenever there is a challenge of mobility and any restriction. Digital platforms generate data that can be analysed to understand audience preferences, behaviour, and demographics. This information can inform programming decisions, marketing strategies, and overall organizational planning. Blockchain technology can be employed to ensure transparent and fair compensation for artists by tracking and automating royalty payments, protecting intellectual property rights.

Learning Pathways for Learners: Career Entry-Points and Development

There are a limited number of conduits for entry in performing arts. Family history and connections are the most reliable source of career entry. This holds true regardless of financial standing or level of education. When a person with no family connection wants to work in the creative industries, their parents and family may be concerned and are not forthcoming (Afzal., et al, 2020). Entry into music industry and theatre is relatively easy as compared to dance. The performing arts are not a popular career choice in Pakistan due to the country's conservative national culture. This is more challenging for those who have pursued higher level of education. Few career entry points mean there is less acceptability in society, less acceptability means less pressure on Government to formulate a national policy for this sector. It signifies the importance of developing new learning pathways, for the government and people, by the organization working in creative sector. The international acceptability can be suitable solution for generating funding and for emerging artists and providing low-cost rehearsing spaces for the performers.

Hyper Real and Credibility to Meta Narratives: *Business Environment and Business Start-Up*

Organisations in all areas of the performing arts continue to operate independently despite the emergence of a small number of platforms for cooperation and mutual support. Mostly cautious; collaboration and engagements are not viewed as chances to a fruitful outcome. In a similar way, there were few examples of cooperation with the larger Pakistani diaspora settled abroad. The sector's activities and success in often celebrated without any culture of sharing. The issues of trust, unprofessional business practices, pilfering of intellectual property and unreliability in financial dealing is affecting the business environment. There is a strong sense of vision but most of the time the unavailability of skill set, or networking required, to fulfil the aspiration, results in failure. Pakistani higher education is traditionally focused on the degrees in natural sciences and humanities and fashion designing, apart from that there are only few best opportunities to develop the entrepreneurial skill for successful creative entrepreneurship. In the absence of full mechanism learners are only left with trial and error. The craft sector has some presence of active national business support and successful development networks, but it has yet to extend into other areas of the performing arts. Additionally, there are worldwide business networks that cater specifically to young entrepreneurs; however, these networks are not currently structured or specifically linked to the creative industries (Taylor., et al, 2014).

Flexibility and Freedom

Skills and Talent

There is a notable deficiency and underdevelopment of professional arts and cultural operations expertise in the sector of performing arts. Even though global cultural institutions like the British Council and the Goethe Institute have worked to increase capacity (Taylor., et al, 2014), there is still a severe lack of resources in a number of key areas, including financing, networking, audience development, human resources, fundraising, and communications. There are gaps in teamwork, marketing, customer relationship management, finance and investment expertise, and finance within the commercial creative sectors. The essential creative abilities like screenplay and scriptwriting are underrepresented in the performing arts, cinema, and television. The long-term sustainability of some artisan skills is a question mark, given that younger generations are pursuing other options. However, there are encouraging instances of postsecondary education programs offered in certain creative skill areas, visual arts, fashion design, and performance. The scale of these courses is very small, and there are not so many higher-quality training and education possibilities due to capacity constraints.

Financial Contribution

Comprehensive financial statistics for creative services within Pakistan are lacking. The fragmented and outdated data that is currently available suggests that between 2003

and 2008, Pakistan's share of the total value of the creative exports from emerging markets decreased. Pakistan's export value increased at a rate of about 5% annually throughout this time, compared to the 10% annual growth that emerging nations experienced on average (Taylor., et al, 2014). The national investment, banking, and financial sector in Pakistan are not well-informed about the creative industries. The notion held by the creative community is reinforced by the belief that Pakistan's public policymakers do not fully understand the prospects of the creative industries. However, there's a rising belief that investors in the private sector are willing to look at potential for investments in film and new media, where large scale funding in performing arts remains negligible. The international donor community makes major contributions to the arts and cultural infrastructure, which is also not enough to cater to the needs of this sector until there is some national investment or policy in these areas (Taylor., et al, 2014). Although there are tiny and micro investment programs that are publicly underwritten, they are not yet structurally associated with the performing arts.

Conclusion

Creative sector of Pakistan, generally and performing arts specifically, require rejection of grand narratives, overarching narratives or metanarratives. Instead of adhering to a single, authoritative storyline or ideology, postmodern performing arts must embrace fragmentation and multiple perspectives. This rejection of a single dominant narrative allows for a more decentralized, diverse, and inclusive representation of stories and experiences. Performing arts should manifest intertextuality, where different texts, symbols, or performance traditions are brought together in a collage-like manner. The mixing of high and low culture, as well as the incorporation of popular culture references, is the answer to many challenges in Pakistan. The interdisciplinary approaches can increase the growth and networking in this sector. It can be collaboration between artists from different disciplines, such as dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, blurring the boundaries between art forms. This sector can be dynamic through the meaningful contribution from the art organizations and art friendly policies from government. Pakistani universities can offer more degrees in performing arts only if the industry is well structured and has career opportunities. Better business environment, flexibility and new pathways for learning can directly contribute to the economic betterment of Pakistan.

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Community Revitalization through Art Education: Innovation in Taiwan's Damaopu Art Village

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Abstract

As a local entrepreneurial design, the case of establishing the "Damaopu Art Village" in the century-old Hakka settlement "Damaopu" demonstrates the potential of regional revitalisation through community art. Unlike other art villages that rely on recruiting resident artists, the founders of Damaopu Art Village are all local artists who transformed a dilapidated old house into a vibrant art space called "Inmoon House". By developing a cultural economy based on aesthetic experience, Inmoon House has ignited a glimmer of hope for the future of the remote Hakka village. The startup model of Inmoon House has also inspired other entrepreneurs to open similar shops, gradually causing positive changes in the region. This case study demonstrates the transformative power of art in revitalizing rural communities and preserving Hakka culture.

Keywords: community art education, cultural economy, cultural innovation, local entrepreneurial design, regional revitalization.

Community Revitalization through Art Education

The Damaopu Art Village, established in a century-old Hakka settlement, exemplifies Hitoshi Kinoshita's principle that a single shop can revitalise an area (Kinoshita, 2015). Unlike other art villages that rely on external artists, the Damaopu Art Village was founded by local artists who renovated a dilapidated old house, transforming it into "Inmoon House", a hub for community art education.

Despite its historical significance, the lack of catering and accommodation limits tourism and local economic growth. Inmoon House addresses this issue by providing aesthetic experiences, though its initial success was met with scepticism from locals who viewed art as superfluous. However, Inmoon House's unique style has attracted tourists and generated positive word-of-mouth, prompting Hakka residents to acknowledge the economic value of art and its potential to improve their livelihoods. This has ignited hope for the future of the remote Hakka village.

Following Inmoon House's success, the team has guided aspiring entrepreneurs to open similar businesses, aiming to gradually transform the region. By attracting tourists, these businesses can restore pride among Hakka youth and encourage them to return to their hometown to start businesses, revitalising the community.

Background Information

Masuda (2014) identified 896 Japanese locations at risk of extinction. Inspired by Masuda's "Local Extinction Theory," Abe launched the "Three Arrows for Regional Revitalisation" upon becoming Prime Minister, declaring 2015 the "first year of regional revitalisation." Taiwan, facing similar threats, designated 2019 as its "first year of regional revitalisation."

"Regional Revitalisation" aims to address population decline. Towns with job opportunities attract residents. Thus, key performance indicators focus on local employment creation and relocation. In areas affected by population shocks, collaboration among local stakeholders is crucial to build consensus, propose ideas, and take action, pooling public and private resources to support initiatives and achieve sustainable management (Kinoshita, 2016).

Kinoshita (2016) cautioned that "Regional Revitalisation" is not replicating existing initiatives but rather identifying unique local strengths and leveraging them. Taiwan's government's top-down approach to regional revitalisation, disguised as a bottom-up approach, disregards grassroots realities, mirroring Japan's missteps. Kinoshita (2015) urged self-reliance, stating: "Instead of criticizing government incompetence, replace it, turn passive into active, and lead." Civil forces should actively "practice" rather than passively "participate" in regional revitalisation. People should create what they need, combining self-reliance with independent businesses to initiate local innovation and reform. Practitioners

should remain steadfast in the face of uncertainty, drawing on their problem-solving wisdom, continuously trying and correcting mistakes, to achieve success.

"Inmoon House-Grain Storage" exemplifies such daring regional revitalisation. Its founders renovate local old houses, using artistic design to enhance community aesthetics. Since 2020, art exhibitions have engaged Qingdongli residents in Dongshi, gradually gaining acceptance of Damaopu Art Village's community art activities, fostering community connection.

Yamazaki (2011) emphasizes that community design should focus on social connection. Design should be people-driven, not for its own sake. Yamazaki's social connection design aims to build social capital, which he defines as "the relationship of coordination and trust that all people in society can have" (Tromp & Hekkert, 2019). Once established, this social capital enables residents to trust each other, cooperate sincerely, and form self-governing teams to independently solve community social problems, fostering a thriving community. Kakehi (2013) describes social design as an exploratory journey through social issues using a "trial and error" approach. "Inmoon House-Grain Storage" represents a pleasing outcome achieved through this approach.

Kinoshita (2015) said "Regardless of location, there are always those who believe the 'local atmosphere' cannot be changed, even in seemingly lifeless and unremarkable countryside, ... They may be seen as troublesome figures, but they may be challengers who will set up shop and try to find a way out for the place. ... Those who can achieve success in regional revitalisation ... are the few who can make up their minds and are not afraid of loneliness. Even starting with one shop can make a difference in an area."

This is Kinoshita's first iron law of a money-making town changing regions. A younger generation director of the "Dongshijiao Cultural and Creative Association" exemplifies this, co-founding Damaopu Art Village with his wife and younger brother in a centuries-old Hakka settlement, utilizing Hakka cultural innovation to develop a remarkable "cultural economy" (Throsby, 2001).

Local Entrepreneurial Design of Damaopu Art Village

The Founding of Damaopu Art Village

The Damaopu Art Village was founded by the above three people, who are all artists themselves. They renovated a 60-year-old dilapidated old house, which they named "Inmoon House". Inmoon House serves as a hub for art exhibitions and workshops. The eldest brother is a collector and professional commentator, as well as a skilful carpenter. He was once employed as an exclusive craftsman for the Artisan Patriarch Cultural Festival. His main contribution to Damaopu Art Village is curation and mediation. His wife is a painter and art teacher. His younger brother is a project manager for an architectural design firm and a metal and leather craftsman.

Challenges and Opportunities

One of the challenges faced by Damaopu Art Village is the lack of catering services and resting places for tourists. This makes it difficult for tourists to stay for a long time and spend money in the local economy. However, the unique style of Inmoon House has attracted tourists from afar to drink tea, chat and take small tours, and built the village's reputation.. This has made Hakka residents in the community realize that artistic design has economic value and can be used to earn money.

The Future of Damaopu Art Village

The founders of Damaopu Art Village are now working to guide other entrepreneurs to open similar businesses in the village. They hope that this will help to revitalize the region and bring more visitors to the area.

Methodology

This paper examines the impact of community art education on the cultural economy, focusing on “Inmoon House-Grain Storage,” the headquarters of Damaopu Art Village. The study highlights the successful renovation of an old house in 2019 and the subsequent acquisition of a government subsidy to promote Damaopu Art Village’s development. The village combines entrepreneurial counselling for young returnees with community art education to drive regional revitalization. Through a practical case study, the paper demonstrates how community art education can contribute to the cultural economy through the artistic design of livelihood-supporting shops.

Research Methods

The research methodology involved organizing interview content through surveys and interviews, followed by searching for relevant information on Facebook using the keyword “Damaopu Art Village.” The classification of online community news releases from Facebook messages was summarized using EXCELL, with categories including date, location, activity, category, feedback, likes, and posting unit. The number of likes and feedback from fans was also counted to understand the status and acceptance of posted messages.

Site and Participants

The study site was the old block of Qingcheng Street, Qingdongli, Dongshi District, Taichung City, Taiwan. Due to its original defensive farm layout, the space environment is well-suited for setting up living art shops in the four corners and displaying living art spaces in the block. The interviewees were key figures in the operation of Damaopu Art Village, including the founders and artists. Specifically, the interviewees were:

- Chief Executive Officer of “Inmoon House-Grain Storage,” a carpenter, curator, and mediator
- Art Director of “Inmoon House,” a painter, and art teacher
- Project manager for an architectural firm and a metal and leather artisan.

Results and Discussion

Establishment and Operations of Damaopu Art Village

Damaopu Art Village was established by two brothers who returned to their hometown in Dongshi in 2019. Later, the wife of the elder brother also gave her full support. They renovated an old house in the Damaopu community and used it as the foundation for the art village. The village aims to create a sense of local connection and community network through various art initiatives. One of its key functions is to support artists by providing exhibition venues, increasing exhibition locations, and extending exhibition times. The village also collaborates with the Dongshijiao Cultural and Creative Workshop and the Dongshijiao Cultural and Creative Association to expand its reach beyond Dongshi Main Street.

Guiding Entrepreneurs to Establish Artistic Shops

The team behind Inmoon House-Grain Storage has been actively involved in regional revitalization efforts, even before the implementation of the "Relocation Start-Creation and Transformation of Hakka Village"-project, a government subsidy project. They have connected with craftsmen in the Dongshijiao Cultural and Creative Association and organized exhibitions of life crafts and design products. This initiative has expanded from Dongshi Main Street to the surrounding Damaopu settlements. As a result of their efforts, the team has assisted in the establishment of two artistic shops, both owned by women aged between 45 and 55. The combination of femininity and artistic taste has contributed to the creation of a unique and aesthetically pleasing community art in Damaopu Art Village.

Table 1 | *Sites of Damaopu Hakka Village Resettlement Project*

Opening time	Business items	Owner/gender
October 27, 2020	Coffee drinks, handmade desserts, freshly roasted coffee beans, small markets, exhibition venues, Hakka tourism, DIY	Single mother in her 40s /female
March 11, 2021	Hakka canteen (reservation), small market, exhibition space, Hakka tourism, DIY	Age over 50 /female

Guided Tours for Cultural Promotion and Art Education

Damaopu Art Village utilizes guided tours to showcase local art spaces, integrate art education into the lives of residents, and promote Hakka village culture. Tour guides lead visitors through Damaopu Village, introducing them to old houses like Inmoon House-Grain Storage. After the tour, experiential workshops are offered, featuring dynamic and static itineraries, in-depth cultural immersion, and DIY programs.

Integrating Art Education with Local Cultural Experiences

Inmoon House-Grain Storage, with its 60-year-old cypress structure, small barn, antique artifacts, handcrafted crafts, and living art pieces, is a story in itself.

Embark on a Hakka village life art tour, exploring defensive streets, the century-old Temple of Three Mountain Kings and the general's garrisons, the age-old irrigation channel, the sweet osmanthus hut, pear, peach, and plum orchards, and the Dajia River valley. Led by local collectors and craftsmen, the tour delves into architectural styles, irrigation channel culture, and Damaopu's craftsmanship spirit, providing visitors with a deeper understanding of Damaopu's artistic living spaces.

Following the Hakka village tour itinerary, visitors can freely explore the village and its local shops. The goal is to promote Damaopu Art Village, offering free visits, opportunities to interact with artists, purchase handicrafts, and support local farmers by buying fruits. This creates benefits for stakeholders in the Damaopu community, fostering their support for Damaopu Art Village. For more details on work projects at Damaopu Art Village, refer to

Table 2 | *Work projects in Damaopu Art Village*

Work projects	Contents
1. Operation of Inmoon Tea House-Grain Storage	1.1. Flexible adjustment of business hours for reservations and various activities.
	1.2. Craft shop: including leather renovation, metalworking creation and renovation, and sales of craftsmen's works.
	1.3. Sales and development of beverages in the shop: Food list products are the main products for sale and actively coordinate the development of small-scale farmers or products with local specialties.
2. Promote art and culture	The concept of an art village promoted by Inmoon House-Grain Storage has gradually been recognized by local residents, young people who want to return home, artists and craftsmen, and art curation is planned.
3. Guiding young people to return to their hometowns to start a business and participate in the construction of the art village	3.1. Consultation for young people returning to their hometowns to start a business.
	3.2 Assist in the development of local creation: assist returnees in obtaining buildings (lease or purchase), building renovation planning and construction management, and operation discussions.
	3.3 Connection of the Damaopu Art Village Project: connect and cooperate with each other to organize related art activities and small trips in the village.
4. Hakka small tours	The purpose of arranging a small trip to Hakka Village is to promote the defensive settlement characteristics of Damaopu Village and Hakka Village culture. Tour guides will lead tourists to know Damaopu Village and visit old houses such as Inmoon House-Grain Storage.

Work projects	Contents
	After the tour ends, the experience courses will follow immediately. There are dynamic and static itineraries, in-depth cultural understanding, and DIY programs.
5. Promotion of agricultural products	5.1. Regularly hold small farmers' markets to sell agricultural products 5.2. Assist in research and development of agricultural product processing (beneficial for preservation and increase of different commodities) and promotion and sales on weekdays 5.3. During the small tour in Hakka Village, tourists pass by the farmland and the orange shop on Qingdong Street, and interested tourists will naturally buy agricultural products.
6. Planning of farming experience	Tourists make reservations for farming experience in advance, and after contacting the farmhouse for the date and time, they will lead the tourists to the farmhouse for experience and experience the hard work of the cultivators. And make a simple way to preserve agricultural products by yourself such as eating lemon enzyme or others.
7. The planning of waste farmland in the old village	Determine the time period with tourists in advance, use the completely abandoned vacant land to provide tourists with camping, and provide them for overnight use, so that tourists can experience the tourism experience of camping on farmland.
8. Plan to establish the brand of Inmoon Tea House-Grain Storage, which carefully selects good things	Get in touch with the producer first. And investigate the product taste and packaging those tourists like. Launch products based on their preferences. All are well received so far. Commodities 1.Lishan Alpine Tea Oolong Tea and Alpine Black Tea Commodities 2.Coffee produced by Damaopu Village 3.Organic scented tea products produced at four kilometers from Daxue Mountain 200 Forest Road 4.Fruits grown by small farmers in Damaopu Village. 5.Osmanthus hut products 6.Hakka-style food produced in Damaopu
9. Tour guide training	Recruit people in the village who are interested in the history of the village and the old house of Inmoon House-Grain Storage to conduct training together.
10. Organize a local mother Hakka cooking team	Organize local mother associations to jointly launch Hakka special meals, and provide tourists with reservations, so that tourists cannot only visit old villages, participate in experience courses, but also taste local mothers' specialty dishes. At the same time, community mothers also increase their income.

Work projects	Contents
11. Encourage residents to use the abandoned space in their homes to provide micro-business services	Inmoon House-Grain Storage continues to encourage residents to use the abandoned space in their homes to provide micro-business services or assist youth returning home to start a business.

Community Art Education Through Living Art Space Planning

Damaopu Art Village's community art education is centered around Tai-Xing Palace (Temple of Three Mountain Kings), gradually expanding its reach through community building planning. As the Damaopu community's alley economy develops, community art spaces gain recognition and support from local residents, fostering economic growth.

On October 4, 2020, the CEO of Inmoon House-Grain Storage reflected on his experiences in community art education. After successfully operating Grain Storage for over a year in the Damaopu community, he extended the space outdoors, completing a small garden and enhancing walkways. A small noren curtain, "Hanami Koji," was installed at the store entrance to provide residents with a pleasant flower-viewing experience. This initiative sparked discussions among neighbours and solidified his belief that community art involves empowering residents to beautify their living spaces, enhancing their overall well-being. Rather than relying on excessive government intervention, businesses can take the lead in tidying up community spaces to foster a better quality of life for residents.

Facebook Keyword Search "Damaopu Art Village"

A Facebook search using the keyword "Damaopu Art Village" revealed that community engagement primarily focuses on promotion (18,099 likes), followed by tourism (3,221 likes), exhibitions (824 visitors), and trade shows (at least 384 visitors).

Table 3 | *Categories of searches on Facebook using "Damaopu Art Village" as a keyword*

Classification	Feedback and press like	The earliest date	The latest date
Exhibition	824	December 26, 2020	March 5, 2021
Travel	3,221	November 17, 2019	November 7, 2021
Trade show	384	December 15, 2021	December 15, 2021
Promotion	18,099	November 5, 2019	February 12, 2022

Since 2019, the CEO of Inmoon House-Grain Storage has been actively promoting community art education in the Damaopu community, primarily through Facebook posts. The Art Village's efforts to revitalize old neighbourhoods have led to a gradual increase in visitors. The exhibition component of the art education plan is currently the most challenging

aspect, as it is the last project listed for promotion. This explains the lower number of feedback responses compared to other initiatives.

According to field surveys, agriculture plays a significant role in the Damaopu community's daily life. Residents' beliefs revolve around Taixing Palace, and their primary living area is Qingcheng Lane and Qingdong Road.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Despite initial concerns about economic viability, the shops at Damaopu Art Village have remained in operation. Social media exposure through Facebook and YouTube, along with media interviews, have helped to raise awareness and maintain business operations. To further strengthen the community arts strategy, the following measures are proposed:

Increase media exposure and community engagement: Actively engage with the community through various media outlets, performances, and art education initiatives.

Promote experiential tourism: Create opportunities for tourists to immerse themselves in Hakka culture, combining art appreciation with authentic cultural experiences.

Preserve Hakka heritage: Incorporate the life experiences of Hakka elders into workshops and educational programs, ensuring the transmission of traditional knowledge and skills.

Foster industrial alliances: Establish a communication platform to connect Damaopu community with surrounding economic and industrial areas, promoting cooperation and mutual development.

By implementing these strategies, Damaopu Art Village can continue to promote Hakka art and culture, attracting both local residents and tourists, and contributing to the overall revitalization of the community.

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A/r/tographical Bread Making as a Becoming Artivist for Community Re-Forming

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Abstract

Becoming an Artivist and A/r/tographer, I create art as a space for making knowledge to exchange current personal and public issues at the community level as meaning-making experiences. The researcher follows the a/r/tographical research approach that offers disruption of the crystalized knowing practice while residing in the in-between 'zone of fracture' to enable the self into a contemplative learning and re-learning process. Considering bread-making an art process, the researcher deeply engages with the materials to see the unseen aspects of the life of materials and what they do to human thinking, doing, and living. Departing from revolutionary changes, the participants maintain liminal involvement to activate creative means in their own current political and social matters. Such a practice allows the participants to be able to enable new possibilities for vulnerable selves during their personal becomings. Through artistic discursive practice and bread-making as a social engaged art practice, the knowers begin to find out their own meanings. Hence, personal knowledge proliferates. At the end of the research, each one of the participants shares their own story as new knowledge to find out what needs to be seen from what appeared to be unseen.

Keywords: a/r/tography, artivist, materialism, social and community engagement, bread making

A/r/tographical Bread Making as a Becoming Artivist for Community Re-Forming

Prologue

The voice woke my unconscious mind up
when I heard the worrying mind's voice.
The voice was strong and remained in my ears.
The voice resonates with my own experience
and so many others who suffer from what's been said to them.
Yes, Monica.
I heard the voice
in the midst of kneading bread dough.
The voice that you missed to release long time ago.
The voice that hasn't been seen returned to the time of now
and took the strongest flight to do something important.
The voice, fly away through this bread making process,
and re-turn to open future possibilities.

Introduction

This artistic bread-making project within an online community learning space offers to share how new discoveries occur at the personal level while the small group of participants are engaging with others like humans and non-humans. This project's design is based on my Bread Making as Meaning Making master thesis project which I pursued at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada (Shimomura, 2022). After graduating, I created an online learning community for Japanese adults who are interested in a radical personal transformation without following a typical instruction that create the same (Pinar, 2019). I chose Japanese participants because I am a Japanese person who experienced non-Japanese education. This special experience allowed myself to transform into someone I have never imagined. I often speak on the online platform about how Canadian education offered me new perspectives. Many of listeners ask me to tell them more. This was my beginning.

I also borrowed some ideas from an a/r/tographical community engaged project (Irwin *et al*., 2009). I was attracted the idea that community members create learning space through art to discover something new within their culture, politics, and certain beliefs. My purpose for activating this online learning community is to introduce a different way of knowing in the world wherein the participants live to be able to exchange different ideas (Biesta, 2006). By doing so, they depart from their own naturalized attitudes that block their personal phenomenological growth (Sokolowski, 2000). I often wondered if the way of

knowing shifts to a new direction within such a community, particularly, for those adults who have already left the education system might initiate to see the current education of unseen (Greene, 2001) by accepting disruption. Whether or not the persons are in a school system, can they collaborate with one another to re-consider how the future art education at the community level can proceed in such an online space through art making. Thus, I pedagogically create a suitable "condition for the unknown" (Irwin, 2013, p. 207). Some ideas supporting this project are: to think of bread making as an artistic engagement, also as a conditioned space of new discoveries (Greene, 2001), to hear a personal voice as the first voice (Leggo, 2019), and to find out the true self - not the constructed self by a certain education (Pinar, 2019).

Method/methodology

Taking my thesis research project a step further, I maintain the following two research approaches: a/r/tography (Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Springgay *et al*., 2005; Le Blanc & Irwin, 2019) and creative non-fiction (Sinner *et al*., 2018). A/r/tographical research allows both the researcher and the participants to see their world differently through art making and theorization. The research focuses on being in a process rather than arriving at the specific answer by engagements that disrupt already determined knowledge. While participants make art, they deeply engage with their thoughts and take further actions for transformational purpose by the flow that emerges from the personal embodied experiences. For a/r/tographers, learning occurs within the cultural and political events for participation rather than receiving some informational knowledge.

Creative non-fiction recognizes a specific process during research while writing personal life stories; so that, a certain product emerges through the writing experiences. While writing in such a way, the researcher-writer invites themselves into a personal inquiry. Being in a process of writing, the researcher seeks a human touch and artistic sense by imagining for the readers to experience personal and special feelings. This way of knowing supports a pedagogical practice by rendering inquiries to reflect own practice and the world wherein they reside.

Bread-Making

During summer 2023, I met two participants from the online learning community that I created in April that year. We made bread as an artistic engagement once or twice a week to exchange some conversations and thoughts. First week, we just simply made bread. From the second week, we exchanged personal feelings, memories, stories, and new ideas that emerged from the bread making art and life making. During the discussion, both the participants and I discover something of which we never thought before and continue to learn from each other to sustain subjective self being and societal issues.

Bread Making Story

H-ko's hands move back and forth.

The dough is covered by the wet towel for some rest.

She re-turns to the dough.

The rising bread gives her hope for the future.

The working hands seem to forget the passing time even though the kneading was no longer needed. "The dough's softness reminds me of my newborn daughter's skin", said H-ko.

What yeast does to the wheat and water bring her back to the old memories.

Her hands repeat to knead, and dough responds.

The larger the dough gets, her expectation towards the result also gets bigger.

When the bread is baked, the flow of the fermentation ends, and yet she begins to think of another possibility of focaccia toppings.

"How about tiny, dried fish and seaweed paste for my new focaccia?", suggests H-ko.

While H-ko puts the toppings on, Monica shows her hesitation.

She is still in a kneading process.

"This is my first time to make bread, and I am not good at it like H-ko…"

Her frustrations rise just like H-ko's dough.

Monica's worrying memory returns to her heart while struggling with her wet dough sticking onto her hands. The stubborn sticky dough does not leave Monica's hand.

The dough challenges her, or does she resist the dough?

The feeling of hesitance reminds her the first day of work.

She always felt like she was falling behind on the first day or the first time she tries something.

"Why am I always behind?" says Monica with her weak voice.

Monica confesses that she always feels this way since her young age.

The worrying mind didn't stop comparing herself with other people.

She wonders, "why am I always falling behind? Am I a slow learner?"

A few days later, I received an email from her. In the email, she said:

> This bread making experience reminded me of what my teacher once told me. The teacher always rushed me, and I felt pressured by her voice. 'Hurry up or you will fall behind.' Even though Yuko, you weren't hurrying me, I was still feeling that I had to hurry to just catch up with H-ko! I was threatened by something that wasn't even there.

We talked about this while H-ko shared her episode of eating her focaccia.

"The first I tried making focaccia with different topping, I only put dried dish. Then, when I was eating it, the fish kept falling off and would never stick to the bread surface" She continues, "I thought a lot about how I could have kept the dried fish on the bread. If I stick with the normal way – just putting olives or some onions on the focaccia, I will not have any issues and never had to think. I guess, if I go with a way that I'm used to, I stop thinking. That means, I stop finding a new possibility! So, toppings that fall off the bread, which seems to be a failure, might be great opportunity to find a new way!" She continues, "Also, this idea of 'sticking onto something' made me think about never giving up, like sticking with further actions. If it's only dried fish, they fall off easily. However, if I use sticky seaweed, the stickiness of the seaweed helps the dry fish to stay! When we think about adding new idea into our society, we need this 'stickiness!' What could that be? We should never give up!"

Monica joined the conversation.

"That's true. I think that I am used to hearing that I am slow or always falling behind. Then, I started to believe that is who I am! Until this moment, I took my teacher's words too seriously."

While kneading my dough, I re-turn to what H-ko said. Here, she might be talking about relational practice. Nowadays, I wonder if such education is limited by just giving homework that learners do at home alone. Or in art education, too, art making practice still can be a solo action.

Also, what Monica said opened my dormant thoughts. Once Ted Aoki (2005), the Canadian curriculum study scholar, claims that we become the language that is spoken. Then, we can easily construct students or any learners the way on which the educator insists. How can I create a space in art education that students or community learners respect their way of being and a way of knowing while working together with others?

Concepts to Explore

During this bread making process, there are two significant concepts that I would like to explore: the failure and making in a space of learning and society to which the person belongs. Both H-ko and Monica struggle with some problems that they might have seen as 'problems' with negative connotations. For H-ko, for instance, little dried fish not sticking onto the bread became a big deal. For Monica, not being able to catch up with H-ko or me became an issue. In terms of concept of making, for Monica a person made by other's words bothered her mind. H-ko also seem to realize that a space of becoming can be made by us. Having notice these ideas, I would further explore those two concepts with some academic thinkers and scholars.

Concept of Failure

When I was a young student, my teachers provided homework. The homework was a repetition of what we did in the class. The students memorized what the teachers

introduced in the class, and if we made mistakes, we had to repeat the right answer until we remember correctly. I wonder this is one of the ways that we learned to not to make mistakes. Even after those students became adults, because of this experience, I wonder if we all associate mistakes with such a negative image. Jardine (2002) writes that learning experience should mean that the students chose and do something worthwhile for the person's life and satisfy personal interests. Meaningful experience, thus, according to Ellsworth (2005) emerge from "emergent desire" (p. 28) so that the knowers seek something that they have not yet seen in the process of doing while dealing with problems. In learning to make bread, I often come up with "the troubling questions" (Green, 2001, p. 18), and as Greene (2001) suggests, the art that I work with speak to me with the aesthetic sense that art offers. For Green (2001), aesthetic means to go through difficult time that art making offers and to feel the pain as being conscious so that the knowers are aware of what they are knowing.

I noticed that Monica's struggle such as being slow, being behind, not being able to do what others can do easily became such a great deal for her. And yet, this struggle in making bread also became a space for her to contemplate whom she really has been becoming. In fact, she felt being a failure because she worked with other people. In other words, in this case, she had someone to compare her work to. Irwin (2013) notes that relational practices in the process of art making support a personal appreciation of special becoming. Rodari (1973) insists that fruits have its own becoming time; in other words, they do not follow the chronological stages. I wonder if Monica's teacher who was telling her to catch up with others saw the child developmental stage as a hegemonical truth. If so, then, Monica might have begun to understand not being able to do what other can do as a failure rather than an opportunity to learn about self.

Concept of Making

H-ko was wondering about 'stickiness' to bind the surface of the bread and the toppings. Later, she metaphorically considered the idea of stickiness as a social connection amongst people for supporting each other's different ideas. I find this idea quite interesting to contemplate how humans make knowledge while relating to each other. In terms of knowledge making, I associate with Ingold's (2013) understanding of knowledge making. According to Ingold (2013), knowledge does not appear as they are. For him, knowledge should proliferate while working with others as human and non-human as unfolding in a process of making. Ingold also writes that knowing is not about knowing about something, rather knowing occurs with the materials. I agree with Ingold when I am with bread ingredients (material). H-ko, of course, did not know what Ingold suggests, however, when she talked about the stickiness of the wet seaweed, I recognized that she was talking about what materials can do rather than what they simply are (Ingold, 2013). She first struggled

with bread toppings falling off the surface. Yet, through a process of making bread, we thought about what the materials do and discovered a new way. That extend our ideas towards how we might connect to a number of current societal issues, find out what those issues do to particular people.

Discussion

Relational Practice as Knowing with Humans and Non-humans with/in Problems

I begin with Pinar's (2019) words:

> The point of curriculum and pedagogy is to become a person, a citizen, a human subject engaged ethically with intelligence and erudition in the problems and pleasures of his or her life, problems and pleasures inevitably intertwined with the problems and pleasures of everyone else. (p. 125)

While three of us were making bread, we truly enjoyed the process of making bread, of learning how bread turns each time, and of knowing each other. At the same time, we also struggle when we face to each personal problem. Monica had difficulty accepting being slow leaner, H-ko fought with materials to find out what else she could do to stick the dried fish as a topping, and I also experienced the dilemma when I think of teaching how to make bread as I was against teaching instructions to create the same. Eisner (2005) claims that using recipe is about controlling the measurement. If using this idea in education, then the purpose of education only seeks a "technical orientation [and] objectify knowledge" (Eisner, 2005, p. 39). As Eisner share his concerns, this to me is problematic. Returning to Pinar's (2019) quote, even though three of us first had each different struggle, bread ingredients as materials taught us relating each other as human and non-human lead us to think and view the world differently.

A/r/tographer as Artivist Working with Materials

Golańska & Kronenberga (2020) and Zebracki (2020) explain that an artivist acts within both identities of artist and activist. While making art, the artivist remains in a community to intervene with the political or societal concerns. To do so, I consider that the artivist needs to see the current issues from a different angle. According to Barad (2007), working with materials, such a practice allows the viewers to rethink "the western epistemology and ontology" (p. 83). This idea invites me to think further with H-ko's notion of stickiness. While I was thinking about a western way of making bread – putting typical ingredients such as olives as a topping, she used wet seaweed to stick the dried fish on an Italian bread – Focaccia. In this moment, H-ko intertwines the western and the eastern epistemology and ontology to think about the societal connection that might be reduced by the westernized notion of individualism from the collectiveness that Japanese nations practiced for a long time.

Final Thoughts

This bread making experience allowed all of us to see our world differently in our own way and hear each other's personal voice. Monica realized that she was only constructed by the words of the teacher, H-ko noticed how new possibilities can be made by connecting each other, and I as a community making a/r/tgrapher re-discovered that inquiry-based study of self and the world can happen at the community level to seek social and personal transformation. During making process with materials, they disrupt the naturalized way of knowing. Thus, the art makers made discoveries of which we had not encountered before. This was my first experience to be outside of a school system providing a studying opportunity in a radical way. I am willing to continue this type of project to see if the adults in a community begin to understand that the non-instructional inquiry project with art practice influence school system. Perhaps, one day, a community and school system reduce the "zone" between those two separate spaces to collaboratively work on personal and social change.

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Collective Zine-Making: Building a Cross-School Community in K-12 Art Education

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Abstract

Fostering cross-school art teacher community through collective Zine-making

In 2022, as one of the facilitators, we launched a series of four workshops in Taiwan, establishing a cross-school community of supportive art educators. In partnership with the National Museum of History of Taiwan, we integrated Taiwanese cultural artifacts into our exploration of zine pedagogy, crafting interactive, student-centred lessons tailored for K-12 art classes. This initiative provided Taiwanese art teachers with deeper cultural engagements with historical artifacts, enriching hands-on experiences, and inspired more innovative approaches to art classes. In this paper, I explore the concept of zines as a form of idea repertoire within art education, emphasizing their process-oriented nature, creativity, inclusivity, and potential for self-expression. As the principal facilitator of the featured project, I will discuss methods for fostering alliance-building among art teachers, including implementing trust-building activities, and using online communication channels. Finally, the paper will present three case studies of student-centred zine artmaking. These illustrate how zines can serve as a pedagogical tool to expand the boundaries of art education. Through these examples, I will show how teachers can convert passive reception of information into active knowledge creation, empowering them to initiate change within their classrooms and beyond.

Keywords: zine-making, art education, teacher community, professional development, collaborative inquiry, zine pedagogy, multisensory learning

Author note

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Collective Zine-Making: Building a Cross-School Community in K-12 Art Education

In 2022, I collaborated with Joy Chih-Ning Hsin, Chia-Wei Hua, Jinna Sun, and Tze-Ning Hong, in partnership with the Taiwan National Museum of History, to lead a collective zine project. This initiative created a cross-school community among K-12 art educators in Taiwan. We linked 17 art teachers from different schools, harnessing the power of zine pedagogy to facilitate the exchange of teaching insights and to nurture a supportive art teacher community. My role as a facilitator was informed by over a decade of experience teaching visual arts in a middle school. Being the only visual art teacher in my school, I often found myself isolated due to a lack of a peer community. This solitude fuelled my aspiration for the collaborative network, an open space where art teachers could freely exchange ideas and support and share their teaching and learning experiences. Therefore, the initiative of the collective zine project embodied my desire to bridge these gaps, creating a vibrant and supportive community among art educators.

We organized four critical workshops in 2022: The first, held on March 19, delved into transforming cultural artifacts and material experimentation, emphasizing objective alignment and curriculum ideation. On April 23, the second we focused on art visual literacy development, incorporating Design Thinking and the Five Rings of Learning and Thinking from Sharestart Pedagogy (Su, 2022). The third workshop, an online session on May 14, was dedicated to crafting the guidebook zine. Finally, the fourth online workshop occurred on May 29, culminating in an Online Art Zine Festival. Each three-hour workshop fostered a supportive and collaborative learning environment, enhancing innovative teaching approaches among K-12 art educators in Taiwan.



Figure 1 | *Online group for the participants, 2022* (Copyright by the author)

Besides the four workshops, I created an online group for the participants to enable informal communication and encouraged them to share their ideas both within this group and beyond. The goal was to empower them to develop our intimate relationships and encourage sharing our creative discoveries. For instance, in the online group, participants maintained a digital album, which served as a creative pool for their workshops' photos, reflections, and creative tools (see Figure 1). During the workshop's journey, we created individual and collaborative zines together. The zine pedagogy was the central method for fostering our community. We utilized diverse zines as a source of inspiration, which was crucial in facilitating interactive and engaging learning experiences. These zines highlighted the importance of the creative process and contributed to a supportive atmosphere. Our Collective Zine Project emphasized the role of artmaking in sparking teaching ideas among art educators, thereby enhancing connections, fostering collaboration, and building a robust cross-school art teacher community.

Our mission was guided by pivotal questions: How could zine-making facilitate collaborative learning among art educators? And in what ways could this collective approach to zine-making enable teachers to take greater ownership of their teaching methods? These inquiries shaped the flow of our workshops, encouraging participants to engage in creation, reflection, and sharing within our community setting. In the following sections, I will delve into the importance of fostering an art-teacher community and present my two main strategies to nurture such a network. This will include discussions on innovative uses of art materials and implementing zine-making as a pedagogical tool.

Zines in Artistic Pedagogy for cross-school community

Art educators often experience marginalization and isolation within school settings due to tight schedules and limited opportunities for engagement in school-based professional learning communities (Gates, 2010). Gates emphasized the need for cross-school collaborative inquiry communities to allow art teachers to express their challenges and vulnerabilities, enhancing support from partners and expanding their social network, mitigating feelings of isolation. As elementary art teachers felt isolated and wanted to collaborate for innovative teaching ideas, Whelihan (2015) resonated with Gates's research and took action. They established an inter-school community utilizing local museum resources and fostered curriculum development through experimentation with art. The project facilitated support for art teachers and promoted teaching creativity that could be integrated into classroom practices. Engaging in hands-on artmaking experiences can elicit emotions and foster teachers' dialogues that create a supportive atmosphere. Besides these cases in the United States, Pithouse-Morgan Pithouse-Morgan, Pillay, & Mitchell (2019) emphasized the significance of creative artmaking, noting its contribution to community-building among teacher-researchers in Canada and South Africa. Thus, how to build a

teacher community within artmaking is underscored as a critical factor for the personal and professional development of art teachers.

What motivates using zines as our chosen creative approach to nurture and develop the art teacher community? Artmaking is an essential factor in the zine culture community. Utilizing the zine format accentuates the use of varied materials and the empowerment of authors, thereby contesting monolithic methodologies and the conventional hierarchy that appraises creative output—this preference for an inclusive and flexible standard fosters unrestricted creativity and expression (Hwang, 2022; Hong, 2021). Zines, thus, become facilitative tools for a comprehensive engagement with learning, allowing educators and students to venture beyond predefined criteria and embrace an expansive array of personal and shared narratives.

Zine culture emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and accessibility in art education, positing that individual contributions are valuable and beyond the same standard. Ramdarshan Bold (2017) has advocated for the continual production of zines, particularly emphasizing their importance for people of colour as a medium to open new paths and explore previously unconsidered knowledge, thereby enriching cultural expression and cultivating a more inclusive community. Similarly, Weida (2020) noted that when students actively engage with philosophies pertinent to their discipline through a zine-oriented approach, they tend to represent themselves in broader, more symbolic ways.

Zines also stimulate conversations and facilitate the exchange of ideas, catalysing collaborative learning and developing innovative concepts in art education. Zine provides non-linear exploration, enabling reflection and promoting professional growth. Workshops culminate in our zine festivals, which are orchestrated to inspire teachers to share insights about their zines and engage with their peers' works. A community steeped in zine culture is cultivated through these interactive circles, where teachers offer commentary on various zines. In the collaborative vibe, we pinpoint a definitive answer to cultivating a pedagogical space that values diversity of thought and welcomes unforeseen outcomes (Weida, 2020).



Figure 2 | *Art materials exploration in the community, 2022* (Copyright by the author)

In our workshops, as a facilitator, I would like to build a cross-school collaborative inquiry community to motivate art teachers to connect. Using zines as a creative approach in our art teacher community encourages diverse expression and stimulates collaborative learning. Zines allow for diverse use of materials and empower authors, challenging traditional educational hierarchies and fostering unrestricted creativity (see Figure 2). Beyond verbal communication, zine artmaking serves as a bridge to connect relationships. In our workshops, art teachers explored diverse art materials such as watercolours, markers, crayons, and various object-based alternatives to make zine. These inventive experiments encourage collaboration and discussion, which become affective connections with participants and provide a platform for shared narratives, enhancing expressions within the community. Moreover, zines stimulate dialogue and idea exchange, which is crucial for collaborative learning and innovation in art education. Through zine festivals and workshops, educators share insights and engage with each other's work, cultivating a community that values diverse thoughts and embraces unexpected outcomes.

In the subsequent sections, I will introduce the outline of our four workshops (Table 1), including the multisensory materials I provided and my creative activities. Additionally, I will illuminate two primary zine-making approaches in our workshops designed to cultivate and strengthen our teacher community.

Table 1 | *Outline of collective zine-making workshops*

Workshop Number	Date	Focus	Key Activities and Objectives
1	March 19, 2022	Cultural Artifacts and Material Experimentation	This workshop emphasized transforming cultural artifacts with material experimentation. It fostered a sense of community by encouraging participants to share their cultural backgrounds and collaborate on curriculum ideation. Activities included group discussions and collaborative projects, building a network of educators interested in integrating cultural diversity into art education.

2	April 23, 2022	Art Visual Literacy Development	Focused on enhancing visual literacy, this session incorporated Design Thinking and Sharestart Pedagogy. It facilitated community building by engaging participants in group exercises to develop shared strategies for teaching visual literacy. Interactive workshops encouraged peer-to-peer learning and the creation of a support network for educators to exchange ideas and best practices in art visual literacy.
3	May 14, 2022	Crafting the artistic Zine (Online Session)	Conducted online, this workshop aimed at crafting various zines through participants' creativity. It promoted community engagement through virtual breakout rooms where participants collaboratively designed and curated content. Educators shared their experiences and insights, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support in creating educational materials. The session emphasized using digital platforms to maintain and build an educational community in a virtual environment.
4	May 29, 2022	Online Art Zine Festival	This final workshop, an online art zine festival, was a celebration and showcase of participants' work. It was designed to strengthen the community by providing a platform for educators to present their zines, receive feedback, and engage in constructive dialogues. This session also included a discussion panel where educators shared their experiences in integrating art into their curriculum, fostering a sense of camaraderie and collective growth among K-12 art educators.

Multisensory zine-making for our community building



Figure 3 | *Multisensory zine-making, 2022* (Copyright by the author)

Each workshop commenced with a phase of material experimentation, a pivotal element in the creative zine-making process. This experimentation goes beyond conventional methods, adopting a multisensory approach that encompasses a broader spectrum of sensory experiences in zine-making. Learning experiences that engage multiple senses, including olfactory, auditory, and tactile, have been shown to augment memory capacity and learning processing significantly (Shams & Seitz, 2008). In a world where art is increasingly complex and diverse, redefining the use and understanding of art materials becomes essential. Expanding our artmaking to include sensory-rich mediums offers learners a more stimulating and comprehensive experience.

In alignment with the multisensory approach, our practice embraced unconventional materials, ranging from clay and marble to stickers, sticks, tapes, and fabrics. Participants merged these varied media to craft unique textures and effects, for instance, by merging marble with collage techniques or weaving digital elements into hands-on experiences (see Figure 3). Exploring new techniques, such as opting for a palette knife over a traditional brush, was also integral.

After exploring materials, participants recorded their initial thoughts on sticky notes, showcasing their zine-making progress and material experiments, igniting small group discussions. These reflections spurred further material experimentation in their zine creation and stimulated contemplation about future teaching approaches. For example, in an interview, one participant shared how the discussions influenced her collaborative teaching philosophy in art classes. She shifted from a product-focused to a more process-oriented classroom environment. The material exploration and subsequent discussions led her to find an online partner to co-develop lesson plans, effectively reducing her sense of isolation at school.

Each workshop concluded with a final 30 minutes that transformed into a vibrant display of collective creativity and insights, resembling a small art exhibition. Participants decorated the walls with colourful sheets and annotated sticky notes, transforming the room into a dynamic tapestry of diverse perspectives. This environment of open dialogue fostered meaningful conversations among art teachers, encouraging them to share insights and ponder their newfound understandings. The experience transcended a mere exhibition, evolving into a collective exploration of the essence of teaching and the joy found in artistic discovery. In our art-teacher community, the emphasis on collaborative inquiry fosters an environment where discussions, support, and the joint development of knowledge are continuously in motion. By organizing online and offline events, we have created a dynamic platform for educators to exchange best practices, celebrate student artistry, and collaborate on zine-making projects. The enthusiasm of art teachers at these gatherings is a testament to the value of such events, leaving participants feeling acknowledged and empowered. As a community, we navigate through various educational objectives, classroom challenges, and creative solutions, ensuring inclusivity and growth opportunities for all members. This collaborative approach is the essence of building a thriving community anchored in a shared passion.

Inquiry-based Collaboration to Enhance Learning and Teaching

The journey of exploration did not stop there.

It led to an ongoing stream of inquiries and a flourishing of creativity.

Our sessions adopted an inquiry-based facilitation approach, where we prioritized asking questions over lecturing. This aligns with Gates' (2010) perspective that collaborative inquiry is a key factor in community building. In our workshops, the inquiry-based facilitation fostered an open atmosphere, encouraging art teachers to actively participate and contribute by nurturing their curiosities. This approach established a dynamic environment of continuous questioning and exploration, leading to significant repercussions. Such interactive learning significantly improved their understanding of cultural artifacts while concurrently refining their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are invaluable in their teaching roles.

Participants immersed themselves in diverse materials, such as the various formats of zines and the essence of 'zine spirit.' Within their small groups, they embarked on discussions that spurred creative thinking and challenged the norms of conventional teaching methods. They posed insightful questions like 'How can the design of zines enhance interactive and immersive learning experiences?', 'In what ways can we collaborate to edit classroom zines, ensuring they reflect a diversity of voices and perspectives?', and 'How can we integrate the free-spirited creativity of zines into the more structured realms of educational settings?'

These discussions were just the beginning. They opened up further inquiries, such as 'What unique narratives can zines unveil in art education?', 'How can zines act as a bridge between traditional art forms and modern educational techniques?', and 'In what ways can the collaborative nature of zines inspire new pedagogical models in art education?' The constant flow of questions and ideas underscored the transformative potential of zines, not just as educational tools but as catalysts for continuous creativity and innovation in teaching methodologies. These inquiries led to innovative interpretations and applications in their zine-making projects. Among the 17 distinct zines created, three were particularly noteworthy. Chien Ling Chen creatively used artifact pieces in a jigsaw puzzle format to ignite student curiosity and engagement. Fu Chun Lin designed a school map zine, exploring how specific locations within the school could be linked to various artifacts, thereby fostering a deeper connection with the school environment. Yuichih Wu took a unique approach by merging pop culture elements with DIY modules in her zine, effectively bridging traditional artifacts with contemporary cultural trends. These examples highlight how zine-making can be a versatile and impactful tool in education, offering fresh perspectives and stimulating curiosity among students.

Why does a cross-school community matter?

The supportive and inclusive atmosphere within our community profoundly impacted all participants. They felt encouraged and empowered to engage more deeply with their creative processes, especially in examining the cultural significance of various artifacts in their zine-making projects. This exploration extended beyond mere artistry to a profound connection with cultural roots and expressions. Teachers participating in the collective zine-making reported a significant boost in energy and motivation. This renewed enthusiasm potentially translated into more vibrant and dynamic art classroom environments, fostering deeper student engagement and a refreshed approach to teaching.

The sense of community nurtured by this initiative proved to be especially impactful. In situations where art educators may feel marginalized or isolated within their schools, the risk of burnout is a real concern. By adopting a collaborative approach, we established a vital network that fostered connection and support among educators. This sense of camaraderie and the sharing of resources significantly reduced feelings of isolation, enhancing the teaching experience for each participant. This project also served as an open platform for professional development. Teachers exchanged new art techniques and innovative pedagogical approaches, contributing to the evolution of their teaching methods and staying current with trends in art education. The effects of these collaborative efforts resonated beyond the workshops, influencing their teaching philosophies and practices back in their schools.

Finally, the collective energy of our community fostered an inclusive educational setting, where zine-making emerged as a tool for deeply exploring Taiwanese culture. This method originated from my observation of a disparity in art education, which tends to prioritize Western culture, overshadowing Taiwanese cultural heritage. With ten years of experience in teaching visual arts in Taiwan, I recognized the necessity to shift this narrative. To achieve this goal, it's essential to collaborate with the broader community rather than working in isolation. Engaging with various community groups will provide diverse perspectives and richer cultural insights, making the learning process more holistic and representative of our rich heritage. Looking ahead, my goal is to highlight localized knowledge and cultural heritage in our educational pursuits, extending beyond our immediate community to encompass a wider spectrum of Taiwanese culture and history.

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Between Counteracting and Reproducing Educational Inequalities: Community-Based Arts Education in Türkiye and Germany

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Abstract

Türkiye and Germany, currently two of the largest refugee-hosting countries in the world, have both made extensive progress in their education policies which have led to greater accessibility and integration in formal education. Arts education can make an integral contribution in creating an identity-promoting and diversity-sensitive school culture. The quality of diversity-conscious change processes is driven by the principles and practices of equity, inclusion and social justice. This also involves a critical approach to the educational institutions themselves, and a commitment to reciprocity and equal cooperation with local communities and civil partners on the ground. Using examples of community-based and cross-sectoral arts education programmes from Türkiye and Germany, this paper aims to examine the potentials and challenges of participatory and transformative opening and change processes on the ground. Departing from civil society's inclusive approaches and activities, (which enable local change and empowerment processes for refugee and host communities), the paper analyses how underlying conditions and funding logics are counteracting the local work of the actors and carrying forward hegemonic orders and postcolonial continuities in the field.

Keywords: arts education, social cohesion, forced migration, inclusive education, inequality

Author Note

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Between Counteracting and Reproducing Educational Inequalities: Community-Based Arts Education in Türkiye and Germany

In Türkiye and Germany, the number of children and youths seeking protection from violent conflict and war has risen significantly in recent years. According to UNICEF, since 2015 Türkiye has registered nearly 1.7 million refugee children and asylum seekers (*UNICEF Türkiye, 2023)*, and an estimated half a million refugee children and adolescents have applied for asylum in Germany (*Europe and Central Asia–UNICEF, 2018)*. Against this backdrop, in both countries, an expansion of long-term measures and programmes can be observed that aim to facilitate refugee children's access to quality learning and social-educational integration. Acknowledging the potential of arts education for promoting inclusion and cohesion in a diverse society, a significant number of initiatives, projects and (funding) programmes have also been launched in recent years in the field to ensure children's equal opportunities and social-educational participation.

However, this article will argue that the implementation of community-based and transformative arts education programmes on the ground remains interwoven in both countries with major structural challenges and constraints. These not only counteract the "inclusive values and approaches" of the civil society actors realising (arts education) programmes for children from refugee and host communities but also reinforce and reproduce structural exclusion and inequality in the field. With regard to this, I also continue with recent voices from research and civil society and argue that, besides the impact analysis of arts education practices for the strengthening of inclusion and diversity in education and society, to overcome hegemonic orders and post-colonial continuities, the broader underlying conditions and financial logics should also be reconsidered and perceived in the fields of culture and education in times of forced migration.

I begin by presenting good practices of community-based and participatory arts education programmes from Türkiye and Germany. I focus on the approaches and values, which the presented initiatives and civil society actors pursue in enabling empowerment and diversity-aware change processes on the ground. I then highlight the main challenges and hurdles faced by the different actors in creating sustainable and structurally anchored education measures and long-term cooperation processes with the refugee communities involved. In conclusion, I outline how I see current underlying structural dynamics and funding logics counteracting the work of the civil society actors in creating equitable and unified change processes in education and society.

Methodology

The bulk of the data describing Turkish good practices comes from project visits and interviews which I conducted with civil society actors from Istanbul during six-months of fieldwork in the scope of my Mercator-IPC research project in 2019. A major part of the

information regarding the German good practice examples goes back to my four-year project assessment of initiatives and local players in the field of arts education in Berlin and Brandenburg as regional manager of the *Plattform Kulturelle Bildung* (cultural education platform). Moreover, in evaluating the challenges and hurdles the actors and initiatives are faced with in their community-work, in conjunction with the interviews, I relied on information and statements, which were mentioned during roundtable discussions and conferences that were realised under the auspices of both programmes. To supplement these outcomes, and to analyse systematic challenges reproducing structural exclusion and inequality in the field, the analysis also makes use of desktop research, analysing relevant webpage information, academic articles and (policy) reports.

Good Practices on the Ground–Mission and Values

The *Flowjob Breaking Crew* is a group of hip-hop and breakdance artists from Berlin and Potsdam in Germany. Since its foundation in 2008, the group members have been undertaking projects and carrying out a variety of schemes together as Breaking, MCing, Hosting, Writing/Tagging or DJing. With its many years of experience, the crew has also been realising social projects and social justice hip hop education for children and youths with and without refugee backgrounds in Berlin and Eastern Germany for many years. These included practical and content-related school workshops offering activities like graffiti, breakdancing, beat making or rap and encouraging reflection on topics around (post)colonialism, racism and gender. In addition, some of the crew members initiated the projects *Break Boarders* and *Break Chances* which enabled children and youths in numerous non-formal learning contexts to build a community of friends, breakdancing and sharing further creative and leisure activities together. What characterises the philosophy of hip hop education for social justice is the importance of community and solidarity in promoting social change and advancing the cause of equality. The *Flowjob Breaking Crew* not only empowered marginalised children and youths by giving them a voice through storytelling, hip hop music or dance, but they were also highly committed to fight against institutional and structural discrimination of their group members and publicly voice their concerns in solidarity with one another.



Figure 1 | *A performance during a workshop* (Copyright by Flowjob Breaking Crew)



Figure 2 | *Workshop members group picture* (Copyright by Flowjob Breaking Crew)

Yuva Derneği (Yuva Association) is an international non-governmental organisation from Istanbul offering services for both Syrian refugees and Turkish people, specifically in Istanbul, Gaziantep and Hatay in Türkiye. With its activities, it focuses, among other things, on community development and youth education. The association pursues an approach of providing holistic solutions to education: It offers inclusive education and diversity trainings for teachers, families and young people and realises programmes to foster the well-being, and social and educational inclusion of children with refugee backgrounds. In recent years, Yuva's inclusive education programmes have been beneficial with their use of a variety of artistic-creative practices. The Flying Library project was, for example, a mobile learning and interactive space offering school children from refugee and host communities a wide range

of (in)formal learning activities—including theatre, painting workshops, specially tailored creative reading courses in Arabic and Turkish or experimental laboratory courses for a playful approach to maths and sciences. In its philosophy, Yuva places great value on respect and sustainability; it believes that knowledge and wisdom of sustainable living should disseminate in the community in a horizontal manner. Their projects are not only based on great respect for the cultures and wishes of their participants, but they also understand the realisation of a project as a process of mutual learning. By including local partners and communities from the beginning and on equal terms in the implementation of all measures, the design process becomes localised and authentic, and an easier internalisation and dissemination of the knowledge and behaviour becomes possible after Yuva leaves the project.



Figure 3 | *During a workshop* (Copyright by Yuva Association)



Figure 4 | *During a workshop* (Copyright by Yuva Association)

Brückenplatz | Plac Mostowy (Bridge Plaza) is an artistic and social laboratory currently taking place in a former gym in Frankfurt/Oder in Germany. The Plaza is a common space for young and old residents who are in search of an open society. Every person can bring their individual ideas and expertise and co-create the space: For instance, the "Słubfurter residents" created, among others*, an intercultural garden, a Repair Café and a FreeShop in or outside the gym. Furthermore, a wide range of events and activities such as artistic workshops, exhibitions or intercultural feasts are jointly realised. A key characteristic of the Bridge Plaza is its ethical dimension which is expressed in its hospitality. It provides a homely atmosphere and a sense of belonging, particularly to people* who have been unemployed for a long time, people with migrant or refugee backgrounds and those who, for various reasons, are looking for alternative forms of society (Kurzwelly, 2021, p. 137). For the artist and founder of the *Bridge Plaza*, Michael Kurzwelly, art links to practical life. Inspired by Joseph Beuys, who developed the idea of an enlarged concept of the arts described as "social sculpture," he understands the *Bridge Plaza* as a laboratory for a society, in which everybody belongs to "US" and where the "OTHER" is included (Kurzwelly, 2021).



Figure 5 | *Two children painting* (Copyright by *Slubfurt e.V.*)



Figure 6 | *At a workshop* (Copyright by *Slubfurt e.V.*)

*Mavi Kalem Derneği (*Small Projects Istanbul) was an independent nongovernmental organisation operating a community centre in Fatih, a central district which is home to most of Istanbul's Syrian refugees and emigrants. In 2023, after eight years of service to the community, the SPI team unfortunately decided to close the centre. Dedicated to helping displaced families to rebuild their lives, the SPI supported community development through realising programmes and activities for empowerment, social cohesion and education support. Just like *Yuva Derneği*, the SPI followed a holistic approach to education. It provided financial support for the education of refugee students or helped children and youths with school registration or other bureaucratic hurdles in accessing education. Beyond educational support, the centre also offered a wide range of psychosocial, recreational and social cohesion activities. A highlight of the programme was the regular art, music and language classes that took place in the centre. One of the centre's greatest strengths was its strong sense of community. Shannon Kay, former co-director of the centre, stated that the essence of their work lay in the relationships they formed. Over the years, they have established a community of individuals who are willing to invest in the development of the centre, including refugee families and particularly women who shaped the centre with their creative and cultural talents (Kay, 2016).



Figure 7 | *Drawing group activities* (Copyright by *Small Projects Istanbul)*



Figure 8 | *At a textile workshop* (Copyright by *Small Projects Istanbul)*

Challenges on the Ground

During the various interviews and discussions with civil society actors and local players in the field of arts education, a large number of multi-layered, local and structural barriers have been identified which impede the community-work of the actors and associations on the ground. Some of the key challenges mentioned, which have a decisive influence on the actor's ability to act and the sustainability in their (educational) work, are barriers concerning financial and bureaucratic conditions, residence and asylum regulations, as well as rising social polarisation and negative attitudes towards people with refugee backgrounds in Türkiye and Germany.

Saman Hamdi, hip-hop scholar, activist, break-dancer and member of the *Flowjob Breaking Crew* shines a light on the contradictory nature of their activism: One the one hand the state hands out […] "integration awards" and financially supports the "integration" of […] [our children and youths with refugee backgrounds], and at the same time the state deports our students and their families (Hamdi, 2020, 00:53:50-00:54:03). Both members of the *Flowjob Breaking Crew* and the Bridge Plaza with refugee backgrounds have been affected by expulsion orders so far, which could only be prevented in many cases thanks to the great commitment and voluntary work of their respective community (Hamdi, 2020; M. Kurzwelly, personal communication, September 5, 2023).

Another great obstacle for a long-term implementation of community-based, arts education practices is the funding of the projects. For *Yuva Association* and *Small Project Istanbul*, sustainable funding was, and is, one of the biggest hurdles the communities face in developing their (arts) educational programmes (Sömnez, 2020*; CSO representative, personal communication, May 20, 2019).* In contrast to Germany, where different levels of state support (national, regional and local) are provided for arts education, in Türkiye initiatives and associations primarily finance their programmes with aid from private and international donors. However, in Germany, *although public funds are allocated in the field, the projects and programmes are generally supported by so-called "Sondermittel"* [special and short-term funds] *(*Kiwi Menrath*, 2018/ 2019),* which are restricting the scope of action *for local initiatives and civil organisations such as the Flowjob Breaking Crew or the Bridge Plaza.*

In addition to the financial hurdles in Germany, but even more in Türkiye, bureaucratic demands represent a further challenge that complicate the implementation of long-term education programmes: One of the CSOs representatives (personal communication, April 20, 2019) I interviewed in Istanbul pointed out that their educational programmes have to be authorised each year by the ministry of education through a protocol, which can make the long-term planning and realisation of their activities more difficult.

Furthermore, in both countries, the negative discourse on asylum and refugee policies, and a related increased polarisation and growing hostility towards people with refugee backgrounds, puts increasing pressure on civil society actors and their work on the ground. Kurzwelly refers in this context to *the rise of right-wing extremist and populist movements, whose growing influence could threaten the* raison d'être of projects, like the Bridge Plaza (personal communication, September 5, 2023). Özge Sömnez (2020, 00:42:20-00:42:48) mentions the current challenge to "find the right tone" and to "send the right" message as non-governmental organisations to refugees and other vulnerable host community members to foster peace rather than division in society. *Moreover, Kay (2016) questions the biased social perception and media representation of Syrian refugees, and particularly refugee children, who are standardised and reduced to a "lost and powerless generation".*

Between Counteracting and Reproducing (Educational) Inequalities: Arts Education in Times of Forced Migration

The presented good practices and a further, not underestimated, number of projects and initiatives across both countries constitute positive assets for advancing inclusive communities and the social and educational participation of children and youths with refugee backgrounds. At the same time, recent studies indicate that the cultural and educational sector and its underlying neoliberal dynamics and integration logics can, itself, produce marginalisation and exclusion. A decisive impact on civil society actors' capacity and scope for action in Türkiye and Germany have been the prevailing eligibility conditions and funding logics.

Moser (2020, p. 51) emphasises that, in the German-speaking sphere, the fields of arts and culture have proved to be remarkably resistant regarding the current forced migration and refugee movements, and continuously (re-)produce hegemonic relations of inequality. She argues for a more equitable distribution of public funds with a view to include excluded persons and those from minority groups. Despite the growing number of cultural projects and institutions, which focus on refugees, little has changed in the structures and the cultural policy thus far (*Micossé-Aikins* & Sharifi, 2016, p. 79). [In addition], project funding is primarily given to projects that affirm or reproduce the existing cultural sector - deconstructive and transformative projects with an institutional-critical perspective are unfortunately still the exception here (Mörsch in Kiwi Menrath, 2018/ 2019).

Marion Geralds and Nobert Frieters-Reermann (2020) explored with their team the currently largest and most expensive German arts and cultural education programme "*Kultur macht stark"(KMS) und Kultur macht stark plus*" (culture makes us strong and culture makes us strong plus) and, with their research results, not only showed that educational projects including children and youths with refugee backgrounds are subject to a dominant

integration logic, while focusing on conveying German language skills and values through aesthetic-cultural practices, but also that homogenising, culturalising and paternalising patterns and tendencies are reflected in the evaluated project applications.

Due to the lack of public funding in the field of arts education in Türkiye, (*Ece &* Fazlıoğlu Akın, 2014), and the bureaucratic hurdles actors face in realising educational programmes with state institutions for including refugee children and youth, many of the NGOs orient their activities toward the interest of international donors such as the EU as well as the private sector […] (Kollender, 2021). The increased political attention and financial support from private and international donors have led on the one hand to an increasing professionalisation of NGOs and a related expansion of their educational programmes. On the other hand, one of the resulting effects, as Ellen Kollender indicates (2021), is also an increased legitimation of success and quality in the field with statistics and figures, which results in a primary orientation of NGOs educational activities toward the "large population" of Syrian refugees. The focus on the target group of Syrian children and youths simultaneously legitimises the exclusion of non-Syrian children with refugee backgrounds and their participation in these projects (Kollender, 2021).

Conclusion

Although the education policies towards Syrian refugees are currently presented as an inclusive reform in Türkiye (Çelik & İçduygu, 2018), the structural level of the inclusion process is primarily considered within the organisational structure and practices in the schools. Relational elements and socio-cultural aspects, such as "belonging," "connectedness" and "social cohesion" are less considered (Şengül, 2020). Furthermore, integration policies have only been focused on the integration of Syrian refugee children into the educational system, while no similar assurances have been made for other child asylum seekers (Human Rights Watch, 2017). On the one hand it is therefore difficult for local civil society actors to tie into current school development processes and to contribute to their expertise and experience to an inclusive school transformation. On the other hand, by relying on current funding logics, local players are subject to the risk to reproduce the existing "exclusive institutional habitus" (Çelik & İçduygu, 2018) within the Turkish educational system (Kollender, 2021).

In Germany, a contradictory situation can be observed in the field as we could see from the example of the Breaking Projects. As long as this contradictory condition continues, and no critical reflection of the arts (and cultural) education field being integrated in the asylum and integration regime occurs (Geralds et al., 2020), I would claim that programmes and projects, which are assets for advancing inclusive communities on the ground, will only remain symbolic islands within the broader funding and educational landscapes and also

reproduce the exclusive orders and practices of the German school system, which has still not overcome its 'monocultural habitus' (Engin, 2003).

In order to promote diversity-aware and inclusive community-building processes on the ground, I encourage the development of comprehensive cultural and educational policies in both countries which enable local actors to overcome the structural hurdles and related contradictory conditions in their work. The broader structural factors and underlying logics should still be advanced in analysis and research. At the same time, political and scientific approaches should go hand in hand with the involvement of civil society actors and researchers who should further the perspectives of local players, particularly considering those who are concerned with structural exclusion and social marginalisation.

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Mindfulness and Meditation for Student Stability in the Classroom

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Abstract

Chaos and turmoil are difficult for the students we see every day who may have had many experiences in difficult times such as physical or emotional abuse, social unrest, economic crisis, food insecurities, and health concerns like COVID-19. This paper focuses on *Mindful Meditation* (MBSR) protocol strategies that all teachers can use to help stabilize their students and their environments. Mindful Meditation provides the practice in students' lives to stabilize an overly active, chaotic, and fearful mind. *Mindful Meditation* is practiced in a wide variety of schools. Research indicates that this practice of even a few minutes a day has produced amazing results and has emerged as a way of treating children and adolescents with conditions ranging from ADHD to anxiety, autism spectrum disorders, depression, and stress (Garey, 2022). According to Winston (2003), there are many teenagers tired of the pressure to compete and consume. They are looking for a different way to live their lives. Current research by Shapero et. Al. (2018) explores how mindfulness can help depression. Mindfulness' popularity has been bolstered by a growing body of research showing that it reduces stress and anxiety, improves attention and memory, and promotes self-regulation and empathy. The strategies in this paper are designed so that all students, teachers, administrators, and community members can support educational protocols like MBSR that are easy to teach and understand to provide a supportive classroom for all.

Keywords: meditation, health, wellness

Author note

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Richards, A. The Unknown, marbling, 12x16”. Copyright by the artist.

Mindfulness and Meditation for Student Stability in the Classroom

Mindful Meditation

We believe that educating students for their future to be successful and effective contributors in multicultural and multiracial democracies in a global community to promote equality, justice, and peace is essential. Their mental health is as important for developing their cultural resiliency as they negotiate the education system and a changing global community. To this end, (Richards & Willis) 2023 *Global Consciousness through the Arts: A Passport for Students and Teachers, (3rd ed.)* not only focuses on the preparation of students to make meaningful contributions to an unknowable future but is intended to make strategies available that can help everyone cope and maintain a healthy mental equilibrium despite the daily stressors. This paper provides mindful meditation strategies that can provide students the mental agility and wholeness to build and sustain the cultural bandwidth to facilitate their navigation of and contribution to multicultural and multiracial democracies in a global community.

Mindful Meditation in Classes

It is unsettling times with the global pandemic, which seems to shrink in cases, then rise again. This can seem like being out of control for many people, especially the vulnerable, as food and resource insecurities increase, chaos and violence are in the streets of our neighbourhood, the constant stress of the war in Ukraine, Israel, and other locations, and as growing global tensions increase. This is particularly true in the United States as political divisiveness continues to increase, gun violence is all too common, and protests are frequent. This is in the shadow of the COVID-19 virus that continues to birth many variants.

Chaos and turmoil, and fear and anxiety, are difficult even for those who have experienced difficult times. This abbreviated version of Chapter 16 in *Global Consciousness: A Passport for Students and Teachers* will focus on a positive approach to helping students and teachers. We will propose classroom procedures that can help stabilize the emotional tensions, psychological and emotional difficulties, and unpredictable futures of students and their families. In this, we will refer specifically to Meditation-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). The first section of this paper discusses the meditative practices used in our classes at Missouri State University and the University of Kentucky.

Meditation-Based Stress Reduction

MBSR provides an opportunity for everyone to practice in their daily lives to stabilize the overly active mind and allow a space for the mind's activities to be mentally and emotionally sorted and organized. As noted by Kabat-Zinn (2003), being mindful requires attention to the present moment without judgment of the experience. We wanted to investigate this aspect of the meditative practices that could be used. The practice of Mindful Meditation is implemented in different categories of schools in the US: inner city

and rural, affluent and underfunded, racially and socioeconomically diverse, and homogeneous parochial schools. At first, we were curious about the implementation of this practice but because of the various schools in which it is implemented, we started asking ourselves, “How can Mindful Mediation be effective in such different environments?”

MSRB in Classes

In an informal case study, students from a Secondary Art Education Methods class at Missouri State University volunteered to participate in mindful meditation at the beginning of each class. With the weekly survey conducted, each student was asked to respond in writing and images of how they were feeling before and after the meditation.

Missouri State University, where this data was collected, is a comprehensive university of about 23,000 students located in Springfield, MO (USA) in the region of the Ozarks. The region is typically conservative and Christian, which frequently resists the concept of meditation being taught in public education. In the class, there were 2 males and 14 females, and all were Caucasian. Most were economically middle-class and in their 20s.

Meditation distractions

One of the distractions to practicing meditation is found in people’s compulsive reliance on devices and instant access to the Internet. Patterson (2015) noted students can learn to manage behaviours as “Mindful rituals can enhance students’ capacity of self-regulation of attention, impulse and emotions” (p. 188). This is true in the family, classroom, and boardroom. Harrison (2018) stated that we are becoming dependent on or addicted to our cell phones. Research indicates that some people experience significant stress and anxiety when they are separated from their phones. They can experience withdrawal-like symptoms. The study conducted by De-Sola Gutiérrez, J., Rodríguez de Fonseca, F., & Rubio, G. (2016) revealed that phones are like drugs to the mind; they are especially addicting to students. Even with the need for connectivity, a daily practice of meditation can help settle the over-active mind and the reliance on devices. Addiction and reliance on activities outside of our body-mind connection can be reduced through meditation. Mindfulness meditation is a mental training practice that involves emotions, thoughts, and sensations in the present moment (Wong, 2019).

Meditation data from 2022

These two small groups of undergraduate Art Education students indicated that there were opportunities for each person to quiet the chaotic mind through daily meditation. Examples of written reflections on the meditations with drawings/doodles done before or after meditation are seen in figures 1-3 to assist the reader in interpreting the data.

Mindfulness Meditation taught in the classroom for 5-15 minutes can change the learning environment in both subtle and drastic ways. Though some may become more

committed to their practice, even a brief daily experience could provide meaningful alternatives to the stress and anxiety that students and teachers can experience in the turbulent times of social, economic, and political changes.

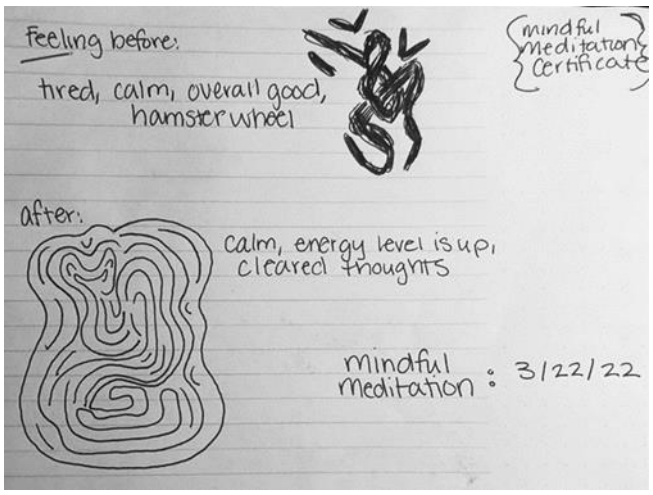


Figure 1 | *Student reflection with drawing/ doodles*

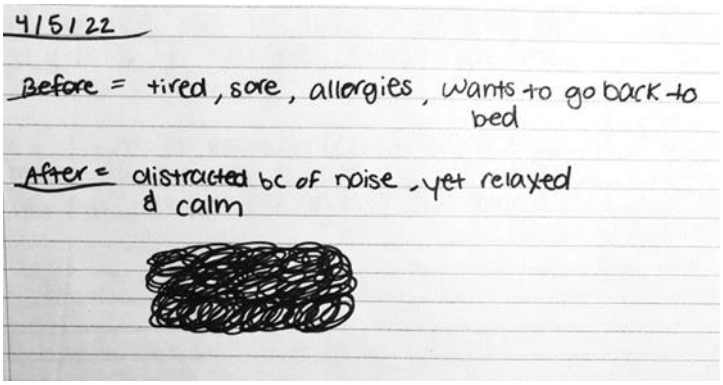


Figure 2 | Student reflection with drawing/ doodle

As seen with the figures 1 and 2 showing students' reflections with drawings/doodles, students responded differently over time depending on their personalities. Some students doodled at the end of each session while others only reflected with text. Some students responded anonymously while others dated and self-identified each entry. It was a choice for the students to participate and write a reflection with or without drawing.

Analysing text and images can make it difficult to hypothesize accurate and meaningful results. In these cases, I chose to add the images for clarity of interpretation that can be made by the reader. Most reflective drawings/doodles capture an organic, curvilinear style. According to The J. Paul Getty Museum,

> The curve of a line can convey energy. Soft, shallow curves recall the curves of the human body and often have a pleasing, sensual quality and a softening effect… Horizontal lines suggest a feeling of rest or repose because objects parallel to the earth are at rest. (¶ 7-12)

It is obvious in the students' drawn reflection that the curvilinear application indicates a calm and restful moment. Excellent reflections with text and drawing/doodle to consider are seen in Figures 1, 2, and 3. In the reflection for Figure 1, it is easy to see the angular, inorganic lines that portray a more aggressive line-making. However, after the meditation, the lines are much more organic and curvilinear indicating a calmer reaction. In the reflection in Figure 2, the drawing is a visual representation of the text when before the meditation the student was "tired, sore, allergies, want to go back to bed." This is seen in the after-meditation component of the images of compressed, lines indicating "distracted bc [because] of noise, yet relaxed and calm." It seems that the text and images are not completely aligned, creating some misinformation or a lack of clear reflection. An Art Therapist could more competently analyse these differences as decoding scribbles is a common therapeutic practice used in art therapy (Vass, 2012).

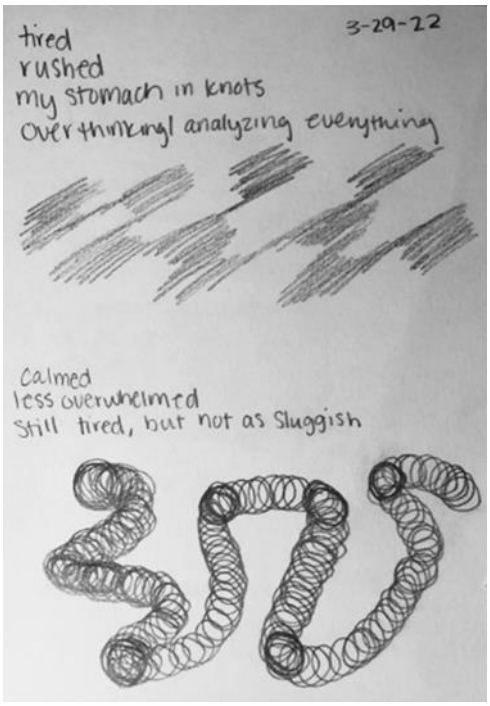


Figure 3 | *Student reflection with drawing/ doodle*

In Figure 3, the drawings/doodles seem to align more closely with the text. Before the meditation reflection, the student noted "tired, rushed, my stomach in knots, over-thinking/analysing everything" which correlates with the use of diagonal multiple lines. According to the J. Paul Getty Museum article on the *Elements of Art* may indicate that "Diagonal lines convey a feeling of movement. Objects in a diagonal position are unstable (¶ 10). In the reflection after the meditation the same student reflected, "calm, less overwhelmed, still tired but not as sluggish." This reflection is also captured in the circular and curvilinear drawing/doodle that seems to align the text and image very closely when calm is aligned with soft, curvilinear lines whereas diagonal lines indicate instability.

Meditation in Schools

In England, over 300 schools are incorporating mindfulness into the curriculum. They started this after seeing the results of a mental health survey that concluded that one in eight children in England between the ages of 5 and 19 suffered from at least one mental disorder in 2017 (Magra, 2019). Like in England, programs are finding success in the US. For example, in Baltimore, Maryland, Coleman Elementary School has replaced detention with mindfulness (Bloom, 2016). The success of Coleman Elementary students encouraged Patterson High School to include a Mindful Moment Room, where students can come in at the end of the day to relax or do yoga (Bloom, 2016). Instead of going to detention and being punished for negative behaviours, students were able to go to a quiet room and practice breathing and stretching exercises. The district believes this has helped maintain good behaviour in the classroom.

In California, more students have been introduced to mindfulness meditation. At Florence Griffith Joyner Elementary School, Los Angeles, CA, teachers have been trained in a UCLA program called *Calm Classroom* (Walter, 2017). The *Calm Classroom* program comes from the Luster Learning Institute, which implements it in schools nationwide. They have seen many successes. According to the Luster Learning Institute, they have seen a 21 percent improvement in standardized test scores, a 75 percent decline in school violence, and a 73 percent decrease in school suspensions in Chicago Public Schools (Walter, 2017). As teachers are trained to introduce and implement meditation, the results are obvious in many ways. When the teacher instructs the students to get into their mindful bodies, the students will be ready to listen for the next step in the chosen mindful activity (Ackerman, 2017). The positive results are seen at all levels of education and in various settings. For younger students, the butterfly scenario is done by bending their arms and lifting their elbows up and down in a wing-flapping motion. This is done in a slow, repetitive motion. The younger children do this together as a class, and the teachers say it is incredible to watch these normally hyperactive students seated quietly at their desks, moving their arms in unison (Walter, 2017).

One strength that we, as art teachers, have is the ability to teach artistic practices in many studio processes while including contextual narratives, aesthetics, analysis, criticism, and art history. We can be the foundation for students' well-being by providing creative outlets for each student at their specific level. Greenhalgh (2017) noted that creative activities tend to ease people into a process of focus, concentration, absorption, and flow, which is the same process experienced when meditating. This is why making art is naturally mindful. As part of the creative processes, we can encounter arts-as-therapy that may be revealed, which can engage several senses simultaneously helping to connect with parts of the self that are not readily available in traditional talk therapy (Perryman, 2019, p. 5). In

every classroom, every student has some degree of varying needs, in which teaching strategies are needed for balancing the inequities and injustices arising from acute differences in socioeconomic status, language, gender, sexual preferences, regionality, cultures, ethnicities, and racial diversity found in classrooms, schools, and communities. Studies indicate that doing mindfulness meditation activities in a classroom can be beneficial in many ways. Coholic (2016), in a study, showed results of improvement in areas of emotion regulation, mood, coping/social skills, confidence and self-esteem, empathy, and the ability to pay attention and focus. These were results found amongst a group of vulnerable children aged 8-12 years old, who were involved with child welfare or mental health services (p. 8).

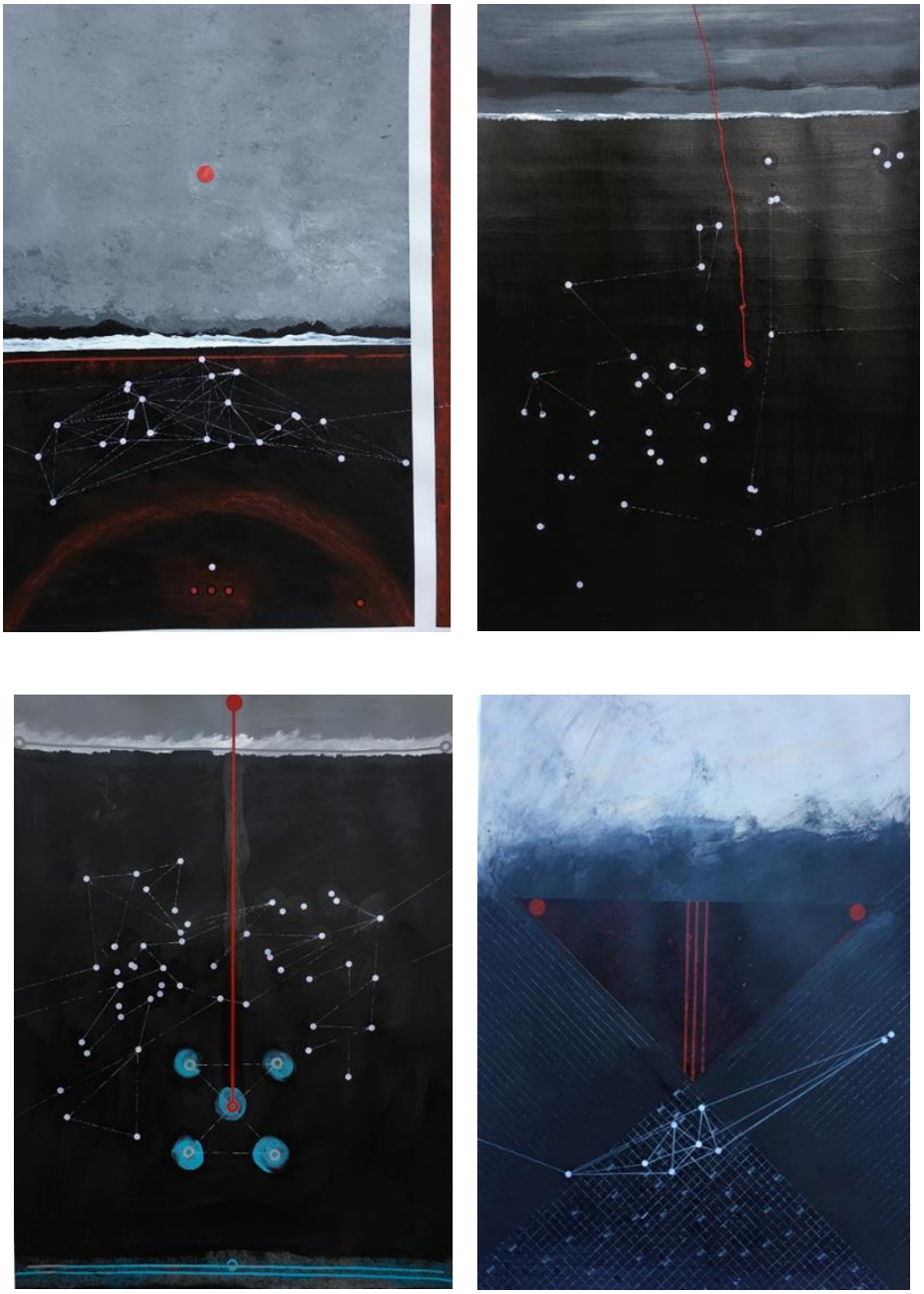
A study conducted with college-aged students who were 19 to 23 years old revealed that a six-week yoga meditation session helped improve total mindfulness while decreasing rates of anxiety and stress (Lemay et. al, 2019, p. 3). Thorpe (2017) discovered through data analysis that practicing mindfulness meditation for longer periods provides evidence to lower blood pressure, which was evident after a year of practice. Other benefits from consistent, daily meditation include improved emotional health, reduction of memory loss, help generate kindness, improved sleep, help control pain, and may even help fight addictions. Mindfulness meditation can benefit each person in many ways.

Many students benefited from a 10-minute mindful meditation. Anecdotally, mindful meditation is a calming experience that increases the comfort of a safe-space dialog for many topics with art education students who worry about difficult topics in their future classrooms including racism, bias/prejudice, poverty, immigration, and religion. For some, the benefits of meditation may have not been too obvious or the benefits may have been noticed at a future time upon reflection.

Steve's Comments

Steve's visual reaction to the times of the unsettled circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and all that it brought forward in life and into the studio practices. As stated in *Songs of Silence – in between space: A transformational process* (2023) (figures 4-7) each person has been impacted differently resulting in resistance, fear, anger, frustration, depression, anxiety, and much more. The images he creates visually address the space between the physical and spiritual. This is a transformative and evolving process of the journey to becoming a complete human being through meditative principles and artistic practices. Meditative intuition is the key.

The images were created in a rehabilitative process found in meditative silence and studio practices that we can create and share with our students. The images represent many dimensions beyond the physical and are significant to move beyond the intellect as opportunities for understanding the meditation practices which, for him, is boundless.



Figures 4–7 | *Songs of Silence – in between space: A transformational process by S. Willis, acrylic on paper, 22 x 30in., 2023.*

Steve appreciates that these images were brought to life as he moves into the mediative-aligned intuitive spaces. The elements and principles are for the eyes and intellect while subtle tones and vibrations are experienced in the heart-centred, multi-dimensional awareness through meditation. To have a deeper experience, these images require multiple connections, much like what is found in mediation. Each layer of meditative intuition creates a deeper knowledge that eludes the cognitive processes and resides directly in the centre of mediation, which opens portals to the expansiveness of the non-physical creative dimensions. Colour, or lack thereof, is more than a simple choice. They represent meditative

vibrations–the colour itself is not the point. These images are a continuation of Steve's walk down the spiritual, therapeutic, and transformational path. As a meditative practice becomes a consistent habit of discovery that enhances the journey with amazing things beyond even what the most vivid imagination can believe. (See more images at http://night4hawk.wixsite.com/stevewillis).

Allan's Comments

The COVID-19 pandemic gave me the time and space to think and contemplate the challenges and struggles of preparing students for an unknown future. Mindful meditation brought me mental calmness and the bandwidth to search for possible solutions. It also quiets and focuses the mind so that in-depth reflection and thought can manifest themselves. This is why in my classes, I look for ways to teach students how to quiet their minds so they can reflect and think deeply.

One way I provide students with the opportunity to exercise mindful meditation is through reflection that complements conceptual pedagogy in visual arts through project-based activities. In 2019, I wrote "The design of the conceptual pedagogical approach in visual arts through projects-based activities is a vehicle through which to ameliorate conflicts and harness the power of cultural diversity to build knowledge and skills in communication, collaboration, interaction, creativity, and innovation" (Richards, p.185). This pedagogical approach is derived from "conceptual art" which is about producing artworks where the concept or idea of the project take precedence over the aesthetic, technical, and material concerns (Alberro & Stinson, 1999). In this case, the reflection to build knowledge and skills in communication, collaboration, interaction, creativity, and innovation is more important than the actual aesthetic, technical, and material concerns of the artwork.

Applying the conceptual pedagogy in visual arts, in combination with a reflective exercise, to the exploration of art and culture, as an assignment to decorate their homemade portfolios in which they kept their class projects, provided students the freedom to imagine and explore without the usual constraint of traditional thinking about art and culture. In this case, students' reflections indicated that they thought about their culture as a static belief that they get from their parents, other's thoughts about their cultures as evolving with the experience they gain each day, and further, some had a difficult time seeing themselves for who they are as a cultural being. However, as students proceeded with their assignment to depict their culture in images, the stories of where they were born, where they went to school, why they thought the way they did, and how they have changed since they came to college started to emerged but I wanted them to take this reflection to its logical conclusion, to share their ideas with their classmates so perceptions about culture can change, particularly for those who thought that culture was static.

Mindful meditation is a powerful tool to bring clarity of thought and the bandwidth to build mental agility to think through complicated and challenging issues. But it can also give students confidence and empower them to engage in rational conversation, embrace their culture, and change their minds when credible information is provided. This experience has changed how I teach. I am now not the centre of the universe in the classroom, I empower students to think for themselves, go where the information leads them, and make their own decisions with clarity.

Summary

We hope that all students, teachers, administrators, and community members can support and enhance educational paradigms like mindfulness, which can be easily taught and understood so that it may create opportunities presently unimagined.

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Recognizing Compassion Fatigue in Teachers: Healing the Fault Lines of the Empathic-Self

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Abstract

This paper introduces the topic of compassion fatigue which may help arts teachers understand some of the stresses they are feeling since returning to their classrooms after the recent Covid-19 pandemic. For many, resuming any sense of normalcy has been a slow process or normal now looks completely different. On many levels the recent pandemic can be viewed as traumatic, and many teachers may still be overwhelmed and experiencing something called compassion fatigue, a concept often discussed in relation to nurses in the healthcare industry. "They, and others in caring professions, can face 'vicarious trauma,' more commonly known as compassion fatigue—the cumulative, detrimental effect of working with survivors of traumatic life events. Symptoms can include insomnia, substance abuse, inability to focus, memory impairment, anxiety, depression, isolation, chronic fatigue, and more" (lesley.edu). The intention is to educate teachers on this aspect within their classroom environments so that they can foster self-awareness and self-understanding and seek professional help if necessary. I address literature about the concept of compassion fatigue, describing the contexts of its occurrence, and offer a few practical suggestions for healing the self and attempting to overcome this in the lives of arts teachers.

Keywords: compassion fatigue, teachers, mental well-being

Recognizing Compassion Fatigue in Teachers: Healing the Fault Lines of the Empathic-Self

This paper introduces the topic of compassion fatigue which may help teachers understand some of the stresses they are feeling since returning to their classrooms after the recent Covid-19 pandemic. The intention is to inform teachers about this aspect so that they can foster self-awareness and self-understanding and seek professional help if necessary. The goals are to have teachers recognize the symptoms of compassion fatigue and then offer possible solutions to assuage this malady. The main content will be briefly addressing literature about the concept of compassion fatigue, describing the contexts of its occurrence, and I conclude by offering a few practical suggestions for overcoming this in the arts classroom on both the professional and personal level. First, I begin with some context of how I came to this idea.

Starting in the Fall of 2020 and escalating in 2021, I was noticing a distinct difference in my own attitude and behaviour, not just toward teaching, but toward life. Thinking I was somehow not strong enough to deal with the pandemic or teaching online, I began to question my life choices. Looking to the internet and googling my symptoms, I was unsatisfied by the various results. Still dismayed, I began researching on my University Library databases the concept of "teaching and the feelings I was having" and landed on the concept of *compassion fatigue* within the medical field and helping professions. Intrigued by the label, I researched further and found that I was not alone and that this was indeed something teachers experience. I am currently still researching this topic even as I present it at conferences and as professional development workshops in some school districts.

I feel this is still a timely contribution because of the recent global pandemic, where many teachers were trying to do instruction *as normal* through remote learning (via computers, the Internet, and other technologies) without being with their students in proximity, or in a shared classroom space. In many cases, daily routines were gone and nothing felt normal. Resuming any sense of normalcy has been a slow process or normal now looks completely different. Needless to say, many teachers may still be overwhelmed and experiencing something called compassion fatigue, a concept often discussed in relation to nurses in the healthcare industry.

As I kept researching, I found it was not only nurses, but others in caring professions, such as educators. In fact, "teachers who are empathetic, compassionate, and hardworking are the most vulnerable (Krop, 2013; Stanley, 2011)," (Donahoo, Siegrist, & Garrett-Wright, 2018, p. 442). Now that I have provided a short introduction of how I discovered this concept in other fields, I include a broad yet cursory introduction through various literature.

First, I will start with a broad introduction of the concept including background information from several caring professionals such as nurses and counsellors.

> They, and others in caring professions, can face "vicarious trauma," more commonly known as compassion fatigue—the cumulative, detrimental effect of working with survivors of traumatic life events. Symptoms can include insomnia, substance abuse, inability to focus, memory impairment, anxiety, depression, isolation, chronic fatigue, and more. (lesley.edu)

To begin, “compassion fatigue is basically draining of emotional energy for those of us who deal with others pain,” said Walter Roberts, an American Red Cross disaster relief mental health lead. “Typically, it has a tendency to be progressive and sneak up on people and often times we characterize this as burnout” (Roberts as cited in Hart, 2020, para. 2). This draining of emotional energy may be conflated with burnout, something we often witness and/or experience in the education profession. While similar, they are different concepts. “A term parallel to burnout in some ways, yet distinct, Figley identified the concept of compassion fatigue as ‘the natural consequent behaviours and emotions resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other (our students)—the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person,” (Figley, 1995, p. 7). As teachers, we always want to help our students when they are in our classrooms, struggling or thriving. “It is important to note that some authors indicate that compassion fatigue can occur without exposure to traumatic material; it can result through chronic exposure to the Other’s suffering” (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, p. 111). In this case, the Other in educators’ lives are often their students.

> Individuals in the relationship-intense professions [such as teaching] are exposed to the stories of the Other. We stand by and create a container to hear and hold the stories of our students. Sometimes these stories are heart wrenching and difficult to hear. Compassion fatigue comes when one hears the telling of the Other’s story as traumatic or when the chronicity and severity of student suffering over time is great. (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, p. 111)

Some researchers have said compassion fatigue is more like a set of symptoms and not a disease. Some also call it emotional numbing. In other words, if you watch the same thing over and over again it doesn’t get the same amount of emotions from an individual. Owner and therapist at the *Counselling Palette*, Jennie Bedsworth noted, “sometimes there’s just a feeling of helplessness and a lot of times people at home can be having that feeling of helplessness like there’s nothing they can do there’s nothing that’s going to get better” (Hart, 2020, para. 7). Walter Roberts, an American Red Cross disaster relief mental health lead that I quoted earlier, also said, “They may lose faith in the spirit of humanity because again they’re just overwhelmed with the daily grind of what they hear or what they see,” (Hart, 2020, para. 11).

It goes without saying that teachers are losing hope bit by bit over time. “Put simply, compassion fatigue is the amalgamation of secondary traumatic stress and cumulative burnout experienced by an individual over a period of time (Figley, 2002),” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 65). No one can blame teachers for being overwhelmed by their students’ feelings of being constantly overwhelmed. Care work is hard work and often we can’t leave it *at work*.

There can be many emotions involved with dealing with a secondary traumatic incident. DuBois & Mistretta (2020) list several here: “sadness, mentally drained, confused, pain, fearful, depressed, scared, guilty, sympathetic, angry, disgusted, helpless, anxious, confused, stressed, unprepared, and heartbroken” (p. 62). MU Health Care Psychiatrist Dr. Arpit Aggarwal notes that compassion fatigue can present similarly to depression or anxiety and symptoms can include irritable mood, changes in your sleep and appetite, lack of empathy, lack of pleasure in doing other stuff (Hart, 2020, para. 8). In fact, some

> individuals can experience symptoms commensurate with posttraumatic stress disorder: including intrusive memories and/or dreams; experience flashbacks; negative self-worth and emotions; detachment and emotional numbness; irritability or aggression; hypervigilance; impaired attention skills; and sleep disturbances (taken from APA, 2013, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 65)

It is important to note that “the appearance of compassion fatigue can take many shapes: a diminishing sense of hope, compassion, and empathy; changes in work performance; feelings of bitterness towards our jobs; violation of boundaries; and a loss of emotional regulation,” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 60). What presents for one teacher may not be the exact same for another.

Now I will narrow this to the teaching environment. This portion of the paper is to inform teachers about the aspect of compassion fatigue so that they can foster self-awareness and self-understanding. “Educators demonstrating resentment, neglect, and distress could be experiencing compassion stress,” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 61). “Each day educators face mounting pressure to meet learning objectives and demonstrate student progress. Compassion fatigue can affect an individual cognitively, emotionally, behaviourally, and spiritually (Figley, 2002),” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 7). As our students come to school grappling with the trauma of the recent pandemic, we are expected to help them cope with what they are experiencing so that some classroom learning can take place. However, we may soon realize we are not equipped to handle the task, especially as we are also dealing with various setbacks, personally and professionally, due to the recent pandemic. Our own participation in that traumatic ongoing event, coupled with a probable lack of trauma-informed training in our teacher preparation programs, may have had us

struggling with how to address the complex thoughts and feelings generated as a result of creating a safe space for our students.

One way to create a safe space is by understanding what trauma can do to students and potentially helping them work through it. “Trauma creates a disruption in a child’s normal brain development leaving profound, lasting effects on a child’s ability to process information, employ problem/decision-making strategies, and ultimately to learn (Grossman et al., 2003),” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 27). However,

> there are also possibly negative implications when educators address childhood trauma in the classroom. Trauma not only affects the individual; it also can have a profound effect on the helper. Teachers can be negatively impacted by the struggles of individual students, as well as suffer from the cumulative burden of supporting all students who have experienced trauma. (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 27)

Figley’s Traumatic Stress Theory (2002) asserts that individuals “working directly with others who have been traumatized can be just as likely to experience traumatic stress and related disorders. In other words, you can be traumatized merely by working with and listening to individuals who have a trauma history (Valent, 2002),” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 61). In the context of our recent global pandemic, it’s safe to say, we’re working with students who are living with trauma.

Here is where I relate to us as arts teachers specifically. While all individuals may not be currently facing compassion fatigue or experiencing the symptoms mentioned previously, many art teachers tend to express genuine empathy and really care about others, particularly their current (and former) students. When their students are upset or experiencing difficulties in their lives, especially as they try to return to a sense of normalcy, compassionate teachers often feel it, too. “Essentially, the more compassionate and empathic you are, the higher your risk for developing vicarious trauma or [compassion fatigue],” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 65).

In my previous research, art teachers are often described as caring, understanding, helpful, and supportive (Hetrick, 2010). Art incorporates life. We are in a great position in the arts classroom and full of the perfect human traits to learn about our students in a deeply personal way. “These traits can create conditions where educators become overwhelmed by the sheer needs of their students. When compassion stress is not addressed effectively, empathy can lead to traumatic stress when [art teachers] are feeling overwhelmed emotionally (Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996),” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 30). “According to Valent (2002), people can experience feelings of distress and trauma from believing that they have not done enough to avert another individual’s suffering,” (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020, p. 30). We have many students suffering, and we just cannot help them all, and this may lead to a feeling of stress for us. Because art teachers are so caring, I will now

begin to conclude this paper by focusing on a few practical suggestions for overcoming compassion fatigue in the arts classroom.

Several resources are now available to help us recognize the symptoms and causes of compassion fatigue. Healing begins by employing such practices as regular exercise, healthy eating habits, highly functional relationships, enjoyable social activities, journaling and restful sleep. Based on the ideas in the third edition of the book *The Resilient Practitioner: Burnout and compassion fatigue prevention and self-care strategies for the helping professions*, the authors Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison (2016) bifurcate this into sustaining the professional self and sustaining the personal self. The following few concepts are taken directly from the book, which has many more ideas to share. I highly recommend it for anyone further interested in working through this topic. I have added my own interpretations and explanations to make them more relatable to arts teachers specifically.

As an example, one way to sustain the professional self is by **engaging in work that is meaningful.** For many arts teachers, working with and promoting the lives of those younger than us, preparing them for a future of critical thinking and artful making, gives us meaning in preparing for and accomplishing our daily tasks. It is when the "teaching seems to have little effect that we reach despair because our *[purpose]* for choosing this work—to make a difference in human life—is threatened," (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, p. 137). Sometimes we feel that we are not being effective or making much of a difference in students' lives, especially in the grander scheme of a global pandemic. This is when it gets harder and harder to go to work and face each day. However, "if we can feel effective, we can obtain the kind of meaning that can offer great sustenance to the self. For the sustenance of the self, therefore, we must find a way in our work to feel that we are succeeding, even if it is in very small ways," (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, p. 138).

Another way to sustain the professional self is by **maximizing the experience of professional success**, which can look different to different teachers or to those in other professions, but generally involve the same four dimensions. According to Skovholt (2016), the four dimensions include student change or appreciation; external recognition by supervisors and peers; expert content knowledge; and the teacher's mastery of the working alliance (p. 139). As teachers, I think we can agree that positive (intellectual and behavioral) change in students and/or their appreciation is the most important dimension of our jobs. However, this is the dimension that we typically have the least amount of control over. For instance, just because we put an amazing amount of effort into our lessons, plan for the unexpected, and differentiate to all needs; it does not mean that students will learn the objectives. If we are judging our entire professional self-worth and efficacy on whether our students learn or like us, this can be problematic to our self-concept and therefore our future effort. Skovholt suggests we should focus on the dimensions of content knowledge

and relationship building; the areas we have more control over. He also notes that we need to stop going "madly from one occupational responsibility to another, rushing from one thing to the next without savouring the success," (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, pp. 140-141). Moving on to sustaining the personal self, Skovholt has written about several ways to help us self-care on a more personal level. I offer two that are indicative of the others outlined.

> Sustaining the personal self is a serious obligation because the work, *giving of the self*, cannot successfully proceed without it. Many [teachers] struggle with feelings of selfishness when they think of trying to meet their own needs…*maintaining oneself personally is necessary to function effectively in a professional role*. (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, p. 161)

The first way to sustain the self is through **Constant investment in a personal renewal process.** "A major goal for professional self-care is to develop attitudes and activities that serve as natural endorphin boosters and stress hormone reducers," (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, p. 161). These attitudes and activities may vary for all of us but pay attention to what you personally respond to those results in a sense of peace, happiness, or vitality. Then partake in more of exactly that.

Another way to sustain the personal self is by garnering an **Awareness of the danger of one-way caring relationships in one's personal life.** This is a call to take stock of your personal relationships that only want care from you, but do not offer the same level of care, or any care, in return. "The hope is that caring goes back and forth in our personal lives' as other people care for us, we, of course, want to care for them," (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016, p. 162). We may need to set boundaries on one-way caring relationships. I hope these few ways of sustaining the professional self and personal self will help you improve your daily life.

Lastly, I propose when you might need to seek assistance. You may want to start by talking to a friend or a colleague. Then perhaps speak to a supervisor or a principal. Or in higher education, talk to your mentor or director. Some schools have counsellors for teachers and for their families. If you have tried any of these methods of sustaining the professional self and sustaining the personal self, and you are still struggling with any of the symptoms addressed in this paper, please seek assistance from a licensed professional. Furthermore, if nothing seems to improve, please reach out to a doctor and/or therapist. I have one important closing thought. As an individual in a caring profession, your self-care is very valuable! If we teach each of our students to love themselves, we need to do the same. Remember, self-care is an act of self-love.

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Navigating Socially-Imposed Fault Lines: Critical Explorations of a Neurodivergent Autistic Identity

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Abstract

This is an opportunity for a late-life diagnosed autistic woman to speak her story and fill the void of critical information to better understand, support, and engage with some autistic individuals. Readers may better understand how to accept and embrace neurodiverse individuals or at least understand their perspectives with a heightened empathic awareness. Most of the time, the author shared selective personal narratives from her childhood detailing what life is like as a neurodivergent thinker in a neurotypical world. These narratives were shared as a way to unfold the unique way in which some with ASD may identify, write, view, and embrace the world—as well as how others' treatment can negatively affect their daily lives, such as being left out of activities, feeling alone and misunderstood, and feeling no sense of belonging. Following through to her current position as a professor, she shared how her late-life diagnosis completely derailed her sense of self and yet inspired a profound self-awakening. Because autism is often labelled a disorder or disability, many people misunderstand the vibrancy, intelligence, empathy, and creativeness that many autistics, especially females, embody. The paper ends with some suggested tips about better ways to approach autistic individuals.

Keywords: neurodiversity, autism, autistic empowerment, auto-ethnography

Author note

Because it is my life story, this conference proceeding includes portions of the introduction and other excerpts from my book chapter: Hetrick, L. (2024). The Intersectionality of Autism, Woman, and Scholar, in *The Intersectionality of Critical Identities in Art Education*. [Eds.] Steve Willis, Ryan Shin, & Allan Richard, InSEA Publications, 3-11.

Navigating Socially-Imposed Fault Lines:
Critical Explorations of a Neurodivergent Autistic Identity

This paper begins with selective personal narratives from childhood detailing what life is like as a neurodivergent thinker in a neurotypical world. These narratives are shared to unfold the unique way in which some with autism may identify, write, view, and embrace the world—as well as how others' treatment can negatively affect their daily lives, such as being left out of activities, feeling alone and misunderstood, and feeling no sense of belonging. The content that follows from those narratives is a cursory definition of autism and its evolution through the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders published in 2022 (DSM-5-TR).

There is a lot of social stigmata that goes along with being a female autistic and with others (not) knowing this identifier about me while at the same time, not knowing a lot about what it entails or relying on stereotypes. "For too many years, women on the spectrum have been pushed aside in terms of diagnosis, intervention, and support," (Henault, 2018, p. i). My main purpose is to share the story of a woman with late life diagnosed *Autism Spectrum Disorder* (ASD). While some in art education have written books on students with autism, actual autistic voices are often unheard or filtered through neurotypical thought processes. The narratives I tell are parts of my story and may not be similar to anyone else with autism, recognizing there can be vast differences in lived experience from one individual to the next. After this foundation, following through to my current position as a tenured professor, I share how my late-life diagnosis completely derailed my sense of self and yet inspired a profound self-awakening in myself and in my teaching approaches. This is important because "spectrum women have a voice that needs to be heard. They need people to understand the challenges they face in daily life, and to recognize their talents and many achievements," (Attwood, 2018, p. i). Because autism is often labelled as a disorder or disability, many people misunderstand the vibrancy, intelligence, heightened empathy, and creativeness that many autistics, especially female autistics, embody.

Growing up in a small town in Ohio, I always knew I was different and that I didn't quite fit in with everyone else. I was bullied a lot, especially by the conventionally cute girls in my class. I was smart though. I was a year ahead in school, having started kindergarten when I was four years old. I really wanted to go to school and learn like my older brother did, and I could read and write, so the administration let me attend even though I was breaking the age requirement (of at least 5 years old) for enrolment. Unfortunately, this era was long before it was considered cool to be smart. My mom had me tested to see if I was a gifted student. With what I can now refer to as selective mutism, though my test scores

were high, they did not put me in that gifted category because of my social ineptitude. I was quiet. I was bashful. I didn't make eye contact. I was not comfortable around people.

However, I was not tested for autism. It was considered a new disorder that school psychologists did not know a lot about (at least in my area) and it was considered a "boy disease," so students were rarely tested, and no female students were tested in my school. Alarmingly, the myth of autism being predominately male still exists today in some circles (Hubbard, 2010).

I hated being touched. I didn't like having my hair brushed. I would only wear certain clothes over and over again because I could tolerate the materials' textures next to my skin. I threw absolute fits when asked to wear wool, corduroy, jeans, sweaters, turtlenecks, taffeta, ruffles, lace, or anything close fitting. I did not like jewellery. I hated dresses. For a long time, I only wore shoes after being scolded for going barefoot everywhere outside and then absolutely forced my feet into what felt like *foot prisons*. If I had to wear shoes, I preferred saddle shoes or cowboy boots, with no socks. I developed a reputation within my family for being particular or picky and quite *stubborn*. Inside I was suffering, and I didn't know why. The concept of sensory overload would be decades off from my knowing and naming of it to explain my experiences.

Food textures can be absolutely upsetting to me, even now, but as an adult I know how to order food to avoid. As a kid, I had a very narrow selection of foods that I would eat. This had mostly to do with textures. I liked having the same lunch packed for me every day of the week for years at a time. I would cry and gag if my parents forced me to eat something that I could not stand. I wasn't being an ungrateful brat for not eating what was provided; it was causing me literal pain because my body would react (e.g., gag reflex, inability to swallow).

The transition from my rural elementary school to a large city middle school was rough. Over time in seventh grade, I was taken in by a group of girls who were also smart and on the fringes of popularity. We were in the advanced placement classes together and in the string orchestra together. They were strong in their intellectual abilities and seemingly didn't care so much about what the popular girls thought of them. They knew they were in school to learn, and while they were somewhat aware of the fashion trends of teenage girls, they didn't put much stock in the trends. This group of girls changed my life.

For the first time in my life, I started to feel like I belonged somewhere. While admittedly still outside of the group (most of them had gone to the same elementary school, so their bond was well-established), I finally had a group of peers to sit with at lunch. I had people saying hi to me in the hallways and people who noticed my absence. I started to watch how they interacted with each other, how they negotiated the intricacies of teen

friendships, how they navigated institutional boundaries and social mores. I started adapting their movements, both socially and physically. I was learning how to be perceived as normal.

Over the course of a few years, I began passing as neurotypical. What I didn't know then that I know now, I was perfecting the coping mechanism called masking or social camouflaging, a more specific form of impression management. "Social camouflaging is defined as the use of strategies by autistic people to minimize the visibility of their autism in social situations (Lai et al., 2016)," (Schneid & Raz, 2020, p. 2). Ironically, it was also my heightened ability to mask that further delayed my diagnosis, which is all too common for females with autism.

Going into high school was a much more stable transition for me thanks to the friend group that adopted me in junior high. Even the changing of daily routines and rhythms was much more tolerable knowing that I had this group of strong smart women with whom I was now a recognized member. However, in order to be socially integrated, I had let go of the parts of my personality that were not socially acceptable. At the time, I didn't recognize nor care about what that meant about what I was doing to my sense of self. Now I understand that "[i]f impression management, especially in the specific form of camouflaging, was required to pass as normal and score social points, it also meant that something had to be hidden inside because it was socially flawed and faulty" (Schneid & Raz, 2020, p. 3).

For decades, I have repressed parts of me that were not socially championed. After my diagnosis and coming to terms with my autism, I have been slowly allowing these parts to surface again without feeling shame. I am feeling more like myself while others are suddenly struggling with these aspects of my personality appearing *out of nowhere*. To be clear, I still struggle. I have so much more to say about my life experiences, especially the times before knowing why I was like I was, but I will move on with some basic definitions.

According to the 2022 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5-TR), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder.

> Autism spectrum disorder is characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, including deficits in social reciprocity, nonverbal communicative behaviours used for social interaction, and skills in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships. In addition to communication deficits, the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder requires the presence of restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, or activities. Because symptoms change with development and may be masked by compensatory mechanisms, the diagnostic criteria may be met based on historical information, although the current presentation must cause significant impairment. (DSM-5-TR)

It should also be noted that prior to the 5th edition of the DSM, Aspergers was a separate diagnosis. However, "[u]nlike Asperger's syndrome, the terms 'low-functioning' and 'high-functioning' autism have never appeared in any diagnostic manual. Rather, they are colloquial conventions used to refer to an individual's intellectual or verbal ability and/or level of apparent social and everyday capabilities" (Kenny et al, 2016, p. 458). I mention this because even among those friends and colleagues that I have trusted enough to share this diagnosis, these descriptors are sometimes used. My best advice is calling an autistic by their name. Beyond that, call them by their title, in my case, Doctor. And if you must address their neurodivergence, then ask them how they prefer to be referenced.

In the presentation, but not pictured in this paper, I provided infographics that show how to better understand the radial spectrum of autism, as opposed to the linear spectrum that so many use or visualize. If you think of a radial spectrum similar to a digital soundboard with sliding knobs for fine-tuned adjustments, those individual elements depicted on the graphic are at differing levels for every autistic person and may also vary by day or by situation. Now I transition into a few possible approaches to use with autistic students.

I have always respected who my students were as individuals; however, since my diagnosis and [re]formation of understanding myself, I have noticed marked changes in how I approach each student.

Because "[e]nvironments where students feel insecure, marginalized, invisible, threatened, and/or disenfranchised do not, of course, inspire meaningful learning" (Powers & Duffy, 2016, p. 61), I foreground creating community and offering a **supportive** space within my classroom on the first day of class. I tell them that while one might argue that the space being opened to talk with them should be a *safe* space for sharing, when talking about one's intersectionalities of identity, the space is anything but *safe*. Divulging and coming to terms with concepts that may be disrupting one's idea of a whole self or a potentially marginalized self will likely be intensely personal and highly emotional.

Once I established a supportive space, I then like to highlight our similarities and commonalities while not dismissing nor denigrating any of our differences. "This shift opens up the possibility to recognize common ground between groups, even those deemed fundamentally different by conventional categories" (Cole, 2009, p. 175). As an educator, recognizing the invisible intersections of self and others may help stimulate the underlying dynamic in the classroom and/or alleviate potential misunderstandings and misdirection that could arise from ignorance or misinterpretation of unknown, undisclosed, or unseen identities that occupy a large portion of any one's sense of self or being in the world. "Recognizing our own and our future students' intersectional identities is an act of creating small openings where teachers may become responsive to learner's needs and identities" (Powers & Duffy, 2016, p. 62). An intimate knowledge of different identity categories and

the internal and external resources that influence their formation can potentially assist preservice teachers in broader acceptance of their future K-12 students and their own intersectionalities of identity.

Once our unique intersectional identities have been validated and shown to be integral to our classroom learning community, we start with readings and activities that explore the topic of emotional intelligence and self-respect, as well as social and emotional learning. I initiate discussions normalizing mental health experiences and encourage self-care amongst the preservice teachers first, so that they are better able to support their K-12 students second.

Then we talk about different tactile sensitivities that some students may have and how to offer different materials or approaches that allow the students to have a similar experience without sensory overload. One such example is having a material like Model Magic (which is smooth, but not sticky, nor dirty) to be offered in place of regular ceramic clay which can be lumpy, sticky, and make a student's hands feel dirty or unclean. We also talk about potentially having a *calm corner* in the room where students who need a break know they can go to relax or reset, play with fidgets, or use noise-cancelling headphones if they need auditory respite. When we talk about these ideas, we also include the concept of offering alternative lesson options for all students (so that no one's difference is amplified) that still meet certain goals but can have multitudinous paths to completion.

In the presentation but not pictured in this paper was an infographic of signs of autistic burnout. Some of the signs included: nonchalance/flat mood, low attention span, exhaustion, scared to make commitments, irritability, low capacity for socializing, and unshakeable anxiety. Recognize that some students may not be acting out for attention, but may be experiencing overload that leads to burnout. Even as an adult, I experience this. My closest friends are now able to notice these signs in me and help me navigate the situation or leave it altogether.

In the presentation but not pictured in this paper was an infographic from an autistic individual who lists examples of what to say to autistic people. Some of the things to say to autistic people include: What's your experience of being autistic? Would you like me to advocate with/for you? What can I do to help you feel more comfortable? This event is optional, and we will not take offence if you cannot join us.

I believe that by employing these and other supportive strategies, we can create a world where disability oppression through educational institutions can segue into disability empowerment by way of caring and knowledgeable (arts) teachers. Since every individual with autism is different, get to know your students as best as you can within your time constraints. Have conversations. Allow for difference. Allow for resistance. Having a safe

person can make a world of difference to an autistic person. Trust won't be immediate. It is a process…

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Building Bridges Through Art Appreciation: How Does Visual Vernacular Foster Connection Between Deaf and Hearing People?

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Abstract

In a society dominated by hearing people, written communication and sign language interpreting can solve basic communication problems between Deaf and hearing people but cannot fully dismantle barriers therebetween. To foster connections from an artistic standpoint, we explored the use of physical expressions. A literature review on visual vernacular (VV) revealed its potential for promoting interaction and bridging the gap between Deaf and hearing people. The literature review on VV highlights its potential for fostering Deaf–hearing interaction. In addition, using critical disability studies as the theoretical framework for this study, we aim to create activities that enable people with and without disabilities to transcend the limitations of dualistic ontology and establish interconnected relationships while preserving their diverse identities. To evaluate the potential of VV, we developed and executed an exchange programme that utilised VV techniques. The results showed that the exchange programme facilitated relationship building between Deaf and hearing people. To encourage further communication, it is essential to develop art activities that combine VV and art appreciation, incorporating hands, fingers, facial expressions, and body movements. By promoting an inclusive and symbiotic society, such initiatives can serve as bridges between Deaf and hearing communities.

Keywords*:* visual vernacular, art appreciation, critical disability studies, Deaf and hearing communities

Author Note

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Building Bridges Through Art Appreciation:
How Does Visual Vernacular Foster Connection Between Deaf and Hearing People?

The author of this paper is Deaf and lives in a world of silence. Having interacted with various hearing people, the author has noticed that there are invisible barriers to communication between Deaf and hearing people, and the metaphor of the InSEA World Congress 2023 Fault Lines, alludes to the power of lines. It is an infinitely malleable form and metaphor for the boundaries and divisions that make up our world (InSEA World Congress 2023). Although Deaf and hearing people live in the same world, the author believes that the differences between Deaf and hearing cultures and the communication challenges of both divide both worlds and deepen the fissures that have developed between them. Therefore, the author has developed a new way of knowing through art from the perspective of the parties concerned (Deaf people) to promote communication between Deaf and hearing people from three perspectives—inclusion, disability, and art and education—to not only make the hearing people shift their awareness towards Deaf people but also resolve the issues that have arisen between Deaf and hearing people. The author believes that this will help to resolve the problems that have arisen between Deaf and hearing people.

Differences Between the Designations Deaf and Deaf

What is the difference between a lower case 'd' and a capital 'D'? Lower case 'deaf' means 'deafness' and refers to a condition that requires medical assistance or social welfare to support or treat a physical disability. Capitalised 'Deaf' does not refer to deafness or hearing loss as a symptom but rather to a 'sense of belonging to the Deaf culture'. Furthermore, capitalised 'Deaf' implies 'deaf and dumb', which is an old phrase meaning 'deaf-mute'. It originated as a counterpoint to 'dumb' (which was inverted from "dumb" meaning "dumb to talk" to mean "nomad"). The capital 'D' was chosen as a symbol of a high assertion of the existence of an oppressed community. Culturally, people of Deaf culture self-identify as linguistic minorities (True Colours Festival Singapore PR team, 2021). Therefore, the author's research subject are deaf people who have a sense of belonging to the Deaf culture.

Barriers Between Deaf and Hearing People

Regarding the barriers between Deaf and hearing people, according to Xu & Zhang, "barriers are created between Deaf and hearing people because of their different communication styles and cultural backgrounds" (2006). Moreover, the author believes that in a hearing-oriented society, written communication and sign language interpreting can solve the basic communication problems between Deaf and hearing people, but it cannot eliminate the barriers completely. For example, written communication allows two people to understand each other, but it is time-consuming for both people. While a sign language interpreter can speed up the communication process for Deaf and hearing people, in doing

so, Deaf and hearing people are looking at the sign language interpreter and not at each other. With a third party involved, there is not much eye nor physical contact between the two people who are communicating. Therefore, the writer believes that in addition to sign language and written dialogue, there should be an artistic medium to help Deaf and hearing people communicate better.

Theoretical Framework

Notably, the 'assemblage' concept in critical disability studies was chosen as the theoretical framework for this study. Why use critical disability studies as the main theoretical framework while supporting the concept of 'assemblage'? One of the strongest developments within Critical Disability Studies has been the cultural studies approach (Shakespeare, 2013) that draws heavily on the humanities and arts and contextualises disability in relation to dominant and anti-hegemonic forms of cultural reproduction (Thomson, 2011; Davis, 2013). Critical Disability Studies is a "location populated by people who advocate building upon the foundational perspectives of disability studies whilst integrating new and transformative agendas associated with postcolonial, queer and feminist theories" (Goodley, 2016, pp. 190–191). We would agree with the assertion that the purpose of Critical Disability Studies theory is "to start with disability but never end with it: disability is the space from which to think through a host of political, theoretical and practical issues that are relevant to all" (Goodley 2016, p. 157; original emphasis p. 977). Tatsumi (2022) presented the concept of 'combination' in critical disability critique. The concept of 'combination' in Critical Disability advocates that disabled and non-disabled people move away from such limitations and actively recognise the potential of the body and material itself. It also emphasises the need to maintain mutual heterogeneity for disabled and non-disabled people to relate to each other. The author therefore believes that to achieve equality, both different groups must understand, respect, and support each other's differences.

The Visual Vernacular and the Development of Creative Activities

The author wanted to create an activity that would allow both disabled and non-disabled people to transcend the limitations of a binary ontology and establish interconnectedness, while maintaining their distinct identities. To this end, visual vernacular (VV) and art appreciation were chosen as artistic mediums to develop creative activities to facilitate communication between Deaf and hearing people. First, about VV, according to Brandwijk (2018), "a field of Deaf Art created by Deaf people (linguistic minorities who use sign language). It is an expressive technique that uses body movements, facial expressions, and symbolic signs to tell a story" (p. 6). The pioneer of VV was Bernard Bragg, a Deaf person. While teaching at a school for the Deaf in the U.S., he saw how children who were not from Deaf families became adept at using their bodies to express what they had seen in

a movie the night before and imitate the characters in a story. However, no one had taught them these things, and they had learned them naturally (Brandwijk, 2018; Stroesser, 2015). Moreover, while disability has tended to be conceptualised in terms of lack, disability's ubiquity throughout all forms of culture from painting to film and music indicates that disability serves some important cultural practices (Goodley, 2019). To this end, VV and art appreciation are chosen as artistic mediums for developing creative activities that promote communication between Deaf and hearing people.

Pilot Study

The author developed a VV exchange programme in 2022 and invited two Deaf and two hearing people to participate in a pilot study. Some of the activities are depicted in Figure 1. They look at a picture of a crowded train, imagine a short story about the picture, and tell such a short story in VV. They can be seen discussing with a pen in front of a whiteboard. The background was added to support and enhance their performance. Both groups seemed to be having a lot of fun.

The first meetings were formal and did not provide a good way of communicating. On several occasions, there were miscommunications. However, these barriers were removed by participating in VV creative activities. Consequently, VV activities facilitated communication between Deaf and hearing people. However, the author found that the VV exchange programme alone was insufficient. Communication that only involves conceiving a story and giving written information to show it physically is difficult for beginners, wastes a lot of time, and can easily lead to beginners losing confidence and even affect communication between the two parties. Accordingly, we decided to use paintings, rather than textual information, to further expand the participants' ideas from the presentation of visual information. Art appreciation via the physical expression of what is obtained from the visual information presented by the paintings would not be a good exchange opportunity for the hearing person to understand the Deaf person.

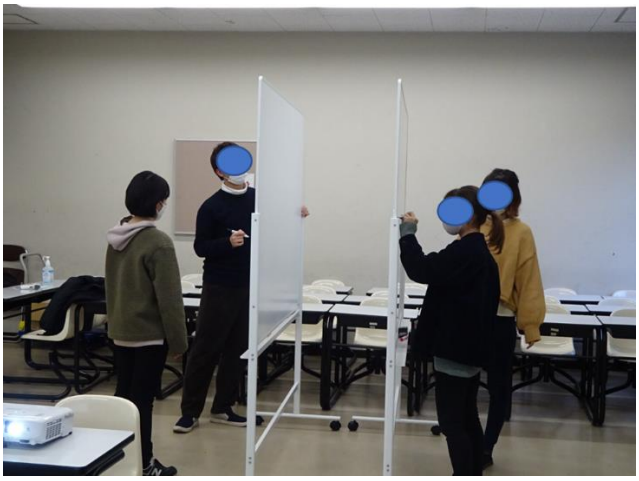


Figure 1 | *Visual vernacular (VV) activities* (Copyright by the author)

On the Integration of Visual Vernacular and Art Appreciation

Interactive painting appreciation can provide many opportunities for two people to have a conversation (Ueno, 2011), and the writer argues that because of the connection between the sensations gained from viewing paintings and physical expression, it is possible for both parties to create interpretations that promote interaction, so VV and fine art appreciation can be combined to develop a creative. The author tried to develop a creative activity combining VV and art appreciation.

The first step is 'appreciation', where two people appreciate a painting together; the second step is to 'collaborate' in imagining and telling a story through appreciation, where the two people cannot use either the sign or verbal language but only written language and gestures; the third step is 'collaboration', that is, physical expression through storytelling, where two people can express themselves physically anywhere and use other small props to assist in the performance; and the final step is 'VV' (presentation) and artwork filming, where the two people get a third person to record the performance. Steps 1 to 4 are depicted in Figures 2 to 5.



Figure 2 | *Appreciate the paintings* (Copyright by the author)

The author not only wanted to know the effectiveness of the combination of VV and art appreciation and the shortcomings they had but also carried out this activity by choosing two groups of listening college students to participate, improve, and reflect on the activity based on their experiences and evaluations. They were asked to look at three paintings and then to connect them through a short story and perform a physical performance. Figure 2 evidently revealed that they looked intently at the three paintings and tried to find the connection between them.



Figure 3 | *Collaboration of imagination and storytelling through appreciation* (Copyright by the author)

As the use of both spoken and sign languages was prohibited, they communicated through words and gestures to create a short story. They carefully worked out the features and movements of the characters and expressed them physically.



Figure 4 | *Collaborative production of physical expression through storytelling appreciation* (Copyright by the author)

We can see the girls performing VV activities in different places in Figure 5. One of the girls used a piece of white paper as a small prop to aid her performance and create the effect of playing poker.



Figure 5 | *Visual vernacular (VV) demonstration and filming of artwork* (Copyright by the author)

The first group enlisted the help of a third person to record and finish the performance in front of them, and the second group utilised the computer's camera function and placed it across from them to record the final performance without getting a third person.

Conclusion

As Goodley (2016), Goodley et al. (2019), and Tatsumi (2022) indicated in their concept of 'assemblage', both artists collaborated through physical expression, understanding and respecting differences with the other, objectively looking at the usual ways of communication, and creating unusual ways of communication. The two artists also worked on the theory of Critical Disability Studies. The exchange programme, which was based on the theory of critical disability studies, enabled the hearing people to change their perception of the Deaf people, while, at the same time, the rich physical expression of VV and interactive viewing, which provided many opportunities for dialogue, broke down barriers between the Deaf and the hearing people and promoted communication between them. communication between them. Therefore, the author believes that art appreciation via VV can function as a bridge between Deaf and hearing people.

However, as a challenge, to facilitate a smoother coexistence between Deaf and hearing people, it is necessary to create activities that utilise not only gestures and rich physical expression but also intellectual tools, such as speech recognition and speech play, to draw out their power and to communicate and understand each other in a way that can completely eliminate barriers. This is a necessity.

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Manifesting Marginalized Mothers: A Collective Narrative Inquiry of Asian Graduate Student Mothers in the United States

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Abstract

This study projects a new trajectory to think about the overlooked population: Asian graduate student mothers in the United States. Asian graduate student mothers face complex challenges related to their multicultural backgrounds, family commitments, and high self-expectations in Western higher education. Despite these challenges, their experiences are rarely addressed in academia. This study explores the struggles and agency of Asian graduate student mothers, who navigate role switching, social expectations, high living expenses and tuition costs, and cultural shocks. The authors, who are themselves ongoing Asian graduate student mothers, employ theories of role identity and feminist theories to examine the influence of social structures and women's empowerment on these individuals' experiences. This study utilized a narrative approach to explore the experiences of five Asian graduate student mothers at a university in the southeastern United States. The participants were interviewed by semi-structured interviews and photo elicitation techniques to generate a deeper understanding of their stories. Through storytelling, this paper sheds light on the structural pressures, inner motivations, and strategic actions that shape the experiences of Asian graduate student mothers. To conclude, we present a diagram to visualize their multifaceted stories and offer recommendations for future student mothers to consider.

Keywords: Asian graduate student mother, motherhood, role identity, transfeminism, agency

Authors note

All images are used with participant permission in compliance with IRB regulations.

Manifesting Marginalized Mothers: A Collective Narrative Inquiry of Asian Graduate Student Mothers in the United States

A large proportion of Asian graduate student mothers in the United States remains understudied, facing challenges rooted in cultural expectations, gender stereotypes, and discrimination, impacting their academic pursuits (Ding & Devine, 2018; Institute of International Education, 2021). As three Asian graduate student mothers, we navigate the intersection of motherhood, cross-cultures, and social structures, engaging in identity work amid diverse expectations. This research explores agency in motherhood and cultural experiences from Asian student mothers in the United States, offering insights for future female students and academia.

Sparse research addresses the experiences of 38,000+ female Asian graduate students, especially mothers, revealing unique challenges (Institute of International Education, 2021). Existing studies lack statistical details on student mothers and family formation. This gap emphasizes the necessity of understanding the specific challenges faced by Asian graduate student mothers.

Asian graduate student mothers navigate complex roles shaped by social structures, including cultural expectations different from countries, family and ethnicity (Burke & Stets, 2022; Koo & Nyunt, 2022; Zhang, 2020). Despite facing multifaceted pressures, Asian mothers prioritize family and academic studies while neglecting their physical and mental health (Phan, 2022; Myers-Walls et al., 2011). The societal expectation to balance various roles poses challenges in identity formation of Asian graduate student mothers (Phu, 2020).

Challenges of Asian Graduate Student Mothers

The experiences of Asian graduate student mothers are diverse due to different family structure and international politics. Myers-Walls et al. (2011) investigate stressors in international student families, where some mothers have partners or social resources for childcare and support, while others face challenges due to partner's work or other reasons. Even single mothers face financial constraints and increased child-rearing duties (Cao, 2022; Palermo-Kielb, 2020). These challenges, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlight the need for understanding and targeted support (Phan, 2022; Zhang, 2020).

Asian graduate student mothers' challenges tie to cultural values, impacting both student performance and motherhood. Confucian values, framing mothers as selfless and subservient within a patriarchal structure, clash with the assertiveness and self-fulfilment demanded in competitive Western academia (Luo et al., 2013). Furthermore, Asian graduate student mothers strive to balance their cultural expectations and individual achievement to form their identity (Murad, 2021). It requires navigating different cultural interpretations of motherhood while carving out a new path to accomplish their goals.

Role Switching

Asian student mothers often face conflicts, struggles, and burnout due to role switching between family and academic expectations. Burke and Stets (2022) note that individuals experience role conflict and strain when managing incongruent roles. This pressure results in feelings of inadequacy, guilt, exhaustion, and neglect of physical health, contributing to a detrimental cycle of stress affecting academic performance (Phan, 2022; Phu, 2020; Zhang, 2020). Besides, globalization significantly impacts Asian graduate student mothers, shaping their experiences and expectations. For instance, Korean female students may pursue education abroad to escape gender discrimination in Korea, but they face heightened expectations, being regarded as role models in their home country, leading to added pressures (Kim, 2011). Recognizing and addressing these cultural and societal pressures is crucial to support the academic success and well-being of Asian student mothers. These challenges, influenced by conflicting expectations in family and academic roles (Myers-Wall et al., 2011; Murad, 2021), underscore the importance of empowering these mothers to navigate and negotiate their roles for success in both academic and personal domains.

Agency and Self-Empowerment

Though Asian graduate student mothers often experience conflicting expectations, they actively pursue self-help methods, emphasizing agency in navigating their roles and responsibilities. Inouye et al. (2022) indicated that international students stress on self-care, self-reflection, and self-regulation to empower them to take control of their academic and personal lives. Leveraging social mediators and support systems enhances well-being and academic success, showcasing agency as a transformative force exercised both within social structures and on themselves, rather than solely assimilating to a foreign culture (Ahearn, 2001; Chang, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

We employ feminist and role identity theory as a framework to explore the experiences of Asian graduate student mothers. Intersectionality and transnational feminism remind us not to oversimplify the complexity of Asian graduate student mothers. Transnational feminism acknowledges the multifaceted nature of women's international experiences, recognizing factors like race, class, sexuality, and nation (Mohanty, 2005). This framework sheds light on how the transnational identities intersect with power structures, influencing their experiences in both immigrants and mothers (Crenshaw, 1991). The importance of solidarity across borders is emphasized, providing a lens to understand the complex interplay of factors shaping the lives of these women.

Role identity theory, as Burke and Stets (2022) theorized, focuses on the relationship between individuals and their social roles, offering an angle to analyse the impact of cultural

differences and societal expectations of Asian graduate student mothers as scholars, mothers, and immigrants. By exploring specific behaviours and expectations related to these roles, we gain a nuanced understanding of the development and maintenance of their role identities. Moreover, recognizing the influence of social structures and agency, we delve into how these women navigate and mediate multiple structures, behaviours, and expectations, uncovering shared attributes and individual interpretations.

To examinate the experiences of Asian graduate student mothers, the integrated lenses of intersectionality, transnational feminism and role identity theory provides a nuanced viewpoint for us to conceptualize participants' lived experiences under the broader structures. Also, this framework brings us to capture the struggles and agency of these Asian graduate student mothers, along with insights and recommendations for better supporting them in their multifaceted roles as mothers, graduate students, and transnational migrants.

Methodology

Through narrative analysis, we seek insights into how Asian graduate student mothers interpret and narrate their experiences.

Participants

Participants are recruited through social media or Asian communities, with inclusion criteria comprising current enrolment as an international graduate student in the U.S. under a non-resident Visa from Asian countries. Additionally, participants must be mothers currently raising their child(ren).

Data Collection and Analysis

This study utilizes three methods for data collection. First, participants complete a demographic questionnaire detailing their origin, children's ages, duration of U.S. stay, and family type. Second, a semi-structured interview guide explores experiences in navigating social roles, and how they interpret and negotiate in these roles. Open-ended questions aim to elicit rich stories. Third, photo elicitation, coined by Glaw et al. (2017) are used to prompt nuanced responses beyond written questions, as interviewees introduce visuals they brought. After data collection, Kim's (2019) narrative analysis is adopted, emphasizing imaginative exploration without self-censorship. This approach aligns with narrative inquiry, seeking to understand meanings and interpret phenomena through storytelling (Ellis, 2004). Ethical considerations, vital for preventing arbitrary interpretations, align with our philosophical orientation (Chase, 2003). The analysis involves reconstructing data, considering multiple sources, thematically assembling narratives and visually interpreting the essence in the narratives, to highlight key insights and implications.

Stories from Asian Graduate Student Mothers

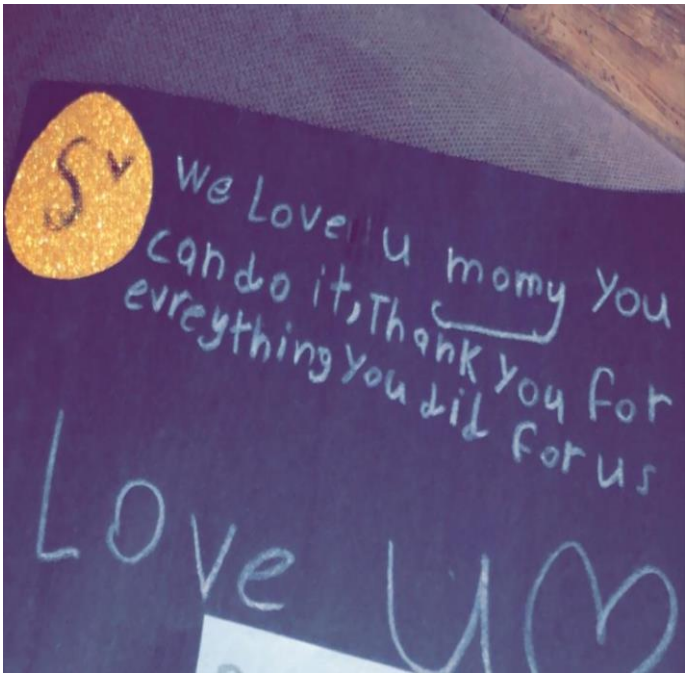
This narrative inquiry explores the experiences of Asian graduate student mothers. Five participants—Winnie, Bliss, Ana, Jojo, and Mimi (pseudonyms)—hail from various Asian countries and currently study in the United States, each with unique family backgrounds. Some migrated with their entire family, like Bliss and Mimi, while others, like Winnie, came with a child, leaving their spouse in their home country. Jojo arrived alone, leaving her daughter and husband in China. Ana, a single mother, brought her two daughters to the United States during the COVID pandemic. From the participants' stories, several themes emerge, reflecting their construction of identities, perspectives as Asian student mothers, and agency.

Motivation and Challenges

For Asian graduate student mothers, motivation is their guiding force, propelling them toward their goals despite numerous challenges. Many participants drew inspiration from their children, considering them the primary reason to excel in their studies. Jojo reflected on the initial hardships of being separated from her family upon arriving in the United States "*Missing family is my biggest challenge. I cried every night in the first and second months in the United States*" (personal communication, April 23, 2023). Despite the emotional struggle, she transformed into a more confident and resilient individual that "*I feel worthy and do not waste my time in the US. Because I want to be better and set a good model for my daughter*" (personal communication, April 23, 2023).

Ana shared a touching moment—her daughters' letter (Figure 1), a testament to the unwavering support from family and a reminder of the importance of their academic journey. In the face of academic and environmental challenges, the profound motivation derived from their children becomes a driving force for these resilient Asian student mothers.

Figure 1 | *This is a letter from my daughters*



Note. Photographed by Ana, 2022, photograph, USA. This image is used with participant permission in compliance with IRB regulations.

Professional Development and Career Goals

Motherhood goes beyond traditional roles, intertwining with aspirations for professional growth. Seeking to expand their academic horizons, these women challenge societal expectations. Bliss articulated her desire for broader knowledge, stating, "*I wish to pursue professional knowledge to fulfil my dream*" (personal communication, April 18, 2023. Ana showcased this sentiment, highlighting the unique opportunities studying abroad provides, stating, "*I believe it creates more opportunities for me than studying in my home country*" (personal communication, April 11, 2023). In their pursuit of education in the United States, these mothers carve a path that aligns with their multifaceted identities and aspirations.

Language Learning and Cultural Differences

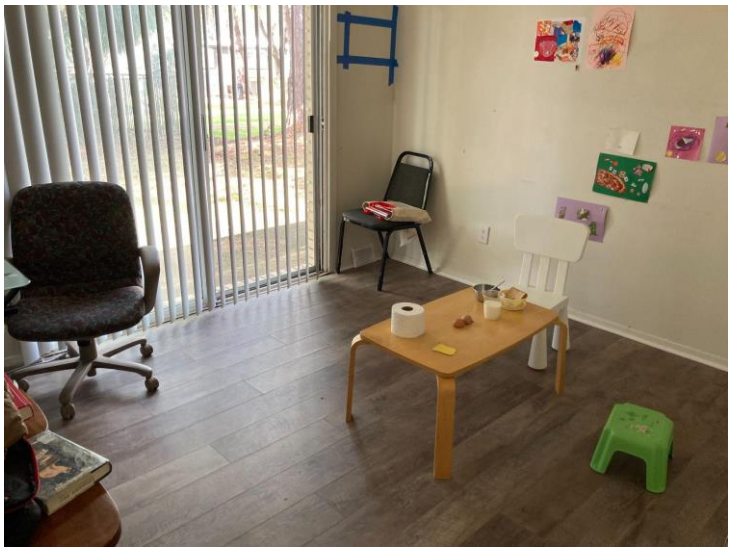
Navigating a new environment poses challenges for Asian students, especially in language and academia. Mimi shared how language barriers erode her confidence, impacting both her professional and personal spheres. "*Because of my language, I lose my confidence. You know, because I work in communication, and right now, I feel I'm not confident talking…*" (Mimi, personal communication, April 27, 2023). Winnie echoed these struggles, expressing difficulty in adapting to Western academic behaviours and feeling uneasy in public speaking situations. Their stories underscore the multifaceted challenges stemming from linguistic and cultural adjustments in an academic setting.

Balance in Studying and Parenting

In the midst of their demanding work-life balance, Asian graduate student mothers deal with inner identity conflicts, particularly those who are single or separated from their families. Balancing parenting while managing academic responsibilities is a constant challenge. Ana, a single mother, shared her struggle with no partner's support, "*Many times urgent things come up for my children and I have to postpone some tasks because I do not have a partner who can cover my place in such cases*" (personal communication, April 11, 2023).

The guilt of not dedicating enough time to family weighs heavily on them. Bliss expressed the fear of losing connections with her family. "*To spend more time with my kids, the dining room also functioned as my study room* (Figure 2)*, so I can monitor my daughter while eating and I can study at the same time*" (Bliss, personal communication, April 18, 2023).

Figure 2 | *The dining room also functioned as my study room*

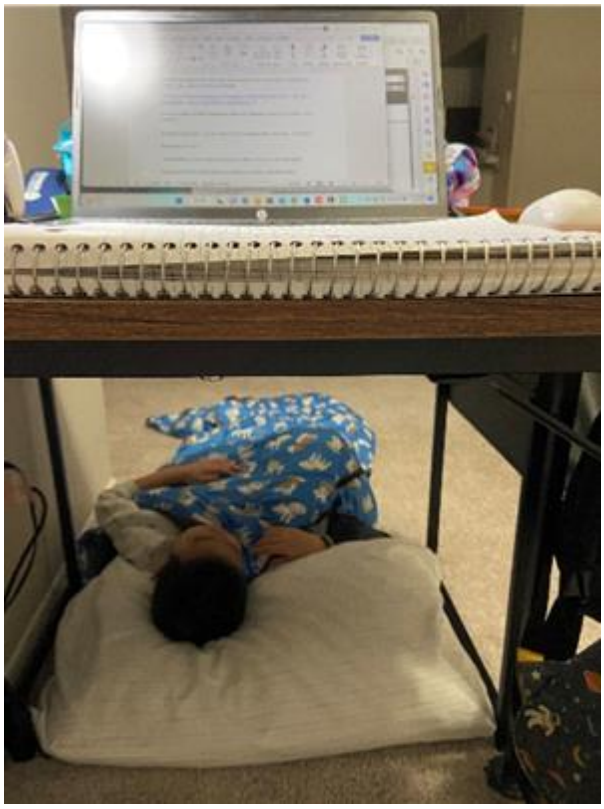


Note. Photographed by Bliss, 2023, photograph, USA. This image is used with participant permission in compliance with IRB regulations.

Emotional Support and Coping Strategies

As Asian graduate student mothers grapple with challenges from societal expectations, support becomes vital. Emotional feedback, especially from their children, forms a sustainable pillar for their well-being. Winnie shared a touching moment with her son, *"When my son saw that I was busy, and still hoped that I would accompany him, he would bring his sleeping bag under the desk* (Figure 3) *and accompany me to support my studies"* (personal communication, April 11, 2023).

Figure 3 | *My son brings his sleeping bag under my desk to keep me company*



Note. Photographed by Winnie, 2023, photograph, USA. This image is used with participant permission in compliance with IRB regulations.

Religious communities offer empathetic support, with Jojo finding solace and companionship in her church community, "*It's really important to have company, even if you don't talk to them about your troubles or just stay there. The church, as a whole, actually gives me great support"* (Jojo, personal communication, April 23, 2023).

Self-Care and Well-Being

Busy for studying and caregiving day and night, Asian student mothers often neglect self-care. Ana, realizing the toll on her well-being, sought counseling for tips on managing her life. Also, Mimi, overwhelmed, turned to self-help books, "*I follow the steps of book to help myself. I say to myself: 'I'm sorry, I forgive myself, I thank myself and I love myself' every day, and I gain a more positive energy, and think about it is OK for every challenge in my life"* (April 27, 2023).

Financial and Practical Support

Financial struggles, intensified by economic instability, are a formidable hurdle for international student mothers. Bliss, striving for multiple income streams, *"I try my best to have multiple incomes, including doing assistant jobs, finding grants or scholarships, and helping my partner to get a job here, but it fails…it is too hard for international family to make ends meet"* (personal communication, April 18, 2023). Being an international student is far from a simple student life; it involves navigating different living expenses from their

home country, adapting to new values, and managing financial changes. Beyond these challenges, these participants—many of whom are mothers or even the primary earners for their households—face additional difficulties in maintaining balance. Their struggles often remain invisible to society as they strive to create more opportunities for both learning and earning, often at the cost of leisure and social connections, further contributing to their sense of isolation.

Distinct Learning Practices in the US

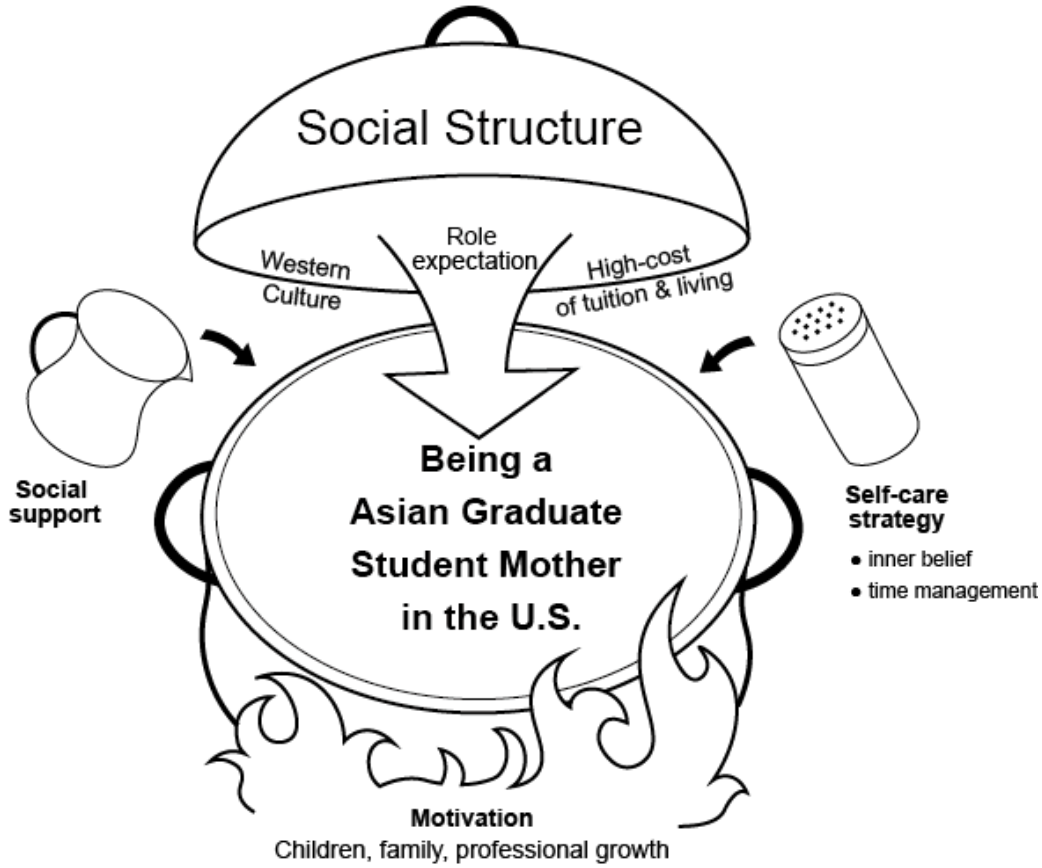
US-academic culture, distinct from many Asian countries, fosters interactive and less hierarchical relationships between professors and students. The expectation for students to actively contribute to discussions and take greater responsibility in their learning requires adaptation for Asian graduate student mothers. Winnie notes the need for thorough preparation and independent exploration, which require plenty of time for self-exploration.

Conclusion

The study explores the stories from Asian graduate student mothers in the United States, utilizing corporeal experiences and photo elicitation to generate thematic narratives. The participants utilized four main strategies to demonstrate their agency: motivation, balance, support, and professional improvement.

In motivation, these transnational mothers draw internal strength, overcoming societal identity constraints. Children become a powerful source of intrinsic motivation, reinforcing responsibility for their roles. Balance is pivotal to navigating their learning goals and mothering, including negotiating, and prioritizing self-care. Both physical and emotional support sustain these mothers to overcome obstacles and succeed in academic pursuits. Professional improvement signifies a cross-cultural and cross-language learning process. It reflects a significant transformation in their professional vision, encompassing growth from linguistic knowledge to cultural integration. Addressing recommendations for future student mothers in higher education, we propose to focus on self-care, navigating cultural/language differences, and managing financial concerns. Plus, we generate a visual diagram (Figure 4), paralleling their lives to a complex cooking endeavour.

Figure 4 | *A diagram of experience of Asian graduate student mothers as a cooking process*



Note: This diagram is collectively crafted by Hsin Fang, Shatha Alrashdan, and Jung Shan Sung, 2023, USA. Digital.

The pot in our metaphor represents the myriad tasks and responsibilities that keep us actively engaged, encompassing parenting, housekeeping, serving, time management, studying, and other duties. Meanwhile, the seasoning symbolizes the social support and self-help strategies that add flavour to our challenging life, offering spice and sweetness to help us persevere through overwhelming moments. The top lid represents the stress from social structures, financial difficulties, and the foreign culture. Conversely, the fire beneath the pot, fuelling everything, signifies our motivation derived from the love for our families and ourselves. This motivation energizes us keeping on track, encourages personal growth, and thriving as positive models for our children.

In summary, this study explores the experiences of Asian graduate student mothers in the United States. The metaphorical diagram illustrates their complex role-switching challenges and agency. Despite multifaceted struggles, these mothers exhibit resilience and flexibility to negotiate with others and to reorient themselves. This study advocates for a closer examination of the societal pressures—both internal and external—faced by Asian graduate student mothers and highlights the need for empathy and support in academia for Asian graduate student mothers.

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My Tent as my Studio: Reshaping Transnational Feminist Identity through Artmaking

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Abstract

"Where are you making art?" For many artists, a studio is a safe space for thinking, exploring, and constructing artistic ideas. However, for a non-American artist like me in the United States, crossing borders can lead to confusion about where and how to make art. As a temporary sojourner living in a displaced setting with limited belongings, I struggled to find an inspiring space for self-reflection, trial-and-error practice, and material exploration. In response, I turned to a tent as a studio and used it as a tool to explore questions about my identity, belonging, and creative expression. Through working within my tent, I discovered that the tent offered a sense of safety and intimacy that helped me deal with life's ambiguities in ways beyond words. By negotiating my non-American and various identities through artmaking within the tent in the United States, I explored the interconnections between race, class, gender, spatiality, and time as a reciprocity of knowledge creation. In this article, I will explore my transnational feminist identity through poetic vignettes and artmaking. I will emphasize the tent as a unique educational tool, linking mobility, mapping, and memory in art education.

Keywords: tent, studio, transnational feminist, identity, artist-teacher

Author note

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My Tent as my Studio:
Reshaping Transnational Feminist Identity through Artmaking

Departure from Taiwan



Figure 1 | *Departure from Taiwan to the United States, mixed media, 2022* (Copyright by the author)

From Taiwan's embrace, to start anew,

In the United States, a journey is true.

A studio lost, in luggage's tide

In August 2022, I embarked on a transnational journey, relocating from Taiwan to the United States to pursue doctoral studies in art education. This transition marked a profound shift in my spatial, temporal, and social contexts as I moved across the world from artist-teacher in Taiwan (Sun, 2023) to an entirely different setting in the United States. In Taiwan, where my journey began as an artist-teacher (Daichendt, 2009; Thornton, 2005), embedded in network of professional and personal relationships in art education built over ten years Moving to the United States meant leaving behind this established social fabric and entering a new one, where I had to forge new connections, both professionally and personally. This transition involved challenges like navigating cultural differences, language barriers, and adapting to a new educational system (Yi, 2018). Cultural differences affected daily social interactions and understanding societal values, requiring significant adaptation. The language barrier, despite English proficiency, involved grasping nuances in academic and everyday contexts. Adapting to the U.S. educational system entailed understanding different teaching methods, student-teacher dynamics, and academic expectations.

This article delves into my transnational narratives, focusing on how I perceive challenges above and transform them into the concept of a tent as my studio into a more intimate and growing space. It specifically discusses my use of a tent as a studio in the United

States, an artistic approach that helps me cultivate a sense of belonging. The article delves into the reinterpretation of the 'tent as studio' from landscape and linguistic viewpoints. It emphasizes how 'tent as studio' facilitates intercultural dialogues, not just within its physical space but also beyond it. I conclude the implication of 'tent as studio' as a pedagogy, offering insights into its capacity to foster a sense of belonging and its significance in the context of feminist identity.

For non-American artists like me, crossing borders can lead to confusion about where and how to make art. As a temporary sojourner living in a displaced setting in the United States with limited belongings, I struggled to find my space for self-reflection, trial-and-error practice, and material exploration. Within limited resources in the Northern United States, I turned to a tent as a studio and used it as a tool to explore questions about my identity, belonging, and creative expression. By negotiating my Otherness identities through artmaking within the tent, I explored the interconnections between race, class, gender, spatiality, and time as a site of knowledge creation. In this article, I highlight the tent as a form of pedagogy and potential as a metaphor for exploring diverse voices and reflecting my transnational feminist identity. Using the tent as my studio, I navigate the complex dichotomy between dominant white narratives and the perspectives of Asian women, opening up new possibilities for understanding and expression. This process has enabled me to fully embody my positionality and engage in an autoethnographic dialogue, thereby reimagining transnational and dialogic feminist narratives in the context of the Northern United States.

At the start of each paragraph in the article, excerpts from my personal poetry, drawn from a transnational art diary created in my tent, weave through the narrative. These snippets chronicle my journey from Taiwan to the United States and serve as a reflective, safe space within the academic context. My poetic narratives act as a crucial tool for self-expression, enhancing the exploration of themes like belonging, cultural identity flow, and transcending conventional academic discourse for deeper, more introspective engagement. As it reflects the dynamic nature of my journey and the innovative use of a tent as an art studio, the poetry becomes a key component of the article, adding emotional depth and impact. Through my experiences in the tent, I navigate language barriers, evolving landscapes, and personal encounters in unfamiliar territories, ultimately reshaping my understanding of what it means to be a transnational feminist in a diverse world.

Arrive in the United States

In the States, a change began,
Less in hand, more in plan.
Art and memory, left behind,
More than place, a shift inside,
In new cultures, I abide.

In the Northern American academic setting, I encountered a paradigm shift. My physical and material constraints – the necessity to travel light due to luggage limitations and the subsequent relinquishment of familiar possessions and art materials – led to a redefinition of my creative space and practice. This transition was not merely geographical but also deeply personal and professional. The loss of tangible, familiar elements of my artistic practice mirrored the broader challenges of adapting to a new cultural and linguistic environment, marked by feelings of insecurity and identity dissonance.

These personal experiences have directly influenced my approach to teaching. The empathy I have developed for students who feel voiceless in new environments is rooted in my experiences of silence and emotional struggle in my graduate classes in the United States. This has prompted introspection about my past interactions with students in Taiwan, leading me to question whether I had adequately supported, or inadvertently stifled, their expressions, which aligns with the notion that teaching is inextricably linked to our positionalities and relationships with people, culture, and place (Wiebe et al., 2017). Entwined within shifting identities, memories oscillate between the past and present, between Taiwan and the United States, and between the languages of Mandarin and English. These recollections linger and swirl in my mind, underscoring the need for a space where I can transform, document, and give life to my stories. Consequently, I ask...

Where is my Studio?

Reflecting on voices, in past and present tense.
A yellow tent, my new domain,
A sanctuary from cultural rain.
Challenges faced, in racial hue,
Art and activism, in a tent studio's view.
A metaphor in fabric, stretching wide,
Crossing borders, with art as guide.

Adapting to life in a new country brought an unexpected challenge: disrupted sleep patterns. Since my relocation, the unfamiliarity of my surroundings has led to many restless nights. During these sleepless hours, my mind often wandered to existential questions about my artistic practice: Where could I find a space that fostered self-reflection, experimentation, and material exploration? Where could I feel safe and secure enough to fall into a peaceful slumber?

In my quest for such a space, I asked, “Where is my studio?” I asked the question because I couldn’t find a space for reflection. Thus, I innovated by purchasing a yellow tent I set up in my room. This tent became more than just a makeshift sleeping area; it transformed into a personal sanctuary, insulated from the deluge of new cultural norms and information that awaited outside its fabric walls. While working within the tent, I began to

ponder a critical question: How does the concept of a tent-as-art-studio serve as a metaphor for my transnational feminist identity?

Who? A Taiwanese Female Art Educator in the United States

In a yellow tent, my studio's embrace,
Against the tides of racism, sexism's might,
Within these walls, my dreams ignite.
Art as a voice, vibrant and bold,
Challenging stereotypes, stories told.
A refuge for creativity, a tent in hand,
In this tent, new perspectives land.
Exploring identity within a canvas vast,
Where race, class, and gender are cast.
In this vibrant, humble space of mine,
A sense of belonging; where are you?

The concept of a 'sense of belonging' is a recurrent theme in the creative works of artists across diverse generations, genders, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds (Kennedy, Mallory & Szymanek, 2021; Sliwinska & Dormor, 2022). Art transcends mere individual expression, engaging deeply with the artist's temporal, spatial, racial, gender-specific, linguistic, and cultural contexts. As a Taiwanese female artist and art educator in the United States, I utilized a simple tent as a studio, a space for art activism and personal refuge. This transformation prompted me to explore the creation of a "tent studio" from a transnational feminist perspective.

Experiencing microaggressions in the United States, including Asian fetishism, racism, and sexism, I made a deliberate choice to purchase a yellow tent from an online retailer. The colour choice was symbolic, as it is used to represent my racial identity, and so I reclaimed the colour as a way to acknowledge and challenge the historical racist undertones associated with Asians in the United States, such as the "Yellow Peril" and its impact on art education (Hsieh et al., 2023). The racialization I experienced, particularly being labelled as 'yellow,' brought to light the unsettling practice of categorizing individuals by skin colour. In my artwork, the colour yellow serves as a visual element and a tool to subvert these racial narratives and stereotypes.

The tent, now set up in my living space, offers a sense of security. It served me amidst the upheaval of relocating. It became a sanctuary free from imperial ideologies, enabling me to perceive the world through different lenses and assert my agency as an active knower. The space facilitated the exploration of identities and the interplay between race, class, and gender. It symbolized both private and public spaces, challenging Western-centric perspectives and offering a platform for rethinking the traditional studio concept.

Tent as a Transnational Metaphor

In my tent, a studio true,
Art and learning in every hue.
A space for dialogue, under its span,
Tracing narratives, where transnational worlds began.
A metaphor for journeys far,
Adapting, thriving, where we are.
In this fabric, a world's embrace,
Art transcends time and space.

This tent-as-studio approach inspired reflections on the broader implications of artmaking and learning, particularly concerning social issues and the diverse voices in the art world. The tent symbolized a protective, provocative, and productive space for self-reflection and artistic expression, transcending spatial and temporal boundaries and emphasizing the importance of art in tracing diverse narratives and fostering dialogue.

The tent as a transnational metaphor, encapsulates the nuanced emotions of uncertainty and the challenges in the United States. The approach emphasized the interconnectedness of daily variations in transnational artists' experiences and the significance of place and space in narratives of belonging and agency (Sliwinska & Dormor, 2022). The tent served as a navigational tool in traversing the complexities of cultural and identity spectrums, contributing unique perspectives to the artistic discourse (Li, 2012; Meskimmon, 2020). For example, it embodied a transnational linguistic perspective, enabling a reconfiguration of fragmented language through artmaking, and offering a broader imaginative horizon.

Mindscapes: A Transnational Journey Through Words Terrains

Mindscapes merge, in linguistic play,
Words like waterfalls, in artistic display.
Inspired by ridgelines, and mountains tall,
In my tent studio, I capture all.

A journey of identity, in a foreign land,
With art and teaching, hand in hand.
In this transnational tale, new paths I wend,
Finding home, where art and heart blend.

In the subsequent paragraphs, I will discuss "Border Text: Linguistic Perspective" and "Border Text: Landscape Comparisons," which illustrate my methods of engaging with border text, following the framework established by Hicks (1991).

Border text: Linguistic Perspective



Figure 2 | *Growing vocabulary within my tent, mixed media 2023* (Copyright by the author)

Drawing inspiration from the concept of a "border writer," an individual who navigates multiple borders naturally adopts dual perspectives, interpreting reality through intertwined creative narratives. These narratives are then contrasted and captured as metaphorical outlines in the border text (Hicks, 1991). To create my border text, I incorporated torn papers within my diary and rearrangement of objects as tent poetry to express the linguistic emotions of my transnational journey. Language, for me, transcends mere words and becomes a palpable facet of my identity. For instance, interacting in rudimentary English with native speakers often left me feeling exposed, as if I were under intense scrutiny. Navigating public arenas using an unfamiliar language heightened this sense of insecurity. The expressions, intonations, and emotions I conveyed in English often felt disjointed to me, leading to feelings of embarrassment and distress. The torn papers and object collections within the tent encapsulate these complicated emotions.

Another layer of my border texts is growing vocabulary (see Figure 2). As I delved deeper into my new environment in the United States, my English vocabulary expanded, and I became captivated and overwhelmed simultaneously by the complexities of the English language. To exhibit this linguistic progression and contradiction, I turned to calligraphy to write my ever-growing collection of new words on the cover of my tent. In doing so, I transformed these "challenging English words" into a visual depiction of a flowing stream or a tumbling waterfall on the tent fabric, integrating them into the mountains and ridgelines that reflected my journey. Thus, the cover of my tent evolved into a canvas for self-expression, weaving together the foreign world with my linguistic discoveries, and standing as a testament to the linguistic power of my transnational journey.

Border text: Landscape Comparisons



Figure 3 | *Mindscapes: A transnational journey through ridgeline terrains, mixed media 2023* (Copyright by the author)

Drawing inspiration from the philosophy of Chang Dai-Chien, a Chinese painter of the 20th century (1899-1983), I am influenced by his "landscape of the mind (寄情於心)" and his "splashed-ink (潑墨山水)" art technique (Fong, 1969; McGinnis, 1994). In my artwork, I showcase artworks that delve into the metaphorical essence of landscape genre, portraying it as a reflection of the mind's interior just as vividly as any physical terrain through my work entitled “Mindscapes: A Transnational Journey through Ridgeline Terrains” (see Figure 3). The notion of ‘mindscape’ encapsulates my thoughts, emotions, memories, and imagination, portraying the dynamic threshold between my inner self and unfamiliar surroundings. In my work, the ridgeline symbolizes challenges and difficulties in my transnational journey based on my initial observations of the different landscapes between Taiwan's mountains and my new habitat in the State College in the United States, centred on the smooth ridgeline. As a result, I have incorporated the ridgeline and iconic elements on my tent's cover. To produce fluid and amorphous landscapes, I merged the Taiwanese trails I had hiked before, blending them into the mental landscapes depicted on the exterior of my tent.

Mobility, Mapping, and Memory Within the Tent

Within this tent, a realm where mobility reigns,
A map of memories, where the heart contains.
Across vast continents, my identity roams

I transformed my tent into a dynamic creative space, a physical manifestation of my transnational journey. This metamorphosis facilitated the exploration of three dimensions in my tent pedagogy: mobility, due to its transportable nature; mapping, as it acts as an extension of my art diary; and memory, by serving as a meditative space. Each aspect plays a pivotal role in how the tent becomes a conduit for artistic expression and personal reflection within the tent.

1. Mobility: The tent-as-studio concept epitomizes mobility. Using tent as my studio, I can easily transport, set up, and dismantle my studio, bringing my creative space into various

environments. This mobility contrasts with the static, traditional studio concept, highlighting the fluid nature of transnational identities.

2. Mapping: I maintain an art diary to document my transnational journey in the tent, chronicling my observations, participation, and emotions in different cultural framework. This diary serves as a map of my life, documenting my journey in a chronological manner. I also share these experiences on social media, inviting others into my virtual tent world and offering a window into the life of a transnational art educator.

3. Memory: My tent art practice involves exploring memory, intertwining past experiences with present identities. I channel these transnational memories into my artwork through meditation and unique artistic methods, such as tearing paper and dipping it in watercolour. Each piece is followed by a reflective process where I jot down keywords and thoughts, capturing the essence of my creative journey.

Tent as Studio: Bridging Worlds Beyond Norms

A tent that questions, beyond the pale.
A challenge to norms, privilege, and might,
In this space, new narratives alight.
My tent, a nexus, private and broad,
Where power's dynamics are keenly awed.
Western views, under scrutiny's lens,
In every corner, convention bends.

Here, in this canvas, a dichotomy's dance,
Asian perspectives, white narratives glance.
A transnational dialogue, boldly unfurled,
In the heart of the North, a new world swirled.

Autoethnography, my guiding light,
Embracing positionality, in academia's night.
Language barriers, landscapes shift,
In State College, my spirit's adrift.

A feminist transnational, redefined,
In a global context, uniquely designed.
Through this tent, my art declares,
A world reimagined.

How do we envision the world, and in what ways can artmaking express our fluid identities within a global framework? This article presents an initial exploration of considering the tent as a metaphorical safe haven that spans across cultures, languages, and landscapes. In art education, it raises the question: how can art create a space that embraces

diverse voices, challenging and redefining the traditional concept of a studio? My approach is to destabilize entrenched narratives and confront the established norms of privilege and exploitation prevalent in the art world. Here, the tent symbolizes a confluence of private and public spheres, a site where power dynamics are scrutinized and Western-centric viewpoints are critically reevaluated.

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Visual Portrait and Identity

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Abstract

In the context of the ongoing amalgamation of modern civilization and the consequent diminishing of traditional ethnic cultures, individuals today grapple with a pervasive sense of identity loss and anxiety. How do we express our identity? How do we understand and respect the identity of others? These questions are crucial for an inclusive and equal society. This paper, situated against the backdrop of the enduring debate between traditional and modern cultures, as well as grassland and urban civilizations in Inner Mongolia, China, introduces arts-based research for addressing these challenges. Through an exploration of personal growth experiences and life narratives, grounded in visual arts, the study navigates the complexities of identity formation. It employs effective art education strategies to assist students in comprehending the world, revealing societal inequalities, and fostering an understanding of individual identity through the creation of visual portraits. This art-centric approach encourages introspection into one's inner world and simultaneously directs attention outward, establishing closer connections and mutual care among individuals. The anticipated outcome is a method capable of mitigating the widespread identity disorientation and anxiety resulting from cultural disjunction and continual transformations, with the overarching goal of contributing to societal equality and inclusivity.

Keywords: art-based research, visual portrait, identity, cultural anxiety, lived experience, auto-biography, Mongolian culture

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Visual Portrait and Identity

Visual portrait is art-based research and a living inquiry based on the visual arts. By reviewing and exploring personal growth experiences and life experiences, it seeks to understand identity and establish closer connections and mutual care among individuals. From 2019 to 2021, I taught ‘Visual Portraits and Identity Identification’ at Inner Mongolia University of Arts for three consecutive years. I aimed to address the common issues of identity and cultural anxiety faced by Inner Mongolian students through the creation of visual portraits. A total of 69 students participated in this course, with 90% of them growing up in Inner Mongolia, and 30% being Mongolian students. They often grapple with the ongoing conflict between traditional and modern culture and the clash between grassland civilization and urban civilization. As regional cultures merge, Mongolian traditional culture gradually diminishes, and this cultural difference and change lead to a widespread sense of identity crisis and anxiety.

Teaching Strategies

The fundamental approach to achieving educational objectives is to encourage and assist students in considering themselves as sources and subjects of exploration in knowledge. By re-examining and exploring individual growth experiences and life encounters, the aim is to stimulate students' intrinsic experiences, uncover inherent qualities, and foster an awareness where students simultaneously focus on themselves and the surrounding world, enhancing the relevance of creating meaning. The rational cognition of self and identity is realized through cooperative learning and the creation of "visual portraits," all within the framework of the a/r/tography method.

There are two essential components: “personal life experience recollection” and the creation of “visual portraits.” These two components are almost synchronously generated throughout the course. First, I pose the questions “Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?” to each student. They recall their ‘childhood-growth-present’ experiences and feelings through personal lived experiences and share them with others. They present these experiences using images and text.

In our actual classes, sharing and discussions are open-ended. As the course progresses, recollections and descriptions gradually transform into conversations and listening. Through extensive and deep dialogue and responses, some common social issues emerge, such as education/employment, food desires/body image, trauma, discrimination/ prejudice, cultural migration/identity, environment/survival, and more.

‘Personal life experience recollection’ is not only self-reflection but also a process of personal growth and self-discovery. I encourage students to describe essential images from their life experiences or use a few adjectives to describe their inner qualities, such as stable, kind, resilient, reckless, radical, creative, and then attempt to connect these adjectives with

abstract visual elements like points, lines, shapes, colours, constructing a visual representation of their overall life experiences and inner qualities. We call this a 'visual portrait,' rather than a mere external image reflection. 'Personal life experience recollection' and 'visual portrait' creation occur synchronously in the course.

Throughout the course, students' identities shift from aesthetic subjects to researchers/ subjects of research/creators/creations. As their identities shift and transform, they develop their aesthetic awareness, enhancing their observation, feedback, and creative abilities.

Teaching Achievement Case 1 to 4

Case 1: Reviving Roots—Rediscovering Mongolian Identity

Hexige is a child who was born and raised on the Mongolian grasslands. When he left the grasslands for urban education, the allure of city life was strong. He longed for modern life and enjoyed popular culture. Mongolian traditional culture seemed ordinary to him. However, when we discussed the fact that many schools no longer taught in Mongolian, he was suddenly surprised. He carefully examined his ethnic language and script, finding them beautiful in a way he had never realized before. He even discovered that Mongolian script is one of the few vertical writing systems in use today. As a result, he created some works using Mongolian script elements (Figure 1.) In the central part of the left image, there is his handprint, surrounded by Mongolian text: 'I am Mongolian.' This expresses a sense of identity and belonging. The Mongolian script repeatedly appearing in the middle image is his name, 'Hexige,' which means auspicious. In the right image, the text is still his name, arranged in a crisscross pattern, representing his relocation trajectory after growing up. The background colours used in the artwork are the traditional Mongolian colours symbolizing auspiciousness: blue, white, and red, representing the blue sky, white clouds, and the passionate Mongolian people on the grasslands.

Hexige's artistic journey is a captivating exploration of identity and cultural rediscovery. This case reflects the transformative power of cultural self-awareness and linguistic identity. Hexige's profound appreciation for the inherent beauty of Mongolian script becomes the focal point of his artistic expression. By incorporating Mongolian script elements into his works, Hexige conveys a deep sense of cultural identity and a longing for cultural heritage and self-affirmation. Hexige's case underscores the significance of cultural awareness and the role of art in deepening individuals' connection to their traditional culture. Through his visual expressions, Hexige not only rediscovers and celebrates his Mongolian identity but also contributes to emphasizing the importance of cultural heritage in the process of modernization.

Figure 1 | A self-created visual portrait of Hexige



Note: A self-created visual portrait by Hexige, dated 2019, with the following titles from left to right: "Me," "I am Mongolian," and "Migration." Materials used include marker pen, ballpoint pen, acrylic, and oil canvas.

Case 2: From Insecurity to Confidence: A Mongolian Girl's Journey of Body Positivity

Odgongao is a typical Mongolian girl who grew up on the grasslands. In the segment of "Personal Life Experience Reflection," she reminisces about her childhood, where the happiest moments were when her older sister couldn't fit into her old clothes, turning them into new outfits for Odgongao. During that time, she exuded confidence and easily found joy. As she grew older, pursuing education led her farther away from home. Gradually, she began to be concerned about others' perceptions and evaluations of her, becoming more cautious in her words and actions. Fluctuating weight and acne during adolescence heightened her anxiety, leading to a diminishing self-confidence.

Upon listening to her narrative, I reflected on my own childhood. She struggled with her robust physique, while I faced insecurities due to a slender figure. Society's adherence to standard norms for female external appearances imposed similar challenges on both of us. Empathizing with her experiences, I shared my childhood memories and encouraged her, emphasizing that although we cannot alter others' judgments, we can change our own perspectives. She describes her artistic intention as follows: Purple is formed by the harmony of passionate red and indifferent blue, and I, cold on the outside but passionate within, am much like the colour purple. The blooming rose in the background is called Dolota, and its floral language is fantasy. I am very fond of fantastical things; they always stimulate boundless imagination. The light purple quadrilateral represents the cage that traps imagination. The irregular black fissure symbolizes the desire to break free from stereotypes (Figure 2).

Figure 2 | A self-created visual portrait of Odgongao



Note: A self-created visual portrait by Odgongao, dated 2021, created using digital drawing techniques.

In subsequent shares, I distinctly observed her transformation. She acknowledged being a fuller girl in a world that idealizes thinness, not entirely aligning with contemporary aesthetic standards, but finding affirmation from her parents, sister, and friends. Previously lost in others' evaluations, she shed her submissive demeanour, celebrating her evolution. I vividly recall her words during the final sharing session: "In this world, there will always be someone who likes me and someone who doesn't. Therefore, I don't need to overly concern myself with others' opinions. Being true to myself while maintaining principles is crucial. Being content with my current self is what matters most." At that moment, I was also deeply moved, witnessing a girl rediscovering her confidence.

Odgongao's experiences reveal psychological challenges associated with societal aesthetic standards for female external images, reflecting how societal expectations shape individual self-perception and social interactions. From childhood to adolescence, her pursuit of education and adaptation to societal norms gradually subjected her to the influence of societal aesthetic standards, resulting in anxiety and diminished self-confidence regarding her physical appearance. The stereotyping of female body images by society is not merely an individual-level issue but a systemic problem deeply embedded in social structures and cultural backgrounds. In this case study, we witness Odgongao's growth from childhood to adolescence, and through her experiences in creating visual portraits of herself, we observe a profound and inspiring psychological transformation. Visual portraiture, as a form of expression, serves not only as an artistic medium but also as a reflection of an individual's inner world. From the perspectives of psychology and aesthetics, this case study provides a

profound understanding of how portrait creation influences individual self-awareness and self-acceptance.

Through the creative experience of visual portraiture, Odgongao gradually achieves a transformation in self-perception. This creative process is not only an expression of individual bodily experiences but also a questioning and reflection upon societal aesthetic standards. Simultaneously, she discovers her intrinsic beauty beyond these standards, freeing herself from the constraints of external judgments. This transformation is evident not only in her artistic creations but also profoundly influences her attitude towards life and self. In her final reflections, she emphasizes the importance of authenticity and principles in a diverse world, urging individuals to prioritize their self-perception over excessive concern for external opinions.

Creative experiences serve not only as a retrospective of past experiences but also as an expression of internal emotions and a challenge to external standards. Visual portraiture, through artistic expression, provides a unique and powerful medium for individuals to scrutinize and accept themselves, ultimately facilitating internal growth. This process underscores the positive role of artistic creation in mental health and self-development, offering a distinctive pathway for individuals to find self-identity.

Case 3: Hair Liberation—Personal Growth in the Experience of Artistic Creation

This work creator always had a dilemma about her knee-length hair, as seen in the painting. Her parents insisted that girls should have long hair and didn't allow her to cut it. She felt that her long hair was a constraint. In middle school, she rebelled and cut her hair short, as depicted in the bottom right corner of the artwork. In the centre of the image, there is a colour palette, and she said, “Childhood was spent with little parental company, and drawing was the magic wand to deal with loneliness.” The two rectangular frames in the upper right corner suggest that her life always seemed controlled and planned (Figure 3).

She wrote in her course feedback, “I am a timid person and usually don’t like to speak. I get nervous speaking in front of many people, and sharing my research results made me feel hopeless. But when I entered this course, I was quickly drawn in. Through multiple sharing and discussions, I am no longer afraid to speak in front of others. The teacher’s encouragement made me more confident, and it greatly helped me in social interactions. What interested me the most was creating visual portraits. I like this mode of expression, representing emotions and states that cannot be expressed in words, using special symbols to express myself, knowing myself better, and understanding my classmates more deeply. Recalling childhood took the longest time for me because I never talked about my childhood with others, and I found it hard to start. But through slow recollection and sorting, I eventually presented my past to my classmates. I found some relief in confronting some of the dark memories from my past, which felt miraculous! Everyone’s transformation is not

accidental. I will continue to keep my hair long, but this time, not because of my parents' demands but because I discovered that I look good with long hair."

Figure 3 | A self-created visual portrait of Meijing



Note: A self-created visual portrait by Meijing, 2021. Materials used include marker pen, ballpoint pen, acrylic, and oil canvas.

The artist's work reflects a profound contemplation of individual self-identity and the journey of personal growth. The dilemma surrounding her knee-length hair becomes a symbol of contradiction with parental expectations, and the act of cutting her hair signifies a rebellion and autonomous choice. Through her artwork in the course, she conveys coping with loneliness and recollections of childhood. Her passion for creating visual portraits indicates a deep concern for emotions and individual states, while the organization of childhood memories brought solace when confronting past shadows. Ultimately, her decision to maintain long hair is no longer influenced by external expectations but stems from her own discovery and affirmation. This transformation underscores the positive role of artistic expression in facilitating individual growth and self-awareness.

Case 4: Visions of Change—Unmasking Personal Evolution in Visual Portraiture

The juxtaposition of self-created visual portraits and those created by others brings new insights at the end of the course. For example, in Chen's visual portrait, he represented herself with many small eyes, signifying the label he had been given of having small eyes. He felt uncomfortable with this label, so he included two large open eyes in the artwork to express his desire to break free from it. The blue represents his rational side, while the red, fierce face represents his occasional impulsiveness, aggression, and anger (Figure 4).

Figure 4 | A self-created visual portrait of Chen



Note: Left is a self-created visual portrait by Chen, dated 2021. Materials used include: Cardstock, Oil Paint Pigments. Visual portraits created by Chen for Mei Jing (top centre), Zharuna (middle centre), Hu (bottom centre), Min (top right), and Sinian (bottom right) in 2021. The medium used for these five portraits is paper and marker pen.

Looking at the visual portraits created by other students for him, you can notice similar visual elements: straight lines, sharp angles, and the colour red. These elements correspond to what we know about Chen's straightforward, honest, and passionate personality. In their descriptions, many mentioned his tendency to be somewhat stubborn, which surprised him, as he didn't see himself as overly stubborn. The Rubik's Cube in the bottom right corner symbolizes their hope that he would be less stubborn, using the cube's rotation as a metaphor for change. Chen found this artwork deeply moving. The creation of personal visual portraits provides individuals with an independent and private space, allowing them to explore, express, and release internal emotions. Chen, through his own visual portrait, profoundly conveys his dissatisfaction with external labels and his pursuit of self-liberation. This individual expressive form of creation provides him with a platform to deconstruct external impressions, prompting a profound introspection of self-awareness.

In the visual portraits created by classmates for Chen, a collective creation is observed, shaping a more comprehensive image through the observation and understanding of Chen's traits. This collaborative creation not only enriches visual expression but also reflects the influences of social interaction and group cognition at a deeper level. In the process of collaborative creation, each participant contributes unique perspectives and elements to the construction of the individual's image, forming a shared perspective.

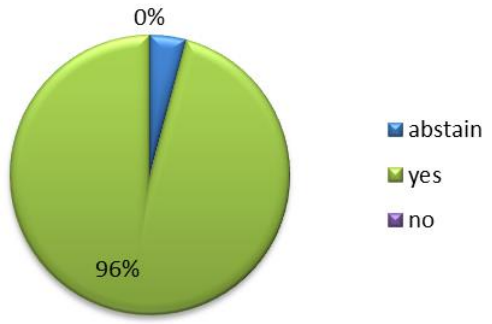
The collective creation through visual portraits not only deepens classmates' understanding of Chen but also facilitates interaction and communication within the group. Collaborative creation provides a platform for each participant to engage in the construction

of the individual's image, strengthening connections between them. This collective creative experience not only broadens individual perspectives but also enhances emotional connections within the group, adding depth and emotional resonance to the conclusion of the course.

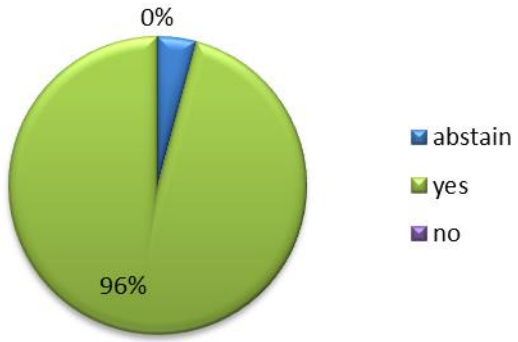
Course feedback

This image captures the feedback surveys administered after the course, revealing an overwhelmingly positive response from the students. Impressively, more than 96% of the participants expressed that the course had significantly enriched their comprehension of various issues and played a pivotal role in their personal development. What is particularly noteworthy is that 62% of the students acknowledged experiencing a sense of mental healing throughout the duration of the course. It is worth highlighting that this course wasn't explicitly designed as an art therapy class, making the attainment of these outcomes both surprising and heartening for the instructors. The unexpected impact on the participants' mental well-being underscores the transformative power of the course beyond its initial objectives (Figure 5).

Figure 5 | Do you think the course experience is helpful for deepening the understanding of problems and inner growth?



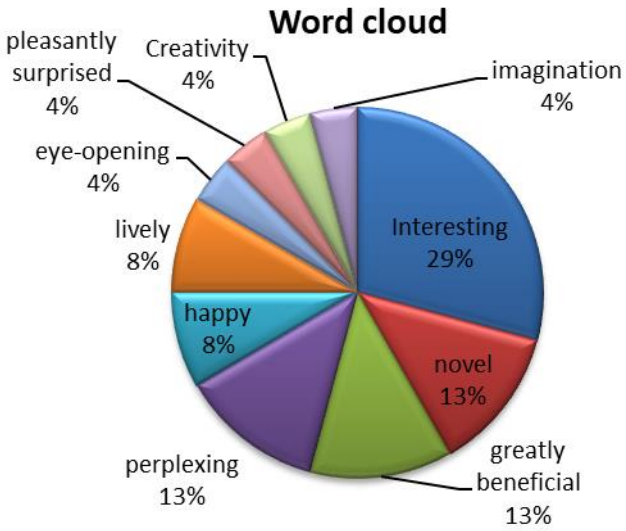
Has the personal life experience recall, and visual portrait creation resolved your anxiety about identity recognition?



Note: The above data is based on a survey conducted on a class with a capacity of 24 students, and the questionnaire was created by the author of this paper using actual data.

This word cloud encapsulates the students' experiences within the course: characterized by terms such as interesting, novel, greatly beneficial, eye-opening, pleasantly surprised, and pleasantly. (Figure 6)

Figure 6 | Please describe your course experience.



Note: The above data is based on a survey conducted on a class with a capacity of 24 students, and the questionnaire was created by the author of this paper using actual data.

Within the confines of this project, I assumed the role of an instructor, while they, in turn, functioned as students. Nevertheless, the profundity of each sincere interaction has left an indelible impact on me. Initially, as the course commenced, we were essentially strangers; however, within this pedagogical milieu, a notable sense of trust emerged, prompting the students to divulge fragments of their life experiences. Throughout this trajectory, I assert that there was a collective maturation.

Course Highlights

The changing culture, ongoing social turbulence, and loss of faith have left many young students in Inner Mongolia in a state of identity crisis. Thanks to the ‘art-centred’ and ‘art-travel-study’ approaches, through my teaching practice, students have generally gained introspection and clear self-awareness, expanded their understanding of their life situations, and have been able to effectively address identity anxiety.

- Students who grew up on the grasslands and initially questioned urban life became more open and regained confidence.
- Students who blindly pursued modern life began to appreciate the treasures of Mongolian culture, such as the aesthetic beauty of Mongolian script.
- Students with narrow nationalist tendencies began to confront the impact of modern civilization on Mongolian traditional culture.

Furthermore, most students experienced spiritual healing through the course.

Conclusion

This study underscores the transformative power of visual portraiture as an art-based research method, providing individuals with a platform for self-exploration, expression, and identity development. Through the lens of the a/r/tography method, the course not only facilitated individual growth but also fostered a collective maturation among students, addressing prevalent issues of identity and cultural anxiety. The positive impact on students' mental well-being and the broader implications for art-based pedagogy highlight the significance of incorporating visual arts in addressing contemporary challenges and promoting holistic personal development.

As an artist, I try to establish connections with the world through painting. As an art teacher, I also conduct art workshops for a wider audience, including children, adults, seniors, and parent-child workshops. Participants often share that, after experiencing my workshops, art no longer feels distant, and they gain unexpected spiritual healing. This encouragement motivates me to develop more meaningful art courses. I believe that art is not merely a tool for healing; the artistic process itself is healing. Last year, I moved to Canada and continued my painting and art teaching in Toronto. In Canada, I have encountered more immigrants who struggle with varying degrees of cultural identity and identity anxiety. I am committed to exploring more art experiences with them to reflect on and respond to personal growth and, consequently, to better understand and contemplate the world, personal growth and, consequently, to better understand and contemplate the world.

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Cultural Literacy: Key to Understanding the True Potential of Visual Culture Education

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Abstract

Visual culture refers to how images, artefacts, and media shape our understanding of the world around us. Today, visual media plays a decisive role in shaping our perceptions of different social and cultural identities, such as race, gender, sexuality, and nationality. As a primary interpretative strategy of visual culture, identity politics refers to how visual media constructs and represents different social and cultural identities. It examines the power dynamics and hierarchies within visual representations of identities and how these representations can reinforce or challenge existing societal norms and expectations. Cultural literacy refers to understanding different cultural practices, beliefs, and values. In education, cultural literacy provides a foundation for students to analyse and interpret the meaning behind the visual culture. By knowledge of different cultures, students can understand and interpret visual symbols, icons, and images meaningfully. Visual culture education, therefore, incorporates cultural literacy as a critical component of understanding visual communication. By recognising and understanding the cultural significance of visual symbols, students are better equipped to appreciate the diversity and complexity of visual communication. Integrating cultural literacy in visual culture education promotes cultural understanding, appreciation, and inclusivity.

Keywords*:* cultural literacy, diversity, inclusivity, politics of identity, visual culture

Cultural Literacy:

Key to Understanding the True Potential of Visual Culture Education

The primary focus of this paper is to explore cultural literacy in the context of visual culture art education and to determine the potential that cultural literacy brings to the critical component of visual literacy. The significance of visual culture in art education has been widely discussed for the last 40 years, and we can assume that most educators have embraced the concept of teaching *Visual Culture Art Education* (VCAE) (Duncum, 2001, p. 101). The significance of cultural literacy in education is still under consideration and research, and we eagerly await new insights. In a globalised and digital world, education is not dependent on the borders between states. Still, it is challenged by overcoming cultural boundaries that, like fault lines, create divisions in understanding among people.

This paper will examine how visual and cultural literacy concepts overlap and complement each other. It will elaborate on how visual literacy entails a certain level of cultural knowledge and how cultural literacy involves some visual literacy competencies. The research questions to be addressed are: How can visual culture and art contribute to multicultural education, and what are the overlapping areas between visual and cultural literacy?

Background

At the beginning of the 21st century, scientific journals (special issue of *Studies in Art Education* (2003) and *Art Education* (2003)) dedicated to visual art education have extensively discussed the necessity of changes in the pedagogy of art education. Most of these works criticise the modernist approach to the curriculum and formalistic aesthetics, adopted at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, to scientifically structure the art profession. The biggest problem is that such a concept is closed to symbolic meanings and social and cultural contexts (Boughton, 2004, p. 76).

Context plays a crucial role in creating meaning for spectators and visual culture producers. Visual culture is a complex concept that is not homogeneous; it refers to many visual cultures and is simultaneously multicultural and intercultural. Different world cultures use additional images that represent the complexity of their worlds and mutually influence each other (Boughton, 2004, p. 76).

Understanding the context and culture requires familiarity with cultural facts and a specific worldview. Today, the focus of interest is on achieving a better society through multicultural or intercultural visual education because cultural literacy is becoming a critical competency in a globalised world. Policy-making institutions, mostly United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) demonstrate the importance of cultural literacy through their numerous documents, recommendations and guidelines: *Cultural Literacy in Developed Countries* (1977), *Literacy, a UNESCO perspective* (2003),

UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education (2006), *UNESCO's The Hangzhou Declaration Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies* (2013), *UNESCO Global Citizenship Education* (2014).

Multiculturalism in Education

Interest in multiculturalism in education first emerged in countries inhabited by people of different races and cultures, like Canada and America. When different cultures coexist in the same area, processes of cultural approximation, known as acculturation, necessarily occur. Acculturation is the "cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It can occur in several ways, like assimilation and amalgamation. Assimilation is the process by which individuals and groups of different cultures adopt the attitudes and way of life of the host culture, leading to the elimination of the native culture. Amalgamation, conversely, involves intermingling cultures without one prevailing over the other. Cultural politics of society have influenced the implementation of cultural policies in education (Figure 1).

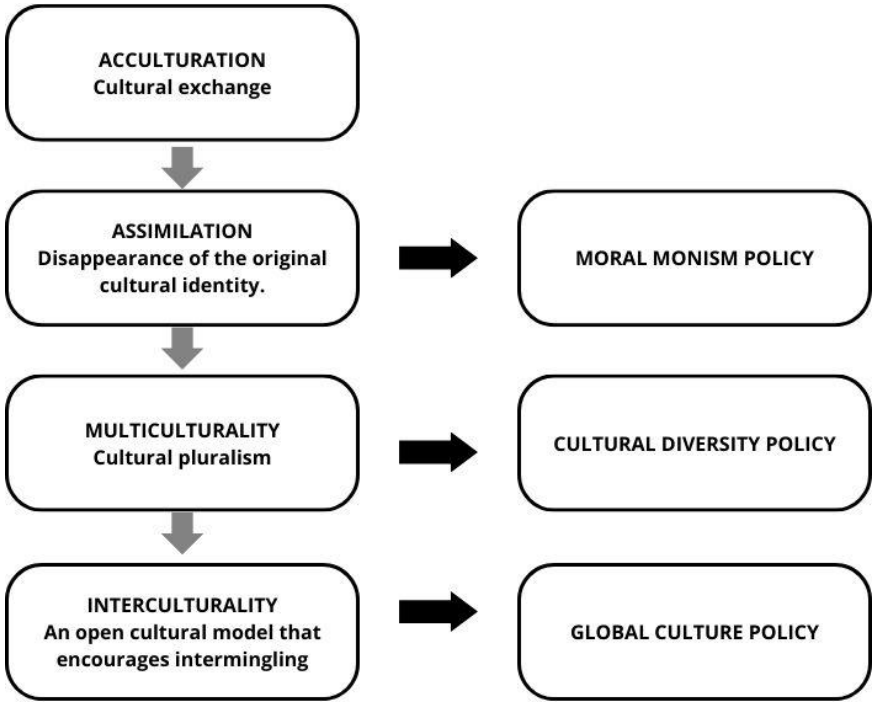


Figure 1 | *Cultural policies in education* (Copyright by the author)

In educational policies, cultural assimilation politics has long been predominant. Initially, it was believed that assimilation processes would be successful, meaning that the new group would fully integrate into the host culture without retaining the characteristics of their native culture. This approach relies on a moral monism policy, representing one culture as dominant and better than the other.

The 20th century has been marked as an era of migration and nationalism. This has called into question the sustainability of assimilation and opened the door to multiculturalism as an alternative (Kymlicka, 2003, p. 278). Multiculturalism advocates for

the coexistence of multiple cultures within the same society while retaining the rights to cultural integrity and diversity according to cultural diversity policies.

Lately, the concept of multiculturalism has been replaced by ideas of interculturality, which allow for the notion of cultural hybridisation. Cultural hybridisation is a cultural transformation that occurs when one culture enriches itself with elements from others due to the constant movement of people and symbols (Pieterse, 1994, p. 60). Art is a powerful indicator that such cultural hybridisations have occurred throughout history.

Understanding other cultures is only possible by correctly interpreting their symbols (Smith, 1983) and appreciating the diversity of aesthetics. We should reconsider how we interpret the art of other cultures and avoid patterns of social injustice (Delacruz, 1996).

How can Visual Culture and Art Contribute to Multicultural Education?

Visual culture and art can contribute to the development of multicultural education in several ways (Figure 2). Visual culture refers to how images, artefacts, and media shape our understanding of the world around us. The primary interpretative strategy of visual culture is identity politics, which refers to how visual media constructs and represents different social and cultural identities. It examines the power dynamics and hierarchies within visual representations and gives interpretation from one point or one minority group.

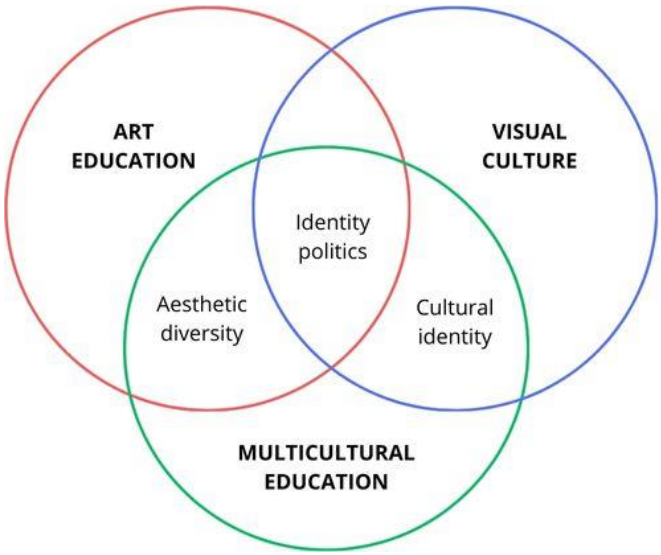


Figure 2 | *Mutual contribution of art education, visual culture and multicultural education (Copyright by the author)*

Visual culture education, therefore, incorporates cultural literacy as a critical component. By recognising and understanding the cultural significance of visual symbols, students can appreciate the diversity and complexity of visual communication. Integrating cultural literacy in visual culture education promotes cultural understanding, appreciation, and inclusivity of different cultural identities. The main contribution of visual culture to multicultural education is explaining cultural identity through signs and symbols.

Art is always taught according to a specific aesthetic. The problem is that we consider visual aesthetics a constant value and quality measure. However, we only consider European aesthetics rooted in modernism and have concentrated exclusively on European high art since the Renaissance (Blocker, 2004, p. 189). According to Delacruz (1996), there is no one correct aesthetic because multiculturalism implies more than one thing. Today, we know that measuring other cultures' art is impossible based on European aesthetic criteria; instead, we must first explore the aesthetic canons of the culture in which the art originates. We will achieve equality between cultures only if we treat all cultures equally (Silvers, 1999, p. 95).

Therefore, we must necessarily consider the possibility of multiple and diverse aesthetics. This aesthetic diversity is the main contribution of art to multicultural education because different art from different cultures is equally valuable for different cultural reasons (Blocker, 2004). As Blocker (2004) said “there is no qualitative evolution (or ‘progress’) of art and no significant international kind of art that can in general be said to be intrinsically better than any other” (p. 190).

For art and culture, appreciation is crucial for understanding the reception process. How do we make meanings from symbols and signs? Art history has different interpretations regarding the relationships within the reception triad, composed of the author, the artwork, and the spectator (Figure 3).

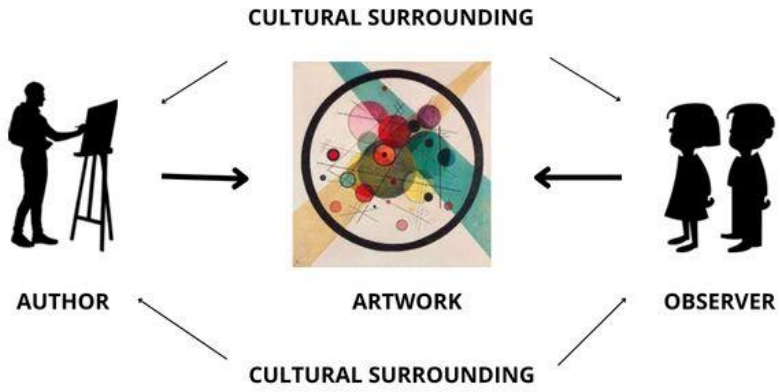


Figure 3 | Reception process (Copyright by the author)

The author introduces specific ideas into the artwork, while the spectator, by looking at the artwork, creates meanings that can be more or less similar to the original intention. The entire reception process takes place in a specific time and place, which can but does not have to, correspond to the time and place of creation. We can say that the reception process is historically and geographically conditioned. An additional problem arises if there is a difference between the time and space of creation and reception, which is often the case when dealing with art from the past.

It highlights only a few significant art history theories that have influenced a change in the approach to the artwork's reception and have taken the cultural framework into

account. Norman Bryson explores the concepts of “gaze” and “glance”, two different ways of looking at and perceiving images in European and Chinese culture (Bryson, 1983). Hans Belting distinguishes between the Eastern and the Western gaze, considering how visual imagery reflects and shapes belief systems and cultural practices (Belting & Schneider, 2011). Martin Jay invented the term “scopic regimes”, which refers to the dominant ways of seeing and the cultural norms that influence visual perception within a specific time and context (Jay, 1993).

The mentioned theories suggest that the gaze is learned and practised throughout history (Belting & Schneider, 2011). Such a perspective opens up the possibility of the existence of other viewpoints as equally valuable and lays a strong foundation for promoting a multicultural approach. Education and art always occur within a particular culture and are influenced by cultural beliefs more than scientific discoveries. For multicultural teaching, we need more than just an art theory. We need to know something about cultural semiotics, a field of study that explores how culture is created, communicated, and understood through signs and symbols.

Resemblance Between Cultural and Visual Literacy

Both cultural and visual literacy are composed of a set of competencies (Figure 4).

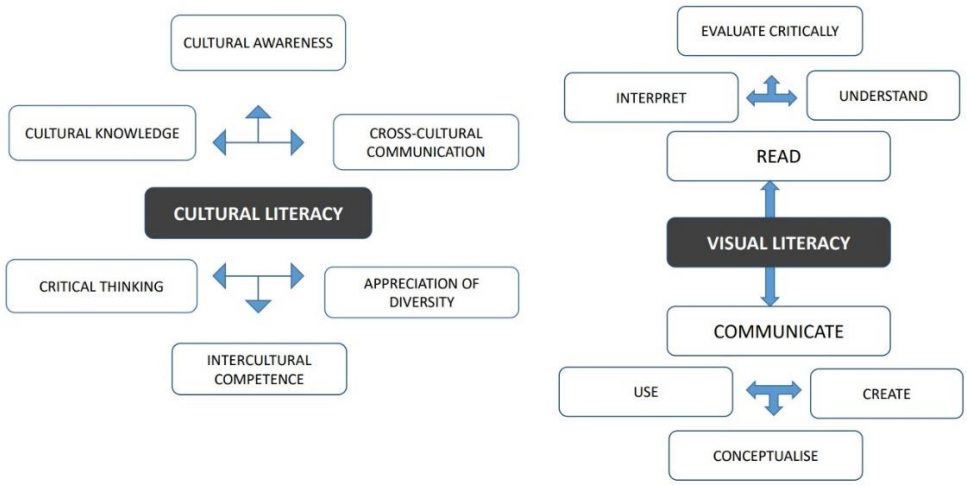


Figure 4 | *Competencies of cultural and visual literacy* (Copyright by the author)

Cultural literacy refers to understanding the cultural references, symbols, beliefs, practices, and values shared within a particular society or community. It is not limited to one's own culture; it also involves understanding and appreciating the diversity of cultures worldwide. In the mid-20th century, the term cultural literacy refers to understanding cultural practices within the culture in which we live. Over time, it has expanded to understand and appreciate any culture, considering all its markers (Shliakhovchuk, 2019). Cultural literacy aims to acknowledge someone's cultural integrity and develop the ability for transcultural communication (Wilson, 1974). Today, we talk more about intercultural

literacy, which is determined as “the understandings, competencies, attitudes, language proficiencies, participation and identities which enable effective participation in a cross-cultural setting” (Heyward, 2004, p. 45). Cultural literacy requires awareness of the complexity of culture, critical reflection, acknowledgement of cultural diversity, and the ability to be an effective communicator (Shliakhovchuk, 2019).

Moreover, cultural literacy is recognised as a crucial element of visual literacy. Visual literacy competencies can be divided according to the ability to read messages and communicate. Reading messages involves interpreting, understanding, and critically assessing visual messages, while communication involves using and creating visual signs and symbols and conceptualising knowledge visually. Each sub-competency occurs within a specific context, within the cultural context encompassing historical, geographical, and societal aspects.

The cultural component is highlighted in some definitions and determination of visual literacy competencies. Pauwels (2008) outlines four types of visual literacy competencies: perceptual competence, decoding and interpretive competence, productive competence, and intercultural competence (p. 80). Introducing the cultural context into the issue of visual literacy suggests that literacy has shifted from individual cognitive skills to social practice, meaning that literacy is done in specific social contexts. Accordingly, Green & Beavis (2013) developed a three-dimensional model including operational, critical, and cultural literacy. The operational dimension involves using the communication system by recognising and decoding codes and conventions relating to basic skills and the functionality of literacy. The cultural dimension involves using the communication system to apply certain conventions appropriate to the context to create meaning. The critical dimension includes a tendency to question ideological patterns in conventions and cultural forms and recognise patterns of social power structures.

Cultural literacy assumes the development of visual literacy, as it requires interpreting culture in context, and artworks, design, and media constitute a part of the tangible cultural heritage. Visual literacy includes knowledge of signs and symbols through which culture communicates.

Discussion

Visual and cultural literacy are closely interconnected, as both involve some of the same abilities. Interpreting cultural symbols is crucial for both cultural and visual literacy. Many visual symbols carry cultural meanings and significance, which only cultural understanding can fully grasp. Understanding the symbolism of colours, shapes, or gestures in artwork may require knowledge of cultural connotations associated with these elements in a particular society.

They also have a shared appreciation of cultural diversity in art. Cultural literacy provides insights into how different cultures express their identities, values, and beliefs through art. Both visual and cultural literacy emphasise the importance of understanding the context in which visual representations are created and perceived. Cultural literacy helps interpret the historical, social, and cultural factors that shape the creation and reception of visual images. A significant similarity is also the ability for cross-cultural comparisons. Visual literacy allows for comparing artworks from different cultures in terms of composition, use of colour, symbolism, and techniques. Cultural literacy enables deeper comparisons by revealing the cultural values and perspectives that shape these artistic choices.

Both literacies use critical analysis of visual representations to encourage critical analysis of how different cultures are visually represented through art. Understanding cultural nuances is essential to avoid stereotypes and misinterpretations. They also have in common that they approach art history as a cultural narrative, embracing the learned history of art as a story written from the perspective of Western European art. Such recognition enables us to give a chance to other narratives not in a position of political power.

Incorporating cultural literacy into art education involves exposing students to various cultural references, critically analysing visual artefacts, and encouraging them to explore the historical and cultural contexts in which artworks are created. By doing so, educators help students become skilled artists and informed and culturally aware individuals who can engage meaningfully with the visual world around them.

Conclusion

In visual culture art education, cultural literacy plays a crucial role in unlocking the potential of art to convey messages, provoke thoughts, and foster more profound understanding. Artworks often contain layered meanings and references to cultural, historical, and social contexts. Without a solid foundation in cultural literacy, viewers might miss out on essential nuances and symbols that artists embed in their works. Cultural literacy encourages an appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives. By understanding the cultural references and symbols in different visual artefacts, individuals can gain insight into various cultures' values, beliefs, and traditions. This promotes empathy and open-mindedness when encountering art from different parts of the world.

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Public Participation at Eye Level: A Cooperation Between University and Museum

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Abstract

In a seminar at the University of Kaiserslautern-Landau (RPTU), art education students had the unusual opportunity to participate in the transformation of a renowned museum. The conditions were extremely favourable: Steffen Egle had been selected as new director of the Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern (mpk) in spring 2022 and was determined to initiate and shape a new beginning. In a previous cooperation, I had become acquainted with his pronounced interest in audience participation. We both knew that the other was interested in discourse between all participants at eye level. This cleared the way for content. At the centre of the event were two full-day museum visits at intervals of a few weeks, each of which was prepared and followed up in seminar sessions at the university. With a critical eye on discrimination, exoticisation, racism, colonialism and othering, students examine exhibition objects and texts in order to sensitise museum management to new ways of looking at museum collections.

Keywords: museum, audience participation, discrimination, (post-)colonialism, othering

Author Note

Informed consent was obtained from all students involved in the project for their images to be used in this publication.

Public Participation at Eye Level: A Cooperation Between University and Museum

Students as Experts

The first museum day took place in Egle's first week of service. The students were first asked to perceive the museum individually with as much attention and impartiality as possible. Then we took part in a classical guided tour. In the subsequent discussion of impressions with the director, these questions played a role: How does the building appear from the outside and inside? How does the staff appear? How are the exhibitions presented? Do they invite visitors to look at them, to engage with them? Was the guided tour appropriate for the target group? The students expressed their impressions relatively unfiltered. For example, they were positively impressed by the façade, irritated by a public disagreement between two staff members or pleased that the supervisors offered information about the exhibitions on their own initiative. Steffen Egle asked specific questions and took notes. It quickly became clear to the students that here was a museum director who listened carefully and took critical comments seriously, such as about the tour they had experienced, and wanted to understand them. This was largely the opposite of what they knew from museums.

For the second day on site, the students were given the task of researching the museum and the exhibition "Political Bodies" by Afghan, multidisciplinary artist Kubra Khademi in detail, so that this time they could express themselves from the perspective of visitors who were as well informed as possible. The seminar deliberately did not include any joint preparation for the exhibition by the Afghan artist, who deals with "questions of female identity in a male-dominated society, the refugee experience and feminist resistance in exile" (Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern, 2022, referred to as mpk in this chapter) in sometimes very explicit depictions. The exhibition posed a challenge to the viewing habits of the Kaiserslautern public and was even described in the newspaper "Die Rheinpfalz" as "feminist pornography" (Dick, 2022).

For this exhibition, we had booked a museum education workshop with Benjamin Košar, also the new head of art education at the mpk. It began with the students using the smartphone app "Canva" to create posters on the situation of women in Afghanistan (Figure 1).



Figure 1 | *Students discuss their posters about the situation of women in Afghanistan in a mediation workshop.* Post from the Instagram takeover by the students, https://www.instagram.com/p/CfhNmsHr9s2/?hl=de (retrieved 28.6.2023)

Using printouts of the results, they discussed, for example: What material does the internet provide? How would people in Afghanistan react to the collages? Did the students take this population group into consideration when working - and is it necessary to do so? Is the aestheticization of the question problematic?

In the second part of the workshop, the students were asked to take on different roles (museum visitor, Muslim, gallery owner, prude, university teacher, feminist) and discuss selected images from the exhibition (Figure 2).



Figure 2 | *In the mediation workshop, students take on different roles from which they examine Kubra Khademi's painting "Parliament Scene."* Post from the Instagram takeover by the students, https://www.instagram.com/p/CflhmtXL2rw/?hl=de (retrieved 28.6.2023)

In addition, there was the opportunity to wear combat waistcoats designed by the artist herself and to reflect on the meaning of these objects in conversation (Figure 3).



Figure 3 | *Practical art education: The head of the museum education department helps a student put on a waistcoat from the exhibition "Political Bodies" by Afghan artist Kubra Khademi.* Post from the Instagram takeover by the students, https://www.instagram.com/p/Cfnw5dtNB6d/?hl=de (retrieved 28.6.2023)

What was remarkable for me was the discrepancy between my own and the students' perception of the workshop. The first sequence seemed to me to be too little focused, of limited depth of discussion and much longer than necessary. The students, however, were enthusiastic about the very motivating start, the freedom in the discussion of the content, the lack of time pressure and the fact that they had been "picked up" in an appropriate way. The museum educator, who was only a few years older than the students, had found a very successful way to win over the participants and to initiate image discourses seemingly casually. Like me, the students rated the role play as an extremely successful form of engagement.

Interventions and Instagram

After the workshop, the students had the task of identifying what they saw as a 'difficult' image in the permanent exhibition, formulating questions about the image and developing initial ideas for critical textual interventions that would later be placed next to the works in the museum. Some had known the museum before from school or private visits and had not experienced it as interested in substantial audience participation until then. This changed at the latest with the prospect of being allowed to intervene directly in the exhibition. In the presentation of the selected pictures and questions, the individual point of view became just as clear as the strongly differing previous training with regard to art education critical of discrimination (cf. Kunsthochschule Mainz ed., 2021).

Before, during and after the visit, three female students took over the museum's Instagram account as the first outsiders ever to do so (fig. 1-5). Among other things, they reported on their critical questions and comments, for example on Anselm Feuerbach's painting "The Storyteller at the Fountain" (1866): "Racist representation convention: the only person of colour [...] is depicted away from the action with his breast exposed (?!)". A particular challenge was to translate complex issues appropriately into the Instagram format, which is subject to fast consumer habits. Racist and sexist discrimination was addressed in a very concise form in the article mentioned earlier, but the intersectionality at hand was not analysed in more detail. Instead, the students had chosen to focus on exoticisation and othering. The ten-part post included a photo of the work and nine short content-related comments or questions and prompts for the audience. Such a post is unlikely to be much more extensive to still be received. Another post criticised the fact that the "Landscape Painting in the 19th Century" aisle began with a picture by Tina Blau-Lang, but otherwise only showed works by male artists. The students asked the other visitors to think critically about the selection of exhibits: "What circumstances could have favoured this imbalance? How could it be dealt with today?"

Even though the number of public comments on Instagram was limited overall, those posts that either showed the students in action or asked critical questions had a particularly activating effect. From my point of view, the posts could have been formulated more drastically and, for example, criticised the hanging of the permanent exhibition in principle. In the reflection discussion, however, it became clear that this was countered by respect for the institution and its media presence.

The students' written interventions, completed after the end of the seminar, are somewhat more complex than the Instagram posts and, because they are placed directly next to the works, stimulate more concrete reflection. Those questions that point to a problem but allow for different answers seem particularly helpful, for example: What can be used to justify the depiction of female nudity?

At the end of the second museum day, there was another discussion with the director. The students asked how their comments during the first visit had been received by the team and whether any consequences had already been drawn. Egle referred to the process of departure that had begun, in which individual statements did not always have immediate consequences, but contributed to the overall picture. Egle reported on the success of the museum's first public workshop and the signs that the urban society was noticing and beginning to appreciate the new openness. He considered the students' criticism of the permanent exhibition and their assessments of the room atmosphere and the behaviour of the staff to be particularly relevant contributions. He could also now see the building's façade much more positively than before.

In the discussion it became clear that the students' interest in the mpk had noticeably increased because for the first time they had the feeling that as an audience they were not only being asked to be receptive but also productive. They were interested, among other things, in which pictures were stored in the depot and why they were not shown, how the museum wanted to achieve its own decolonisation or how the visibility of women artists in the permanent exhibition should be improved. They pleaded for more seating and a discreet guidance system in the building as well as a café. They noted as positive the low-distraction, but friendly and overall perception-promoting atmosphere in the building.

Students Coach the Museum Director

The students also had the task of coaching the new director from their individual perspective. This explicitly reversed the traditional hierarchy between museum management and the public in written form. The students took this task very seriously and gave, among other things, detailed advice on how collaborations with local schools should be expanded. They problematised the institutional power of the museum and referred to its public mission for society. Some coaching sessions also provided a scientifically elaborated discussion of exoticism, racism and colonialism, which in turn led to concrete suggestions. For example, the sentence "One focus is 19th century art" should be changed to "One focus is 19th century regional Palatine, German and European art." This would make the underlying standardisation clear without negating the character of the collection. Racism should also be made visible and addressed for those not negatively affected by it.

One student saw the special role of Max Slevogt as a painter from the region but called for appropriate information to be provided in the exhibition (Figure 4 & 5).



Figure 4 | *Students discuss the depiction of the male and female body in the painting "Judith with Self-Portrait" by German artist Max Slevogt.* Post from the Instagram takeover by the students, https://www.instagram.com/p/CfrC8d2tH7l/?hl=de (retrieved 28.6.2023)



Figure 5 | *Students ask questions about the depiction of female nudity in Max Slevogt's painting "Judith with Self-Portrait" from today's perspective*. Post from the Instagram takeover by the students, https://www.instagram.com/p/CfrC8d2tH7l/?hl=de (retrieved 28.6.2023)

In addition, written feedback from visitors should generally be made available in the exhibition. The students saw further possibilities for audience participation in special events such as concerts and online surveys on the programme and presentation.

All in all, the seminar showed in an exemplary way how audience participation at eye level can on the one hand increase identification with a museum, but on the other hand also considerably intensify the content-related examination of the works on display. Medium- and long-term success seems possible when hierarchies are flat and actual consequences become apparent to the public. The mpk (Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern) has embarked on this path. Future collaborations with the RPTU can include, for example, the development and testing of didactic offers for schools or making the depot a place of research for students.

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Art Education in Czech Science Centres

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Abstract

The paper entitled 'Art education in Czech Science Centres' presents qualitative research focused on educational practice using art education in the context of science centres in the Czech Republic. Science centres approach scientific and technical concepts through interactive and creative activities. Art education, commonly present in museum and gallery education, has the potential to visualise scientific principles and develop creativity also in these centres. Using the methods of interviews with educators and observation in science centres, the author of the research analyses the extent of this interconnection and the importance thereof within pedagogical activity when mediating science to children. The paper follows the thematic scope of the conference reflecting on learning through art, and the fault lines metaphor which is perceived in this paper as a seemingly insurmountable gap between science, technology, humanities and art disciplines, which in practice often interconnect, inspire one another and integrate in many ways.

Keywords*:* art education; science centres; qualitative research; interdisciplinary integration; in-school and after-school education

Art Education in Czech Science Centres

Art education in Czech science centres offers more than one parallel to the theme of this year's InSEA World Congress. The fault lines of upheaval and change, both geological and symbolic, have been chosen as a conceptual demonstration of major changes in the 21st century education (InSEA World Congress, 2023).

Among these parallels, we would find historical and geographical ones, as science centres have appeared in the field of Czech non-formal education in the last decade as institutions without a firm anchor in the system of traditional museums and galleries (Krčmová & Chvátal, 2020). It emerged as a breakthrough after 2010, thanks to the support from the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation with the aim of popularising science, which, following the example from abroad, meant popularising mainly natural and technical sciences. Thanks to one of the objectives of the aforementioned subsidy programme, which involved regional development, five Czech science centres were established in larger cities along the geographical borders of the Czech Republic in abandoned, neglected or underused premises of historical and technical monuments – Techmania in Pilsen, iQLANDIA in Liberec, VIDA in Brno, Svět techniky [The World of Technology] in Ostrava and Pevnost poznání [The Fort Science] in Olomouc. They were intended to bring excitement and change to neglected areas on the border outside the capital – the largest city of Prague, where no such an institution has not been established (Moravec, Kuták & Chábová, 2014).

The aim of the grant programme was also the popularisation and commercialisation of research and development, which in practice meant popularisation through interactivity, personal experience and entertainment. Inspiration from the commercial sphere, a greater emphasis on financial practice and financial independence of the subjects were also evident. This kind of educational practice is referred to as edutainment. The metaphor of the fault line was perceived here in relation to the discussion in the public space, because it is a form of education that excites strong emotions and friction from the professional sphere of memory institutions or often the scientific community. The latter perceived edutainment as an undignified reduction of professional quality and unwilling to further reduce the amount of factual knowledge (Vlasaná, 2006).

Another fault line can be seen as the crossroads between formal and non-formal education. Non-formal education in the Czech Republic has long set an innovative trend towards the formal education environment (Hanuš, 2021). Many institutions, organizations, groups or individuals create innovative methods of education that subsequently influence the shape of school practice. Science centres in this regard offer a wide portfolio of non-formal education activities largely offered to schools. Thanks to their objectives in

popularising current scientific knowledge and technological possibilities, schools have the opportunity to be inspired by or directly collaborate with the centres during their visits.

But what role does art education play in this context? What is the experience of educators with art education, now traditionally present in museum and gallery pedagogy? In science centres, it has significant potential in developing visitors' creativity and contributing to their understanding of scientific principles through other means. Thus, art education has become the last fault line – between science, technology, humanities and art disciplines, which in practice often interconnect, inspire one another, and integrate in various ways, but are most often formally separated in education.

Theoretical Framework

In the context of the ongoing reform of the framework curriculum in the Czech Republic, the topic of interdisciplinary integration has become topical again. From the above context, it seems that art education in the environment of Czech science centres has the potential for fulfilling and innovating in the field of interdisciplinary integration. During the year of 2023, qualitative research was conducted on the educational practice of art education in the context of five science centres in the Czech Republic, which are associated together with three planetariums in the Association of Czech Science Centres.

The research addressed the question whether art education takes place in Czech science centres? And if so, how is it implemented? How is it perceived by the educators themselves, and what role does it play in their work? What is their experience with interconnecting formal and non-formal education in this area, and whether there is interdisciplinary cooperation?

The research topic is interdisciplinary in nature. It belongs to the field of non-formal education, which is currently promoted in connection with the key document of education in the Czech Republic entitled *Strategy 2030+* (Fryč, Matušková, Katzová, Kovář, Beran, Valachová, Seifert, Bet'áková & Hrdlička, 2020), but it is relatively little analysed in the academic field. As key publications in this field, we can consider *Muzejní expozice jako edukační médium* [Museum Expositions as an Educational Medium] (Šobáňová, 2014) and *Edukační potenciál muzea* [The Educational Potential of the Museum] (Šobáňová, 2012) by Petra Šobáňová, which partly deal with science centres and operate with a large amount of existing phenomena and concepts in research. Furthermore, we can mention the thematic issue of the journal *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], subtitled Neformální vzdělávání [Non-formal Education], which deals, among other things, with science centres from a practical, almost existential point of view (Vachková & Kohout, 2020). There are now also a number of diploma theses in the field of science centres dealing mainly with marketing or popularisation programmes of natural science sections or also with methodologies.

However, the reflection of educators' own experience in science centres has been neglected so far.

Methodology

This study uses a methodological framework of grounded theory, as it is qualitative research with the aim of describing educators' experiences with art education in Czech science centres. It was conducted using a semi-structured interview method with five selected educators from five Czech science centres, who were selected and approached for collaboration based on consultations and recommendations from their departments. These are therefore the individuals who have the greatest potential to contribute to the topic, as they are or have been creating some form of art education within their professional competences or were recommended by their institution regarding the research topic. They are working in different job roles, in very different workplaces, with different work competences, for this reason the initial identification set of questions, focusing on institution, length of experience, educational attainment and type of education, was expanded to include questions targeting job description, educational practice and work competences.

Further questions of the interview itself were divided into four groups: 1.) Own experience with art education in the science centre 2.) The topic of collaboration in the science centre 3.) Forms of interdisciplinary integration and opportunities 4.) Final evaluation and perspectives.

The interviews took place between June and August 2023, in two cases live with a face-to-face visit to the institution and in three cases in the form of an online interview. All interviews were audio-recorded, after which the interview results were transcribed and evaluated using an open coding method.

Ethical Aspects of the Research

In accordance with the consent of all participants, all interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the names of the institutions were retained in quotations, while all names of respondents were anonymised. The author of the research also acknowledges a personal relationship to the topic, as he is an employee of the Pevnost Poznání [The Fort Science] science centre, one of the institutions studied, and one of the respondents is his partner and colleague. He perceives personal experience as a potential benefit and one of the main motivations for researching the area. He tried to avoid possible contamination of the data through a rigorous approach in terms of methodology and data analysis.

Results

All the science centres surveyed have their own specialised workshops, which educators themselves usually describe as the spaces where most art education takes place. These are mostly polytechnic workshops called Fab Labs (Fabrication Laboratories), which,

following the foreign model, are shared workshops designed for individuals to produce computer-designed products, projects and artworks. They are usually equipped with specialized workshop equipment of computer-controlled fabrication machines such as a laser cutter, CNC milling machine, cutting plotter or 3D printer (Wikipedia, 2023).

> *We have workshops for the public, which is our sort of main station for polytechnic education, so they're designed more like workshops for polytechnic education, but because it's our sort of, let's say dirty workspace, we also use it for creative activities here. (Interview with a Techmania educator)*

From the first question area, entitled *Own experience with art education in the science centre*, three of the five science centres showed very similar characteristics in the field of art education. These were respondents from the Techmania, iQLANDIA and VIDA science centres, all of whom had a natural science degree, in contrast to the other two science centres, which have educators with an art degree. The educators with natural science education perceived art education as a tool to enable them to impart knowledge in the field of science, the popularisation of which is the main objective.

> *Well, and because art is related to everything, and it's certainly a significant part of life, so we think of it as a great tool to introduce kids to science. (Interview with an educator from Techmania)*

Most creative activities are used in open workshops, educational programmes and summer day camps aimed at the younger age group – pre-school and lower primary school children.

> *The biggest one is Bastlírna, which is an open workshop for younger children and the whole family in general, where children can create with different materials...[] (Interview with an educator from VIDA)*

The art activities described usually did not include the aspect of free creation, experimentation or working with images. Respondents admitted that this was not the aim of the educational content. Rather, the activities included workflows, templates, and demonstration or application of natural science laws and knowledge.

> *Well, we're using the art as such, not that we're primarily after the goals of the art, but rather our goal is the other subject and the art helps us meet the goals of the other subject because it's just like the kids enjoy it. (Interview with an educator from iQLANDIA)*

The respondent from the World of Technology in Ostrava described a diametrically different approach to art education, as the local workshop was specifically art-related. It focused on art activities in most cases in a purely disciplinary concept of the educational subject. The activities included, for example, children own expression using linocut or cyanotype techniques, among others.

The educator sees the reason for the different educational practices in the historical origins and organization of the institution. The World of Technology Science Centre is part of a wider group of associated institutions in the Dolní Vítkovice conservation area. The art gallery Gong (Dolní Vítkovice., 2023) also belongs to the grouping. A significant influence on the overall concept of the project and the revitalisation of the conservation area was the entrepreneur Jan Světlík, whose interests include collecting and promoting art (Wikipedia, 2023). Under his leadership, art also became one of the educational focuses of the project.

> *We have discussed this with the management here and art is one of the three pillars that we have here for education. And I think it also has to do with the fact that we actually have a huge gallery next door meaning the Gong and he, Světlík, likes to actually support the arts. (Interview with an educator from the World of Technology)*

A respondent from the Fort Science describes a different approach. According to her, art education here tries to have an equal dialogue with other educational sections in the science centre. The program sections here are divided by school subjects: History, Mathematics, Biology, Geography, Physics, Chemistry and Art Education. The goal of art education here is interdisciplinary integration. This is particularly facilitated by the organisational structure, as the art workshop here provides complementary programmes to the educational programmes of the other sections. The accompanying programmes build on and develop the main educational programmes in terms of content, which leads to the necessary interdisciplinarity. The open workshops are also designed on the principle of interdisciplinarity in the concept of the so-called science workshops, which interconnect the creative workshop and the chemistry laboratory and offer a complementary thematically coherent programme.

> *I think it is accentuated here. That we try not to actually marginalize it at the expense of the other fields, but instead we try to create, to create some kind of partnership. So, it's probably based on the principle of some interdisciplinarity, where the creation and the creativity as such serves as a means of getting to know the world on different levels, whether it's part of a weekly after-school activity club for the youngest children, or whether it's some kind of education, for the wider public, where there are also adults. But we are trying to bring a phenomenon closer through the art, but the activities are based on the art and the technological education. (Interview with an educator from the Fort Science)*

The topic of collaboration in the science centre was chosen as the second area of questioning, because a collaboration between educators with different professional backgrounds affects interdisciplinary integration. The interviews revealed the belief of all respondents that collaboration within the institution is mainly influenced by the organizational structure. If the institution allows for joint meetings and planning, and above

all defines time opportunities for such meetings, then collaboration occurs and is praised by the staff. This subsequently leads to joint interdisciplinary projects.

On the other hand, according to the respondents, joint projects do not occur unless a joint system is set up from within the organisation based on the capacity of the staff.

> *[]...we've already discussed it with the biology sector or preschool. So, we're trying, but because we all have busy schedules, it's really, really hard to fit it all together. (Interview with a World of Technology educator)*

At the same time, in the third area, entitled *Forms of interdisciplinary integration and opportunities*, the commercial aspect of science centres also emerged as an issue. Teachers who commission educational programmes often see them as a substitute for school teaching in their subjects in topics they do not like to teach. The educational programme is then usually designed in its purely subject-specific concept in relation to the Framework Curricula for school subjects.

> *...(educational programs) because some of them are just purely for physics or purely for chemistry and there is not that much room for creativity. (Interview with an educator from iQLANDIA)*

When asked if respondents perceived any possible disadvantages of interconnecting subjects, the possible lack of expertise was mentioned. This is an interesting aspect of inaccuracy and the possible introduction of error into education, which is one of the possible concerns and trouble spots also in the current educational practice of museums (Šobáňová, 2012, p. 82–85).

> *Here I don't think it's a problem with interconnecting it with art education, because there's not so much to understand, but sometimes when there is a link between physics and chemistry, not all physicists know chemistry. (Interview with an educator from iQLANDIA)*

The motivation for using art activities as a relaxation for participants was also mentioned when engaging in art activities.

> *[]...kids just enjoy the activities. Like we put some art activities into the programs, so it's just kind of an escape or a break for them for a little while and then they go on with the science stations again. (Interview with an educator from iQLANDIA)*

The fourth area, *final evaluation and perspectives*, showed that all science centres are planning for greater interdisciplinary integration, especially with an overlap into the arts.

> *[]...we are now preparing a program to be launched in January, which actually reflects the scientific laws of art methods. (Interview with a Techmania educator)*

According to respondents, there is also a greater emphasis on equivalence in interconnecting subjects.

Not always. Well, for example, in the programs that we're going to be preparing it's probably equivalent, but mostly the emphasis is on the natural science subjects,...() (Interview with iQLANDIA educator)

Discussion

This study outlined the broad and largely unexplored issue of art education and interdisciplinary integration in the Czech science centres, which has been presented within the scope of the paper in the basic areas influencing the interrelationship. The answers of the respondents revealed different experiences with art education in science centres with respect to the given institution. Art activities are used in all Czech science centres on a wide range from the unique purely disciplinary concept of art education in the World of Technology in Ostrava to minimal involvement of art activities. However, interdisciplinary integration with art education has not yet occurred in a targeted way in most Czech science centres, which the respondents themselves reflected on attributing it to the different goals of the institution and an organisational structure that does not foresee the integration of art education with other educational areas. The disciplinary focus of the educators themselves and the existence of an art department in the institution also proved to be one of the key findings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, art education is present and used in science centres in the Czech Republic. The qualitative research presented in this paper and conducted through interviews with educators shows that the connection of art education with natural science education has an impact on pedagogical activities aimed at transmitting scientific knowledge to children. The study presented in this paper highlights the potential for synergistic interaction between art education and science centres, showing that this interdisciplinary integration can enrich the learning environment and contribute to the overall development of children. Even educators from science centres, where the integration of art education has not taken place so far, reflect this fact and plan educational contents with interdisciplinary collaboration in the future. In this way, art education can provide new perspectives on scientific knowledge and contribute to the creation of innovative and comprehensive approaches to non-formal and formal science and art education.

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Pedagogy in Museums: New Itineraries

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Abstract

Museum institutions carry out a wide range of educational work, both from a specialised technical point of view to reinforce the teaching-learning process of a specific content, and as a showcase that adapts to new learning scenarios for a wide public. In a specialised report called *Excellence and Equity*, 1992 by the American Association of Museums, the educational work carried out by museums was presented as a basic public service. As museum education has developed as a field of study, efforts have been made to record its history and set an agenda for regular research to strengthen its position as a discipline in the broader work of museums. We investigate new ways of learning for museumgoers, the best way to interpret the contents on display and how these institutions can be key spaces not only to enjoy cultural leisure, but also as a tool to generate workshops for future teachers. By studying the uniqueness of these museum and heritage interpretation spaces, we will propose an alternative way for ideas to be expressed and understood by a non-adult public. Finally, an educational workshop design for children will be proposed as a pilot project that can be developed in a museum and that can serve as a tool for future teachers to design their own museum workshop in the classroom or in the museum institution.

Keywords**:** museums, museum education, pedagogical museum, pedagogy, constructive learning

Pedagogy in Museums: New Itineraries

Society and art are mutually integrated. Therefore, emerging artistic sensibilities should be encouraged as a sign of a society that is constantly renewing itself. Cultural heritage is a set of material goods produced in specific historical stages, a period in which the culture of that context expresses itself, manifests itself and creates its main themes and myths. The meaning of "cultural heritage" is a set and complex of conservation, development and transformation actions carried out by institutions, which are constituted from tangible and intangible goods, from narratives that are transmitted through generations (Calabrese & Ragone, 2016). The relationship between these components is used to identify the heritage, transform it into an object and subject of the interpretations or narratives of the institutions, the media and the people linked to this asset also come into play; all of this serves to understand the value that cultural heritage possesses and to be able to transmit it.

The space where these goods are located can be considered a trans-place, an anthropological space that is located beyond the local and global spheres of the territory. The cartography of a territory presents dynamic components thanks to the relationship between information and visual records or images belonging to the collective cultural memory belonging to that place. This space is a place in which identity and history are built and entails specificity, temporality and location, as well as certain interpretations and relationships associated with individual and collective identities (Augé, 1992). Currently, asset conservation actions are not enough since these heritages must be valued and communicated.

The sphere of art falls into a category of actions or events that reflect an objective reality, and this makes it possible to better understand the context and society (Francastel, 1969). Currently, art reflects a plural, critical or accepting vision and cultural fragmentation and is sometimes criticized for not providing a tool for analysis between opposing points of view (Crane, 1997b). The artistic work has immense cultural value precisely because it resists any division, the created object preserves the ideas and creation process of the artist. The artist, as a social actor, is within a collective structure that is the art world and has unique artistic abilities.

Museums carry out extensive educational work, strengthening the teaching-learning process with new ways of presenting content and functioning as a window to new learning scenarios for a wide audience. The public museum is a place where permanent or temporary exhibitions are offered, and objects are shown in a format and through a broad discourse and narrative. It is a space with a significant and valuable entity, its purpose, in addition to conservation, is to inform a more or less specialized public about historical or current events, culture, the branch of science or the field of art.

The museum is a socially valued institution that can be a pedagogical meeting place (Trofanenko & Segall, 2014) in which how to learn inside and outside this physical museum space is actively questioned through recent studies and practices. It is about investigating new modes of teaching/learning so that the public who visits museums can better interpret the contents on display.

In *Beyond Pedagogy: Reconsidering the Public Purpose of Museums* (Segall & Trofanenko, 2014), Macdonald (2006) establishes a series of terms to determine the relationship between museums and education or teaching modes: among these are those of "second-wave new museology" that refer to two terms that were coined by Vergo (1989), what has been called the "old museology", which dealt more with the methods used in museums and little with the purpose of museums and the "new museology" that analysed the political, ideological and sociological implications of past and present museum practices. The old museology taught pre-professionals how to put into practice the presentation of "facts or events, objectivity, superior taste and knowledge" (Macdonald, 2006), the new museology focused on deconstructing museum programs and policies to identify the contexts in which certain types of knowledge predominated.

The second-wave new museology fuses old ideas with new ones, analyses strategies to develop exhibitions and programs that respond to the academic and theoretical criticisms of the late 20th century and to museum practices. The beginning of new museology (Lindauer, 2014, p. 10) coincided with criticism from other academic disciplines that applied theoretical knowledge (such as poststructuralism, postcolonialism, semiotics and postmodernism, among others). These new ideas about museums served to generate innovative exhibitions in their design and structure.

It is also important to highlight that the notion of education can be extended with the idea of cultural interaction. Under this approach, the notion of educating is that of interpreting, showing a new, better and innovative facet of the museum content on display and its objects, connecting with the personal experiences of the visitor, characteristics that Freeman Tilden highlights in the publication of his book, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 1957, which has included contributions from research studies and subsequent suggestions that have enriched it. Finally, an educational workshop design for children will be proposed as a pilot project that can be developed in a museum and that can serve as a tool for future teachers to design their own museum workshop in the classroom or in the museum institution.

Expert Reports

It is very relevant to study the uniqueness of these museums and heritage interpretation spaces and visualize how they adapt to children's museums and propose an alternative way for the ideas to be understood by a non-adult public. Among some of the

most significant reports in this regard are Excellence and Equity: Education and the public dimension of museum of the *International Council of Museums* (ICOM), a presentation of the educational work of museums as a basis service to the public.

Museums and Pedagogy: Connection Links

The current public museum focuses not only on the citizen to whom it is directed, but also on the good design and curation of its exhibitions, collections and how this nourishes and enriches the research that is associated with educational practices, pedagogy and discourses. educational institutions, which increasingly value the museum as a learning space. Based on this intellectual exchange, new innovative academic terrain and emerging practices are created.

In order to establish a current pedagogical line in museums, it is necessary to understand that the didactic objective in public museums began in some areas from colonial practices. The public museum began, according to Crane (1997a), as an elitist institution to preserve, inventory, identify and create cultural heritage from events, actions or objects of the past and present.

Certain museums visualize part of the history of the past based on themes such as colonialism and its international relations (Trofanenko & Segall, 2014), they show the creation and construction of the empire, immigration, as well as local practices associated with the context. In historical, national, ethnological museums or some more specific natural history museums, the history and knowledge of a group or community that is delimited and on which an identity, a sense of belonging to the place, as well as a ideal of citizenship, which in this case is hierarchical in nature. Sometimes the museum marks a difference between these colonial ideals and our current context, an aspect that would be interesting to be able to work on from a critical response that reflects on these museums, so that they can serve the visitor not only to obtain objective information about a certain historical event but to analyse and reflect on the current museum. Studying the pedagogical nature of the museum and the ways in which pedagogy has been used in the museum as a learning space creates new perspectives and critical points of view in museums about what the work of the teller is like, how tells and in what direction, what values we must assume and take into account. Usually the notion of pedagogy refers to what the teacher does in the classroom, but the most recent ideas about pedagogy are linked to critical pedagogy, analysis and cultural studies that define pedagogy from a broader, innovative and integrative vision.

The idea of pedagogy is a term that refers to something more than what happens in schools, it is also a process “through which knowledge is encouraged, organizing a specific way of ordering the world, of finding it and giving it meaning” (Simon, 1992). According to Simon (1992), the practice of pedagogy, whether it happens in schools or museums, aims to influence the experience of the subject. From a broad context, pedagogy encompasses any

message, content that is exhibit based on an educational action, which occurs within formal or informal contexts, as well as inside or outside the school, which structures the experiences of the students and, in the case of museums, the visitor. It is a format that influences the way in how ideas can be absorbed, structured, understood and accept their meanings, as well as a fundamental element to question the role of education and propose new strategies. Pedagogy establishes a specific vision of what is most valuable in terms of knowledge, what direction should be established, what meaning it has to know something and how representations about the individual, the community and the world can be built (Giroux and Simon, 1988, p. 12).

Museums as Learning Areas

Museum visits for children are activities that should be age-appropriate and take place during school time or as a tourist activity. There are many benefits to visiting museums, among others are that museums are spaces that teach, educate and inform. The places where facts or events from the past, present and future are exposed. Just as they show and expose lessons about achievements made by a specific community or civilization or certain errors that have occurred.

The notion of "object-based learning" (Chatterjee & Kador, 2021) is used to describe the multisensory engagement of museum experiences for the acquisition and dissemination of specific and transversal knowledge, practical and other skills. In *Engaging the Senses*, Chatterjee and Hannan (2015) use the notion of "object" in reference to any component such as an artifact, artistic work, manuscript, or archive. This publication explains the processes by which higher education students and teachers interact with objects with multisensory engagement. The main aspects of learning to take into account are:

- Experiential and active learning. (Dewey, 1899; Piaget, 1929).
- The continuum of knowledge, which includes the ideas of constructivism, according to which students construct knowledge based on their experience (Piaget, 1929).
- Socially distributed learning, to achieve significant cognitive engagement when learning is carried out socially (Vygotsky, 1978).
- Somatic learning, involves perception and the senses in the acquisition of knowledge (Matthews, 1998).

New Learning Itineraries in Museums

To create new learning itineraries and formats in museum spaces, we consider it appropriate to visualize the educational scenarios of the past taking pedagogical museums as a reference, to design and project learning strategies for the future in museums or exhibition halls. Currently, museums offer a multitude of devices with which to have a different experience, as well as showing their content from multiple formats such as audio guides, videos, 360º images for virtual visits, 3D prints or video mapping, among others.

These new learning paths provide and encourage various formats and activities that stimulate learning that are participatory, collaborative and interactive. Museums thus become key spaces in which to design collaborative workshops in which learning by discovery, experimentation and learning by doing prevail.

Some research has studied the relationship between collaborative projects and experiences in museums and has determined that there is a disconnection between the parties involved in museums and schools. This is one of the main difficulties and for this reason it is necessary to consider the value of the visit as a motivational complement and to transform it into an activity that enables a teaching and learning process, creating connections and a close understanding between schools and spaces in museums (Gupta, et. al. 2010).

The poor coordination that sometimes exists between museums and schools prevents increasing the impact of school visits on academic performance. Among the causes of this problem, we can highlight the cost of visits to museums and the pressure on teachers who produce the demands of a curriculum based on the acquisition of academic skills for the normalization of students (Bobick & Hornby, 2013).

Previous research has already studied these problems and has created an action model to promote learning in museums of which three essential elements can be highlighted (Caston, 1989):

- Museum element. The museum, its exhibitions or its collection are the main components that promote learning.
- Educational element. This is formed based on the audience of the school group that makes the visit and the teaching methodologies.
- Element of the scope of the subject. The study plan and interests of the students are the elements to take into account to achieve learning in museums. (Cited in Escribano, et. al. 2022, p. 34-35).

Multidimensional research (Polyudova, 2021) considers art museums from the social point of view and from the perspectives of personal development and educational practice. The objective is to investigate fields in which changes are current. Art museums are avant-garde spaces as they try to adjust cultural heritage to the needs of modern society.

Documents to Connect Museums and Education

We indicate some essential documents from organizations such as UNESCO, the United Nations, ICOM and Educause that represent a change in educational policy worldwide that can be applied to the field of education at a global level or to that of museums (for a greater analysis see table: Farrell & Sugrue, 2021, p. 104), and which since 2014 marked a turning point in education on sustainable development. These make up

recommendations based on ideas to achieve a better future in the educational field, in its different areas: sustainability, education, museums and technology.

Year	Organism	Documents	Subject
2014	UNESCO	Shaping the Future we want – UN Decade of education for sustainable development.	Sustainability
2015	United Nations	Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.	Sustainability
2017	OECD	Education for sustainable development	Sustainability
2018	OECD	Education 2030: The future of education and skills	Education
2019	ICOM	Annual Report 2019.	Museums
2020	OECD	Pisa 2018 Results (Volume VI): Are students ready to thrive in a interconnected world?	Education
2023	Educause	2023 Educause Horizon Report. Teaching and Learning Edition.	Technology

Table 1 | *Reports on significant policies in the educational field* (Farrell & Sugrue, 2021, p. 104).

Pedagogical Museums

Pedagogical museums are a good example of how teaching was done before using educational materials, objects or furniture, so that by knowing the history of schools and their teaching methods we can build new learning models. Among the pedagogical museums we highlight the Comenius Pedagogical Museum in Prague and the Worthing Museum & Gallery in the United Kingdom. These experiences can help us see how to visualize ancient teaching, as well as apply new teaching methods in museums such as those proposed by Rika (2014) in which I also use new ways of interpreting heritage value.

Educational Proposals

The educational proposals were made with postgraduate students from the 2019-2020 academic year of the Master in Teacher Training, Baccalaureate, Vocational Training and Language Teaching in the specialty of Drawing, design and plastic arts. 23 students participated, of which they have selected only one work by 3 students, from the subject of Teaching Innovation and Educational Research in the Teaching of Drawing, Design and Plastic Arts.

Different designs of a nomadic museum were made to show works by artists, using digital techniques and tools, based on sketches and infographics. Also holding a workshop based on the theme of art and education. The structure followed the format of a didactic unit and was based on the description of architectural structures, artists or artistic movements such as ephemeral architecture, pavilions or experimental architecture.

Figures 1 – 3 |

Nomadic museum, 2019-2020. Courtesy of Eduardo Carmona Ballester, Aarón Hernández Borges y Tezeida María Martín Barrios.





Note. Production of the ephemeral educational museum about the Bauhaus

Conclusions

Museums as an institution can be key spaces not only to enjoy cultural activities, but also to generate workshops for future teachers, research on new methodologies such as the creation of new exhibition rooms in a museum, among others. Currently the museum houses contemporary art associated with current events, interacting with personal experience and the political, cultural and social progress of a community; an art that sensitizes the public to contemporary changing events. In this cultural context, reflections on theory and practice in museology try to define how to design an open, dialogic and inclusive museum. The purpose of education, to which museums can contribute to a large extent, is to analyse and make accessible the art of the past and contemporary art, placing the viewer in both very different temporal scenarios. The school must establish strategies to develop the student's capacity so that she can use her critical sense in the selection of content and information, so that she can establish her own choices. Making a choice implies having a certain cultural training and the selection of this taste for art is carried out by cultural mediators.

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Decolonisation as a Way forward within Museum Culture and beyond

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Abstract

The paper deals with one of the key phenomena of the contemporary museum culture, which is decolonisation. In general, it constitutes a necessary instrument by which to reflect on how the global colonial system has shaped the today's world, and has influenced the way we perceive ourselves and other cultures. Memory institutions have played an important part in global colonialism, and ethnographic museums in particular represented an instrument of imperial and colonial identity. Today, cultural and educational institutions aware of their role in perpetuating and recreating an identity on individual, local and global level are taking various steps towards reflecting on their colonial past. Considering the term *colonialism without colonies*, it follows that decolonisation is relevant also for those countries which have never had colonies as it shows the way they participated in the system of economic and cultural transfers of the past while adopting the Eurocentric and imperialist view of other cultures and otherness as a whole. As an example, the paper reflects on the current exhibition displayed in the Náprstek Museum in Prague that presents Emil Holub, a 19th century Czech explorer, as perceived and interpreted through the optics of the 21st century.

Keywords: decolonisation, museum culture, Czech lands, postcolonialism, colonialism without colonies

Author Note

All exhibition photos were taken by the author Photo Jana Jiroutová with the permission of the Náprstek Museum in Prague (Czech Republic)

Decolonisation as a Way forward within Museum Culture and beyond

The paper deals with one of the key phenomena of the contemporary museum culture, which is decolonisation. Considering the many semantic layers of the term decolonisation, it focuses on the way the global colonial system influenced the shape and perception of today's world. From the broader perspectives, the process of decolonisation reflects on the impact colonialism has had on the perception of other cultures, on our mind, education, art and other strata of our everyday lives.

Memory institutions have played an important part in global colonialism, and ethnographic museums in particular represented an instrument of imperial and colonial identity. Today, cultural and educational institutions aware of their role in perpetuating and recreating an identity on individual, local and global level are taking various steps towards reflecting on the colonial past of imperial powers and the colonies subjected to them.

The paper considers the term *colonialism without colonies*, and analyses the specific context of the Czech lands, which though have never had colonies participated in the system of economic and cultural transfers of the past while adopting the Eurocentric and imperialist view of other cultures and otherness. In this context, the paper reflects on the current exhibition of the Náprstek Museum in Prague presenting a 19th century Czech explorer as perceived through the optics of postcolonial turn.

The Development of Decolonisation and its Relevance to Today's Museum Culture

To analyse the many semantic layers of the term *decolonisation*, we need to go back to the 18th and 19th century, that is, approximately 400 years after the modern colonial era was began which refers mostly to Western European countries' colonisation of lands mainly in the Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania. It was in this time, when decolonisation was chiefly considered with the way colonised people were treated by the colonisers and gave rise to various movements eventually resulting in the abolition of slavery. So, while the atrocities committed on colonised people were the topic of much criticism, the colonial system imposed by European imperialism as such was widely accepted as an indisputable world order.

It was later when the actual undoing of colonialism took place. It happened in various colonies at various times, but the term decolonisation was understood until the middle of the 20th century as the process of gaining political and economic independence from colonial powers for nations, and personal freedom for individuals.

In the second half of the 20th century questions related to museum history, their past and current practice, the origins of their collections and the representation of others begin to enter the museological discourse developing as a result of these discussions a new branch of museology referred to as critical museology (Dolák, 2016).

Without going into much detail about the various issues that began to be discussed within critical museology, in general, the museum has been as of then viewed critically, in a variety of historical, social, ideological, and economic relations and contexts (Oriešková, 2006). One of the leading claims being that the museum is not an impartial, objective institution that presents permanent, unchangeable *truth*, but that it is a product of its own time and often manifests itself as a powerful, totalitarian institution that constructs its theses depending on social requirements or the ruling ideology (Šobáňová, 2012).

Issues that have supported this claim related to the way museums and galleries have for example greatly influenced the history of art, meaning the history of western art, or the way museums were often meant only for the elite (Kesner, 2000). Importantly, these critical voices also reflected on the way non-European and non-white cultures and peoples were presented in museums as 'primitive', 'inferior', 'uneducated' and 'uncivilised' (Šobáňová, 2012; Winter, 2023b). It has thus been concluded that museums have indeed played a great role in establishing and perpetuating the dominance of colonial Europe and narratives of cultural superiority, and ethnographic museums and their collections in particularly were often created as an exhibition hall of own colonial achievements or related wars of conquest.

Naturally, the provenience of the objects and the origins of collections began to be discussed and critically assessed as well because former colonies now newly reborn nations in the need to restore their national identities should present and explain their history not as the history of ethnographically 'others', meaning exotic or even inferior people as seen through the gaze of the white man, but as their own heritage, based on their own discourse (Dolák, 2016).

While some of the museum objects were purchased, the fact that much of them were taken as spoils of war or otherwise removed without the consent of the people or community that owned them has resulted in a discussion on repatriation of museum objects, which has shaken the very basis of the museum culture. While some museums have adopted a more progressive approach to this issue, others have up to now been rather hesitant in their response.

However complex and difficult the issue of decolonisation of museums and the repatriation of museum objects is, the fact remains that it is no longer sustainable for museums to avoid the issue of decolonisation and repatriation should they continue to be relevant to today's world and society, should they continue to play an important role in culture making, should they aspire to lead the way towards improving the lives of all humanity.

Museums and galleries have thus sought to settle the colonial legacy mainly through reflecting on the museum's problematic past and the museum collections. Naturally, the

prime issue considered is the origins of objects and the way they had been acquired which can lead to repatriation as discussed previously.

Another approach involves the reconstruction of their exhibitions and asking new questions, some of the museums choose the purely aesthetic approach displaying their objects as works of art (see Fig. 1–2) (Crhák, 2023). The negative aspect of such an approach is the rather limited contextualisation of the objects which can lead to neglecting the phenomena related to colonialism altogether, but we can understand the sentiment of this approach as an attempt to restore the dignity of those objects and the peoples' who once created and used them (Crhák, 2023).

Most importantly, though, museums should enter into a dialog with the representatives of the cultures their objects originate from. To many, this is the way to comply with the postcolonial turn which challenges the world to remove itself from eurocentrism, to turn around the optics and gain new perspectives on various issues, this time from the viewpoint of the formerly colonised.

Colonialism without Colonies

To move away from eurocentrism means to initiate a debate in which our task is to acknowledge the way colonialism and imperialism impacted the way we think, we work, we learn, we make art and the way it affects all the other strata of our everyday lives. The postcolonial approach thus refers to the process of dismantling established stereotypes that influence the way we see other cultures and their people.

With this in mind, we have transitioned ourselves toward yet another semantic layer of the word decolonisation which does not refer only to the tangible aspects of the issue, but also to the intangible one. In other words, while the decolonisation has up to the past century brought the liberation of the physical spaces it has yet to liberate the vast invisible spaces and most remote folds and creases of the mind. For the mind in the most parts of the world remains very much under the subjugation of the imperial/colonial powers.

And by that is meant white supremacy which was there at the beginning of European colonialism as a key justification for it and which is there now when it, as Solomon and Ranking (2019) maintain

> defines our current reality. It is not merely belief that to be White is to be better. It is a political, cultural, and economic system premised on the subjugation of people who are not White… White supremacy is the voice in our collective heads that says it makes civilised sense that one group of people gets to annihilate, enslave, incarcerate, brainwash, torture, sterilize, breed, and terrorize other people (Solomon and Rankin, 2019, vii)

All this may very well be relevant to countries that have been in the past colonial powers, but the pressing question is what about the countries that have never owned

colonies such as the Czech Republic? Should they also participate in the ongoing decolonisation of museums and apply the postcolonial approach to their practice? The answer is a resounding: yes, they should. And let us now have a look at why.

As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2021) explains, it is because colonialism in itself was not just about acquiring new territories. It was also about redistribution and representation of tangible riches of colonised territories and the dissemination of ideas that formed the way these regions were looked upon (Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 2021).

And thus, although the Czech lands (formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire later transformed into an independent republic of Czechoslovakia) have never had colonies which means that the obvious equation in which we have a colonial power on one hand and a colonised territory on the other does not apply here, the Czech society, however, was in fact connected to the global colonisation on the ideological and economic basis – a concept that was described by a group of Swiss scientist and coined as *colonialism without colonies* (Purtschert, Falk & Lüthi, 2015; Křížová, 2020).

The natural question is then how or who brought colonial ideas to our environment. As Ondřej Crhák (Crhák in Winter, 2023b), a Czech historian and curator explains, at first it was mainly the political elite whose connection to colonial world followed from their social status and occupation. During the 18th century it was also the nobility whose favourite form of leisure was exploring remote lands and hunting. A leading role in disseminating colonial ideas, however, was in the Czech lands played by individual explorers who travelled to remote places in Africa, Asia, Americas and so on. Together with the natural and artificial riches of the far-off lands, they would also bring back the ideas of how to view these territories and how to treat their culture and people which followed in the steps of orientalism as coined by Edward Said (1979). In general, orientalism was closely linked to global colonialism whereby it created the necessary ideological background which was instrumental in the legitimisation of colonialism. Orientalism can be explained as a set of approaches including civilisation discourse, paternalism, racism and social Darwinism (Said, 1979).

Decolonisation in Museum Presentation: A Czech Case

Let us now have a look at Emil Holub (1847–1902) who is one of the most prominent explorers in the 19th century of all the Czech lands. During his lifetime, Holub made two journeys to South Africa. Both expeditions, amounting to eleven-year stay, brought him great popularity, and he gathered an enormous amount of knowledge and natural and ethnographic material.

In fact, he acquired over 15,000 ethnographic objects representing the main South African ethnic groups, and thousands of objects for natural history collections. His strategy was to collect several pieces of almost identical objects so that the collections can be then

distributed among more than a hundred European museums, schools and universities. The Náprstek Museum in Prague – the largest ethnographic museum in the Czech Republic houses about 500 of them (Winter, 2023a).

To promote the collections and in hopes to cover some of the costs of his travels, he organised several exhibitions the largest one being *Holub's South African Exhibition* that premiered in 1891 in Vienna and was repeated in Prague in 1892 – the main attraction was life-sized models of entire villages of South African ethnic groups including plaster figures presented in the context of everyday and ritual practice (Winter, 2023a). He wrote journals and published a number of travelogues and scientific texts. He greatly contributed to the advancement of knowledge and science; he is a symbol of Czech explorers.

This has been the narrative the Czech public has been told repeatedly by museums, schools, media until the Náprstek Museum in Prague opened a new exhibition in May 2023 entitled *Emil Holub* in which the curators looked at this historical figure from a different perspective that gives us a deeper insight into the cultural and ideological transfer of the time.

To start with, the exhibition reflects on Holub's writings which were written in the period paternalistic approach to African people. In the exhibition, we also learn about Holub's ambition to establish Czech colonies in Africa, he just never succeeded. At the end of his first African journey, Holub hired three child servants and took one of them back to Europe. She was an orphaned Bechuana girl called Bella (see Fig. 3) and Holub presented her at public lectures and his exhibitions which is not far from the practice of displaying living human specimen at colonial exhibitions. In the context of the current decolonisation and repatriation debate, the most controversial of Holub's objects are rock carvings of the San people (also known as Bushmen at the time) which were forcefully removed from their original location and were the subject of much criticism already in his time.

The current Emil Holub exhibition in Prague has stirred many controversies in which the critical voices view it as an attempt to discredit or even cancel Emil Holub arguing that any historical personality would not stand under the postcolonial scrutiny. The curators, however, maintain, that the objective of the new exhibition was not to condemn or even erase Emil Holub from our historical memory but to view him from a different perspective that leads to new information and knowledge ultimately contributing to a fuller picture of this important historical figure (Winter, 2023a). Using the example of Emil Holub, as the curators go on to explain, we can understand the transnational colonial thought and show the type of period colonial discourse that spread through the Czech environment as a result of also Emil Holub's activities (Winter, 2023a).

The current exhibition of Emil Holub is very important on several levels. It contributes to dismantling stereotypes we attach to this historical figure of Emil Holub, and

to the current postcolonial debate which in the Czech Republic is still very hesitant and often dismissed on the grounds of us not being a former colonial power. Through reflecting this popular historical figure, the exhibition challenges us to reflect on our own history, on our current society wide issues and our part in it, on the way we see the world, ourselves and others.

Conclusion

Decolonisation is one of the key characteristics of the today's world that has relevance not only for cultural institutions but for all segments of our everyday lives including, education, employment, culture. As follows from the concept of colonialism without colonies, the decolonisation approach to museum presentation applies to every country regardless of it being a former colonial power or not.

As an example of decolonisation of museum practice, the paper presents the current exhibition of the Náprstek Museum in Prague entitled *Emil Holub* which reflects on this historical figure through the optics of decolonisation. The importance of such an exhibition lays mainly in the attempt of affording the Czech public a fuller picture of this historical figure, illustrating the way countries that never owned a colony were involved in the global colonial system, while challenging the viewers to self-reflect on the way we see the world and others in it, and on our own involvement in the current society-wide issues.

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Figure 1 | *A view of the exhibition Emil Holub presenting objects of South African ethnic cultures in an art gallery setting* (Copyright by the author)

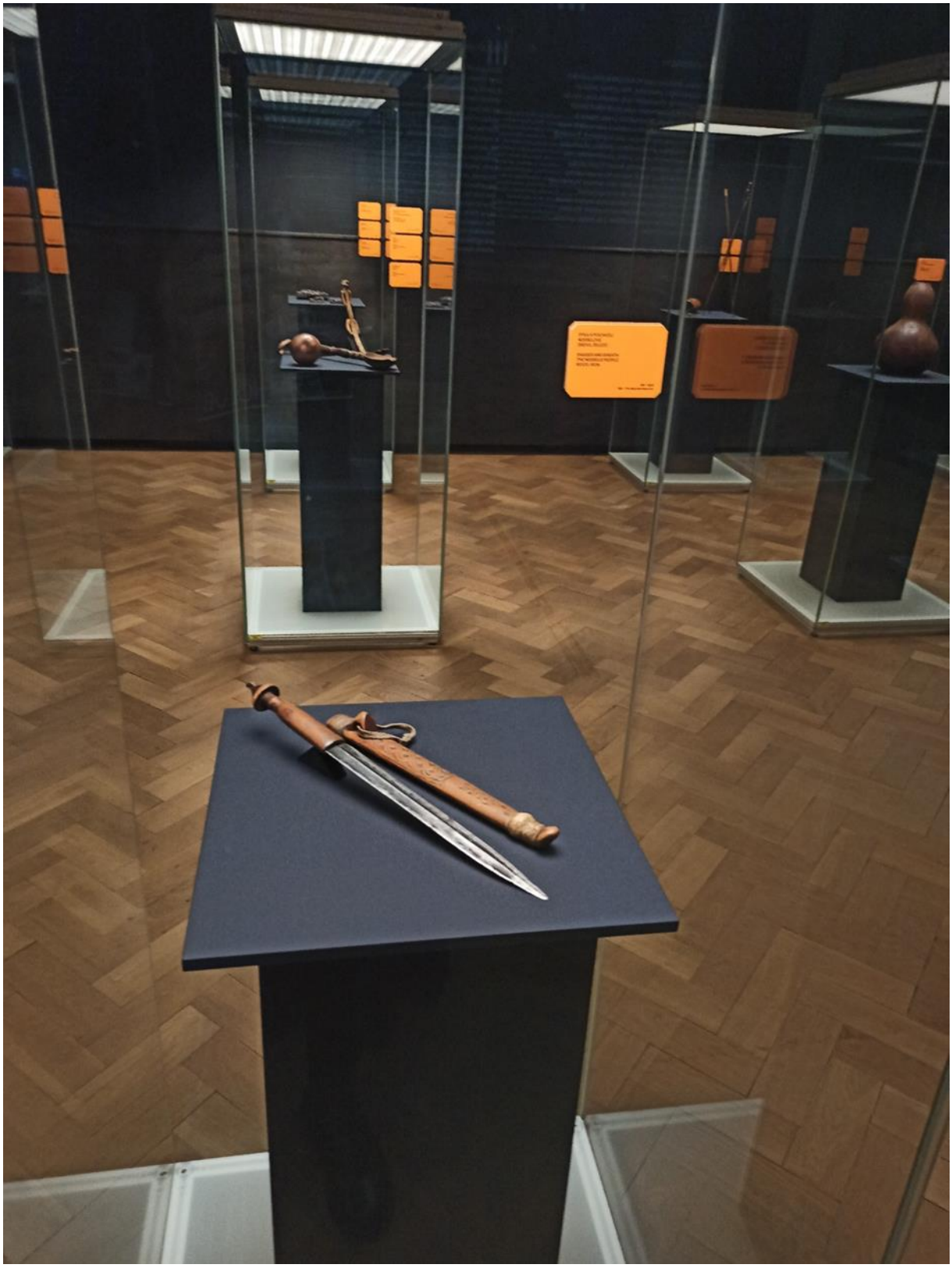


Figure 2 | *A view of the exhibition Emil Holub presenting objects of South African ethnic cultures in an art gallery setting* (Copyright by the author)



Figure 3 | *A view of the Emil Holub exhibition of the Náprstek Museum in Prague – pictures of Bella* (Copyright by the author)

The Significance of Interview Research: A Study on a Museum Family Programme Focusing on its Participants' Recollections

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Abstract

How can art museums contribute to the family? In Japan, families have been facing various problems typically due to gender inequality. However, similar issues are seen worldwide. In 2019-20, the Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo, (currently the Artizon Museum) conducted a case study on its Family Programme provided from 2001 to 2015. This study was comprised of the first phase quantitative study via a mailed-questionnaire survey and the second phase qualitative study based on the first survey. Probably, the second-phase study, interviews with 13 families, was the first face-to-face interview research exploring participants' recollections of their programme experiences four to seventeen years after their participation in any family programme. As the outside researcher, I designed and implemented this entire study with three Family Programme educators and analysed the interview data of 13 families alone utilizing an ethnomethodological approach. The results reveal unequal relationships between museums and people, adults and children, or men and women. Based on the key findings of this interview research, I will discuss three issues and suggest that an interview as a democratic conversation is necessary and effective for any education or research to understand our diverse constituencies and ourselves and deal with our social problems together.

Keywords: family programme, recollections, interview, ethnomethodology, social problem

Author note

I deeply appreciate the substantial contributions of the three educators of the Artizon Museum and the research participants to this study.

The Significance of Interview Research: A Study on a Museum-Family Programme Focusing on its Participants' Recollections

The role of the family as a basic social group has not changed even its configurations have become varied in changing societies. In any family configuration, informal and life-long education takes place mutually and individually based on long-term relationships among family members particularly through interactions typically conversations among them (Leichter, 1975). Despite the worldwide popularity of art-museum family programmes, there has been a lack of studies on them (Otaka, 2007).

Therefore, I have been studying and providing art-museum family programmes in the US and Japan. In my case study on three art-museums' family programmes in NYC exploring their participant families' post-programme activities, I interviewed 15 adults (three grandparents and 12 parents) and 16 children (aged four to 11 including non-participants) of eight families (nine households) at their homes at least twice in 2005-06 to understand what significance their programme experiences had had in their lives. The findings indicate that participant families were busy as adults were enthusiastic educators of their children/grandchildren despite the differences in families' cultural origins, educational backgrounds, or economic situations. Adult participants often became "the connoisseurs of family programmes" evaluating the efficacy of programmes on their children's/grandchildren's growth, rather than becoming co-learners with them (Otaka, 2007, p. 249). The educators often did not give instructions or educational materials to adults. Thus, art-museum family programmes tended to be considered as programmes for children. There was also a weak relationship between participants' programme experiences and those in their daily lives where everyone appreciated and created various cultural objects whereas family members did not often understand one another due to the lack of conversations (Otaka, 2007).

Also, through my case study on my own family programmes at an art museum in Tokyo in 2014, it was found that a common factor in having democratic interactions between adults and children within the family take place beyond programmes was adults' consideration of themselves as co-learners with children (Otaka, 2016). In Japan, families have been facing various social problems typically due to gender inequality that resulted in a rapidly decreasing child population. However, similar issues are seen worldwide. Then, how can museum educators realize social problems that diverse families are facing and deal with these problems with them?

About this Study

As one of the oldest art museums in Tokyo, the Bridgestone Museum of Art (currently the Artizon Museum, hereafter Museum) opened in 1952 based on the founder Mr. Shojiro Ishibashi's collection of Western modern-art masterpieces. Since 2001, it has

been providing Family Programme (hereafter FP) for pre-registered families including elementary-school-aged children. With a theme, each two-hour session consists of three components: a group art-appreciation activity, a family activity, and a group activity to share everyone's work. The Museum has kept each session's records.

Aiming to study FP participants' recollections of their programme experiences, the action research was pursued in 2019-20. Comprising the following two phases, three FP educators and I, as an outside family-programme specialist, conducted this study on all 258 sessions from 2001 to 2015 in which 2,836 persons from 1,074 families including repeaters had participated.

Phase one: An A4-sized one-page multiple-choice questionnaire, with a free-answer space on its back, was mailed in the spring 2019 to 248 families whose addresses had been recorded. It surveyed basic individual information including participants' names, sexes, ages, occupations, addresses, and whether they remember anything about FP and whether they had done any post-programme activities. While 44 families were not reached due to their address changes, 132 participants from 69 families (33.8% of 204 families) answered via mail. Among the respondents, 72.5% were women while 27.5% were men, and 80.9% chose "I remember FP" and "I remember FP very well."

Phase two: Based on the phase-one survey answered by April 3rd 2019, we chose 20 families by considering a variety of programme participants and their written episodes to ask them whether we could interview them further at their homes or wherever they would choose. As a result, we interviewed 13 agreed families respectively in April through June 2019, five families at their homes, six at their neighbourhood diners, and two at the Museum office.

Each interview was semi-structured with several common questions and unique topics along with the interviewees' answers as well as those in the phase-one survey and each past session-end survey with their names voluntarily written. Regarding each interview, all the researchers shared museum documents and data including voice records, the photographs of objects shown if any, and a basic transcript made by outsourced agencies in 2000.

Our 13 interviewee families varied in their participation years (2002-15), frequency (1-30 times), participant members within the family (a mother/parents and a child/three children), child-participant interviewees' ages (11-26), and their addresses (Tokyo and adjacent prefectures). Three international-marriage families and one single-mother family due to parents' divorce were included.

I designed and oversaw the entire phases with the educators and analysed the interview data alone from an ethnomethodological perspective to understand specific interactions by examining the procedural aspects of members' situated practices typically

through conversation analysis (Have, 2004). Although transcripts were limited to basic information, I examined both what was talked and what wasn't.

This is also a case study of collective autobiographical memories. They tend to be kept for a long term by repeatedly recollecting and talking about them with others and tend to be reconstructed within each talker's current contexts (Ito, 2008). I divided each interviewee's recollections into concrete episodes and general information on his/her previous customs as the former contained more personal matters. I also explored the characteristics of those recollections in relation to each interviewee's current interests. Securing each interviewee's privacy, I wrote an article on this research for the comprehensive book of FP published in Japan (Otaka, 2020). With my translation into English, this is based on that paper with additional contextual information on Japan.

Findings

As most interviewee families participated in various family programmes frequently, they can be considered as common among family-programme participants in the Greater Tokyo Metropolitan area. The 13 families have common patterns despite the differences in their family configurations, FP participation years and frequency, or their addresses, and many of these patterns are concordant with those found in my former study in the US (Otaka, 2007). For instance, all families were busy for the duties, events, and activities of each member or families. Also, by possessing and appreciating various cultural objects, families enjoyed their fruitful everyday aesthetic experiences (Fig. 1).



Figure 1 | *Family D's entrance hall with the mother's flower arrangement* (Copyright by the author)

In these contexts, all the 24 grown-up interviewees, both 17 adult and seven grown-up child participants (older than 18 years old), felt strong connections between themselves and the Museum, including its masterpiece collection, FP, and kind and excellent staff members, and valued these compared to other museums. Table 1 synthesizes tendencies seen concerning talkers' relationships among plural interviewees in 11-family interviews.

Table 1 | *Relational tendencies among the family members within their conversations in the group interviews of 11 families*

Tendencies in Conversations	Tendencies in Relationships
The interviewees sometimes asked questions to other family-member interviewees.	The relationship between supporters and the supported who ask for their supporters' help to recall their past affairs. The questioners want agreement from the answerers.
The parents frequently answered the questions to their children before they answered whereas the opposite rarely occurred.	The parents' position is higher than their children.
The mothers and their children frequently answered questions reciprocally supplying agreeable and additional words and episodes mutually.	The mother-child relationship is based on their common experiences and memories. The mother-child relationship is harmonious.

Table 2 indicates tendencies in what the adult participants talked in relation to their purposes of participation in FP. Among these, Pattern 3 is newly found.

Table 2 | *Three patterns concerning what adult participants talked in relation to their purposes of participation in FP*

Pat-tern	Purposes of Adults' Participation in FP	Tendencies in What Adult Participants Talked
1	For their children's education and enjoyment	Both individual and group interviews were occupied mainly by the adults' talks concerning what their children had experienced and learned and what they had wanted their children to learn in and beyond FP. They rarely talked about what they had learned through FP.
2	For their children's education and enjoyment as well as for theirs	Although the adults mentioned that they had chosen FP for their children, they also clearly stated their impressive FP episodes including what they had l earned and enjoyed.
3	For their own education and enjoyment more than their children's	Although the adults mentioned that FP had given them opportunities to spend the time with their children, they mainly and clearly stated their aesthetic experiences including their impressive episodes in the Museum and FP.

In terms of child participants, while appreciating various daily popular-culture matters including TV comedies, games, and films, the seven grown-up interviewees stated broader experiences relating to their FP experiences with deeper reflections than the four junior-high/high-school-aged interviewees. For example, besides visiting art museums alone or with others frequently, an economics-majored university student, who was working as a part-time social-science lecturer at a prep school and a volunteer for his local "boy fire brigade" (like a boy scout), reflected on his FP experiences:

> Thinking back then, I'm sure, I said whatever I wanted. I really appreciate you accepted everything with smile and said, "Interesting." As I've been teaching sixth graders, when I think I was such a cheeky child; then, it's amazing, you responded to everything while smiling. First graders also come to our camps, and they don't follow me. As I like working in education, I enjoy it; but elementary-school kids are too energetic. I think it's really great you organized us in such a nice way even in front of artworks.

Thus, what the interviewees had been impressed in FP varied.

Discussion

A striking finding is that all the adult participants have been fans of the Museum and its FP. Their admiration for authenticity seems to affect this. Compared to most public museums' poor collections and budgets in Japan, they appreciate both the Museum's excellent collection and its FP that has frequently enabled its participants to explore its collection from various perspectives with educators' explanations and to create artworks such as sketching Museum collection individually whereas other museums have been primarily providing one-time art-creation workshops occasionally conducted by artists or volunteers relating to special exhibitions. Thus, the adult participants consider good museums provide people excellent experiences.

Unequal Relationships between Museums and People

These adults have also known the differences between art museums in Japan and abroad through their own international experiences. They assume art museums in Japan unwelcome children due to their active behaviours. They also evade crowded art museums because those in Tokyo often hold blockbuster shows. In these contexts, family programmes are important to educate children. Most interviewees have participated in various family programmes where they have often seen other participants and have formed a loose family-programme association. I define this phenomenon as "family-programme migrants."

The adults consider themselves as "amateurs" in art as opposed to the FP educators as "specialists" although these adults' statements reveal their deep knowledge and insights based on their consistent inquiries into their favourite artists. One father admired the educators' inquiry-based conversational pedagogy towards the children. Although he was a careful listener, he stated that because the educators' knowledge had made this pedagogy possible, it was impossible for him. One underlying issue is people's notion of art museums in Japan, where specialists teach amateurs and not the other way around. While talking about their dislike of museum crowds, several interviewees even stated that art museums should be only for knowledgeable people. Then, family programmes should let adults recognize that art museums are for everyone whose insights teach others including museum educators through dialogues.

Unequal Relationships between Adults and Children

Pattern-1 adults participated in numerous family programmes of which they became the "connoisseurs" of family programmes evaluating the efficacy of programmes on their children's growth. This finding is concordant with that of my former case study in the US (Otaka, 2007). Furthermore, they hardly mentioned what they had learned; this is also concordant with my former studies in the US and Japan (Otaka, 2007; Otaka, 2016). Additionally, Pattern-1 adults revealed unequal parent-child relationships in their conversations. For example, as Family M (Participation: 2008-14, the father and his only-child

son for 30 times mostly with the mother; both parents indicate Pattern 1. Interviewees: the parents and their high-school-aged son. Interview place: museum office) had attended too many programmes, interviewees' memories revealed many confusions. As the father's purpose of participation was educating his son, he thought that FP substantially contributed to his son's growth and assumed that only children should have to sketch. While Pattern-2 adults talked about vivid episodes concerning what they had learned from child participants, this father did not mention any such episode.

In family conversations in the interview, Family-M mother sometimes answered the interviewers' questions to her son. Thus, the mother tended to have the right to intervene and select the next speaker as per Francis and Hester (2004) while the son sometimes had the right to enforce silence. This tendency of parents' restriction of their children's talk was seen in Pattern 1 while in Patterns 2 and 3 the sequential structure (turn taking) of conversations between parents and children was made by both parties more flexibly. When Family-M son said he had gone to FP because for 70% he had been taken by his parents while for 30% he had wanted to, the FP educators were surprised as they thought that he had come for 30 times spontaneously.

Fundamentally, Pattern-1 adults think adults teach children not the other way around. Confucianism prevailing over Japan also influences this, requiring the younger to respect elders. In family programmes, however, children frequently show their insightful interpretations in art appreciation and their unique expressions in art creation. By integrating individual and group activities, art-museum family programmes anywhere should reform unequal relationships between adults and children, as well as specialists and amateurs, by suggesting that in art, as an equal co-learner, everyone is a learner gaining insights enjoyably from others and by oneself even afterwards.

Family Programmes as Relaxing and Educative Liberation for Stressful Adults

Another unique finding is that Pattern-3 adults including several men and women exist. Their main purpose of participation seems to enjoy and deepen their own aesthetic experiences. For instance, in Family F (Participation: 2009-14, the mother and her only-child son for seven times. Interviewees: mostly the mother while her high-school-aged son sometimes talked before he left. Interview place: home), although the mother, a full-time forest surveyor, had begun attending FP as for the education of both her son and herself, she primarily talked about her own aesthetic journey. She had begun visiting art museums frequently after her move to Tokyo when her career started. She had visited the Museum twice or three times a year to see her favourite artworks particularly Georges Rouault's Pierrot (1925) while an FP educator mentioned he had not known this until this research. Seeing Pierrot in a peaceful gallery was relaxing, as her life in overcrowded Tokyo was not easy. With her husband and son, she has been visiting museums in Switzerland and other

countries to explore one of her favourite painters Giovanni Segantini's works. She also buys the postcards of her favourite artworks like other interviewees (Fig. 2).



Figure 2 | *Family-F mother's postcard collection* (Copyright by the author)

On the desk of her company office, she has displayed the postcard of her most favourite Segantini's painting, Resting Place in the Shade (1892), depicting a woman lying face down on the field, to whom she has been mumbling such as "shindoina [weary]" in any bothersome situation. She encountered this painting at a museum's special exhibition in Tokyo in 2011. Hence, the interviewees' explorations of their favourite artworks have been broader than their museum experiences and have been consistently interwoven by constructing various opportunities. Furthermore, for Family-F mother, art is neither a luxury nor a margin, but fundamental support on which she can reflect herself quietly in any troublesome situation.

In Japan, parenting has been still considered as primarily the mother's role. In 2023, the World Economic Forum ranked Japan as the 125th among 146 countries concerning gender equality. The child population in Japan has been decreasing for 42 consecutive years since 1982 and that of 2023 is estimated to be the smallest (Statistic Bureau, 2023). However, similar issues are found worldwide. Art-museum family programmes anywhere can be relaxing and educative liberation for stressful adults such as mothers who have been still suffering from gender inequality.

Conclusion and Implications

According to Dewey (1916/1997), only when a person discovers a relationship between one's former and latter experiences, the latter becomes a trigger to reconsider the former. Based on the results of this interview research, I suggest that art museums should provide educative opportunities for both the family and educators through continuous conversations. Although the interviewees kept abundant records of individual and family events, they rarely checked those afterwards. They taught us various significant matters in

their lived experiences and spontaneously asked us about our work and the Museum's future plans. Thus, the interviews became opportunities to explore and discover unrealized experiences, issues, and "family stories" with a fondness for both the interviewees and interviewers. "Family stories" are important in education within the family as per Leichter (1997).

In Conclusion, the interview as a democratic conversation is an effective and necessary method for any education or research as follows.

- Memorabilia to recall forgotten matters
- Self-reflection to revalue one's own experiences
- Mirrors of its participants' relationships
- Discoveries of others, such as hearing revelations, and oneself
- Process of collective transformation of any group

Educators should deeply understand our constituencies within our social contexts as we can change our future society together. I believe art museums provide any programme where educators also learn from our participants, deal with our social problems, and grow together through dialogues.

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The Relationship between Museum Literacy and Educational Programmes through the Analysis of Visitors' Willingness and Preferences

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Abstract

The term 'museum literacy' has long been used, but its relationship with educational programmes has not been studied extensively. I hypothesised that museum visitors' willingness to participate in educational programmes and their preferences for programme content differ according to their museum literacy. I first conducted a questionnaire survey on visitors' activities and thoughts during their visit to the museum, which was extracted from previous research. Non-hierarchical cluster analysis and multiple testing revealed that visitors' museum literacy could be categorised into three groups: A group with high scores for all questions (Group 1), a group with high scores for questions about exhibitions (Group 3), and one with results between these two groups (Group 2). Analysis of the trends in each group regarding their willingness to participate in educational programmes and preferences for programme content revealed that all groups were highly motivated to participate. I also found that Group 3 expected a short-term programme and wanted to participate in different programme formats depending on the level of knowledge they were seeking. Formulating ways to bridge the gap in visitors' needs based on different museum literacy types may encourage more visitors to participate in educational programmes.

Keywords: museum literacy, museum education, educational programme

The Relationship between Museum Literacy and Educational Programmes through the Analysis of Visitors' Willingness and Preferences

'Museum literacy' has been studied since the 1980s. However, its definition remains ambiguous and is rarely discussed in academic or practical fields. Under such circumstances, museums must cultivate museum literacy among visitors but cannot define the specific measures they should take. Consequently, I considered that museum literacy might not have improved.

Moreover, most museum literacy research has been discussed in the context of museum education, but no research has been conducted in relation to the format and content of educational programmes. In other words, the influence of museum literacy type on the willingness to participate in educational programmes has not been clarified, and appropriate programmes tailored to visitors' museum literacy have not been provided.

To sum up, although museums have been called upon the need to cultivate museum literacy among their visitors, the definition of 'museum literacy' is unclear; therefore, appropriate measures have not been defined. Few studies have investigated the relationship between museum literacy and visitors' activities and thoughts when they visit museums, and research has not clarified when museum literacy is cultivated. Explaining the differences in visitors' activities and thoughts based on their museum literacy through a visitor survey may help clarify policies that should be pursued in this regard. In addition, the influence of museum literacy on visitors' willingness to participate in educational programmes has not been investigated; therefore, programmes tailored to museum visitors' literacy have not been considered. To resolve this issue, trends in activities and thoughts influenced by museum literacy should be analysed, based on a questionnaire survey of visitors, to investigate their willingness to participate in educational programmes.

Meaning of 'Museum Literacy' and Research Questions

The term 'museum literacy' was first used by the museum researcher Carol Stapp in 1984. The definition of 'museum literacy' by Stapp (1984) is the following: 'Basic museum literacy means competence in reading objects, but full museum literacy signifies competence in drawing upon the museum's holdings and services, purposefully and independently' (p. 3). Since then, the debate on museum literacy has continued, and in 2013, Minoru Nagahata proposed three categories. Nagahata's (2013) categories of 'museum literacy' are as follows:

A. The ability to critically read and understand information on museum materials and exhibits.
B. The ability to independently utilise museum materials, exhibits, and services.
C. The ability to develop social communication through creating and transmitting new information (p. 83).

This study adopted these three categories as they comprehensively covered all previous studies. No previous studies on museum literacy used visitor surveys. Therefore, I conducted a questionnaire survey in a museum with the following three research questions:

1. How often do Tokyo National Museum (TNM) visitors engage in activities and thoughts related to museum literacy?
2. What does each group categorised by Survey 1 think of educational programmes?
3. What implications do the results of this survey have for Japanese museums?
4. Museums in Japan

Typical Japanese museums face a challenging situation, with only three full-time employees, one part-time employee, and one curator. In addition, local and small-scale museums often lack sufficient budgets or human resources. To provide implications for these museums, I conducted research at the TNM, one of Japan's leading museums. TNM has 150 years of history and is one of the oldest museums in Japan. It contains approximately 120,000 objects from Japan and East Asia.

Materials and Methods

Outline

The survey was conducted in Japanese on 127 visitors to the TNM in June and August 2022, during the Coronavirus crisis, when no blockbuster shows were held. The ages and genders of the respondents are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 | *Age and gender of the survey respondents*

	Teens	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	Over 80s
Male	3	16	4	8	6	7	2	0
Female	6	16	10	13	16	11	2	0
N/A	1	2	1	3	0	0	0	0
Total	10	34	15	24	22	18	4	0

I conducted two surveys on museum literacy. The first consisted of 20 questions related to museum literacy (Survey 1). The questions were created based on Nagahata's definition, and the respondents were asked to answer on a five-point scale. The answers were grouped using non-hierarchical cluster analysis, an analytical method that groups individuals into multiple clusters by collecting similar tendencies from individuals with various characteristics. The second survey item concerned the motivation to participate, appropriate time, and expected difficulty level in the six educational programmes (Survey 2). The answers were analysed to determine whether differences existed among the groups classified in Survey 1.

Survey 1

Twenty activities and thoughts were listed based on Nagahata's categories of items, considered influenced by museum literacy (Table 2). First, for 'A. Ability to critically read and understand information on materials and exhibits in museums', nine items were listed as 'items related to exhibitions', such as '(1) Read captions and explanations' and '(6) Take time to appreciate each artwork'. Next, regarding 'B. Ability to independently utilise museum materials, exhibits, and services', eight items were listed as 'items related to functions other than exhibitions', such as '(10) Use of the museum's archives and library' and (12) Participate in the museum's educational programmes. Finally, for 'C. Ability to develop social communication through the creation and transmission of new information', three items were listed as 'Items other than the above', such as '(18) Share with others about information or exhibitions you have seen at the museum'.

Table 2 | *Twenty activities and thoughts based on Nagahata's categories of museum literacy*

Categories by Nagahata	Activities and thoughts which I made
A. Ability to critically read and understand information on materials and exhibitions in museums →items related to exhibitions	(1) Read captions and explanations of exhibition themes (2) Read catalogues, brochures, and related books about the exhibition (3) Recall past experiences and knowledge when appreciating artworks (4) Feel emotionally enriched by visiting the museum (5) Be aware of the relationship between artworks, such as exhibition themes (6) Take time to appreciate each artwork (7) Take notes while appreciating the artwork (8) Have a favourite museum or a favourite exhibition room (9) Have your way of appreciating artworks
B. Ability to independently utilise museum materials, exhibitions, and services →items related to functions of the museum	(10) Use of the museum's archives and library (11) Use of facilities other than exhibitions, such as museum theatre (12) Participate in the museum's educational programmes (13) Visit the museum with a specific purpose in mind (14) Visit museums of your own volition (15) Use restaurants in the museum (16) Use shops in the museum (17) Would like to join/have ever joined a membership programme
C. Ability to develop social communication through the creation and transmission of new information →items other than the above	(18) Share with others about information or exhibitions that you have seen at the museum (19) Would like to be/have been volunteer staff at the museum (20) Share with others about information or exhibitions that you have seen at the museum on SNS

Survey 2

Survey 2, regarding the educational programme, was conducted on six programme formats: Gallery Tour, Art Creation, Lecture, Symposium, Backyard Tour, and Conversational Art-Appreciation. Participants were asked to respond to three items from the following options: Motivation to participate, appropriate time, and expected difficulty level (Table 3).

Table 3 | *Six programme formats and content options*

Six programme formats and content options

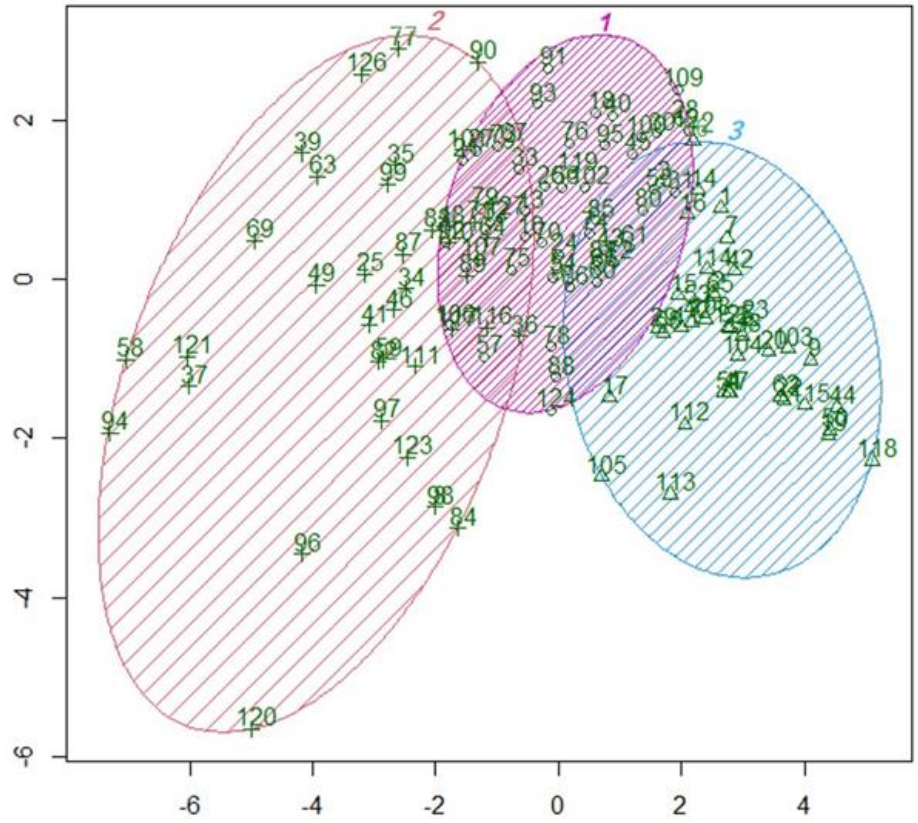
<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Motivation</th><th>Appropriate Time</th><th>Expected Level of Difficulty</th></tr>
<tr><td>(1) Gallery Tour</td><td rowspan="6">1: Do not want to participate
2: Not really want to participate
3: Somewhat willing to participate
4: Very much want to participate</td><td rowspan="6">1: ~30 minutes
2: 30 minutes to 1 hour
3: 1 hour to 1.5 hour
4: 1.5 hour to 2 hours
5: 2 hours ~</td><td rowspan="6">1: Basic
2: Somewhat specialised
3: Very specialised</td></tr>
<tr><td>(2) Art Creation</td></tr>
<tr><td>(3) Lecture</td></tr>
<tr><td>(4) Symposium</td></tr>
<tr><td>(5) Backyard Tour</td></tr>
<tr><td>(6) Conversational Art-Appreciation</td></tr>
</table>

Results and Discussion

Results of Survey 1

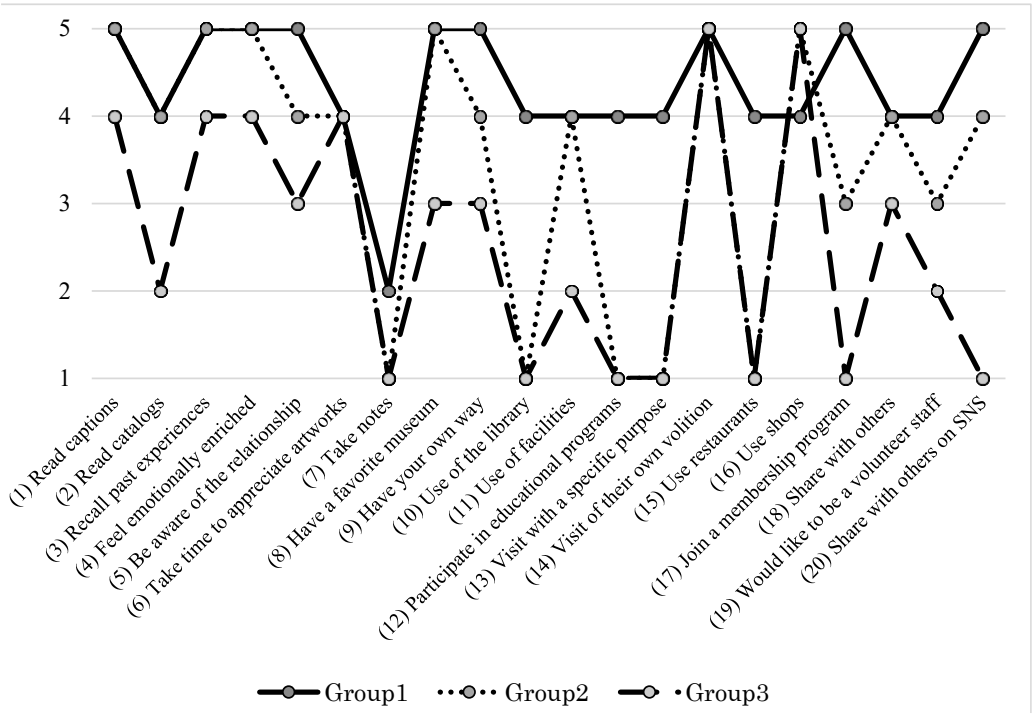
According to the survey, visitors can be divided into three groups: A group with high response scores for all items, a group with high response scores on items related to the exhibition (A), and a group with results between those two groups. In this research, I refer to the group with the highest overall response scores as Group 1, the group with high response scores on items related to exhibitions (A) as Group 3, and the group between these two groups as Group 2. All the groups have high response scores. The distribution diagram is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 | *Distribution diagram of the three groups*



A graph of the response scores (modes) for each group is presented in Figure 2. The scores for A (exhibitions), all groups exhibit high overall except for the '(7) Take notes'. The graph also shows that the scores for B (museum functions) vary between groups. However, all groups had high scores for '(14) Visit museums of your own volition' and '(16) Use shops'.

Figure 2 | *Response scores for the three groups (Mode)*



Discussion of Survey 1

First, all groups have high response scores for items related to exhibitions and item '(14) visit museums of your own volition'. Those who have visited the museum during the Coronavirus crisis, without blockbusters, are likely to have a high level of museum literacy. Second, items such as '(10) Use the library', '(11) Use facilities other than exhibitions', '(12) Participation in the educational programmes', and '(15) Use the restaurants' exhibit low scores. This result may be related to the quality of Japanese museum facilities rather than museum literacy; however, determining the specific reasons for this result is beyond the scope of this study. Third, statistical processing shows that while a difference is observed in response trends between Groups 1 and 3, no significant difference is found for '(16) Use shops'. In other words, improving museum shops may increase all groups' satisfaction and affect their literacy. Studies have shown that shopping enhances museum experiences (Otaka, 2022).

Results of Survey 2

The modes of the response scores are shown in Table 4. The median of the response scores is also analysed, but the trends are similar to the mode; therefore, this study adopts the mode.

Table 4 | *Mode of the response scores*

Mode of the response scores

	Motivation			Appropriate Time			Expected Level of Difficulty		
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
(1) Gallery Tour	3	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
(2) Art Creation	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1
(3) Lecture	4	3	3	3	2	1	2	3	2
(4) Symposium	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
(5) Backyard Tour	4	4	3	4	3	2	3	2	2
(6) Conversational Art-Appreciation	3	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	1

Discussion of Survey 2

Considering the preferences for educational programmes, the first feature is that most groups answer '3. somewhat interested in participating' in almost all programmes. This result indicates that even groups not participating in educational programmes are highly motivated to participate. The second feature is that all groups answer '3' or '4' regarding

participation in the Art Creation and Backyard Tour. This phenomenon indicates that these two programmes have a high potential to encourage the involvement of many people. The third feature is that Group 3 is interested in seminar-style programmes such as lectures and symposiums for specialised knowledge, and hands-on programmes such as Art Creation and Backyard Tour for basic knowledge. Furthermore, many in Group 3 look for short programmes of less than an hour. This result suggests that Group 3 participants may be busy people with little time; however, examining this issue in detail is beyond this study's scope. Finally, the response scores for Conversational Art-Appreciation are low. This result may be because Conversational Art-Appreciation is not well known in Japan and is often conducted by volunteers, not curators.

Conclusions and Implications

Concerning the first research question (How often do visitors to the TNM engage in activities and thoughts related to museum literacy?), one group showed high response scores for all items (Group 1), one exhibited high response scores for exhibitions (Group 3), and one with results between these two groups (Group 3). No difference was observed in the use of shops, and almost all visitors came of their own volition. This result indicates that the respondents in this survey have a high level of museum literacy.

Regarding the second research question (What do each of the groups categorised by Survey 1 think of educational programmes?), all groups were highly motivated to participate in almost all programmes. Hands-on programmes lasting less than one hour and including some specialisation effectively met all needs. In addition, considering the characteristics of Group 3, those who were willing to but had not participated in educational programmes tended to seek short-term programmes.

Finally, concerning the third research question (What implications do the survey results have for Japanese museums?), improving museum shops would likely satisfy many visitors because all groups used shops in this research. For Group 3 participants, who had relatively high museum literacy but did not participate in the educational programme, programmes should be conducted in a shorter time to meet their needs.

Future Research Directions

This study did not address those who did not visit the museum frequently. To conduct a non-visitor survey in the TNM, the same questionnaire should be administered when a blockbuster show is being held. I also think it is also necessary to conduct surveys in non-museum locations. I also could not investigate reasons for the low use of services other than exhibitions. The quality of the museum facility may affect the study's results beyond the impact of museum literacy. I would like to conduct further interviews to investigate this issue. Finally, I would like to conduct a follow-up survey on whether visitors conduct research independently after visiting a museum.

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Communication through Art at a Japanese University: Bridging Young Adults with Art Museums

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Abstract

This paper discusses how the incorporation of art museums' conversational art appreciation techniques into the author's communication course at a university near Tokyo could motivate students to visit art museums. Most university students have not visited art museums except on mandatory school excursions, pointing to the elitist nature of art museums and their lack of artistic experience as reasons why they do not go. I conducted interviews with 16 students who took my course and visited an art museum in 2021 or 2022 about their pre- and post-visit images of art museums and what was interesting about their visits. The results reveal; first, they enjoy extraordinary experiences; second, they appreciate artworks through chatting with co-visitors; third, they deepen their art appreciation through on-site and online information; and finally, they raise awareness about social issues. All the interviewees had enjoyable and meaningful experiences that positively changed their initial images of art museums. Nearly all of them now visit art museums in their free time. Based on these findings, cooperation between universities and art museums would encourage more young adults to go to art museums.

Keywords: Communication through art, art museums for young adults, collaboration between universities and art museums

Communication through Art at a Japanese University:
Bridging Young Adults with Art Museums

Many university students in Japan today do not visit art museums for their informal learning. According to the Polls on Culture conducted online with Japanese citizens by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan, between January 27 and 31, 2023 (2023), a certain number of young people aged 18-19 and 20s went out for cultural appreciation in between February 2022 and January 2023 (Table 1). Art appreciation holds popularity following movies in both age groups. However, it is not clear where their art appreciation took place whether it was at art museums, commercial galleries or elsewhere. Also, university students are aged from 18 and up to their early 20s, so this survey does not grasp them exclusively. Art museum visitor demographics by art museums and national and local governments available to the public also do not categorise university students separately. Seemingly, university students are an underdeveloped or overlooked category in art-related surveys and at art museums in Japan.

Table 1 | *The answers of age groups 18-19 and 20-29 to the question: What cultural appreciation did you go out for between February 2022 and January 2022?*

	18-19 yrs (n=62)	20-29 yrs (n=339)		18-19	20-29
None	21.0%	36.3%	Contemporary art	8.1%	5.6%
Art	21.0%	18.3%	Local culture & festivals	6.5%	5.6%
Anime movies	46.8%	25.7%	Stand-up comedies	1.6%	2.4%
Other movies	40.3%	37.2%	Traditional theater	6.5%	2.9%
Historical sites	16.1%	16.8%	Contemp. theater	3.2%	1.3%
Historical museums	27.4%	12.1%	Botanical shows	4.8%	2.9%
Music (pops, rock, etc.)	17.7%	15.9%	Ballet / Contemp. dance	3.2%	3.2%
Music (orchestra)	21.0%	10.0%	Other dance	8.1%	3.5%
Musicals	11.3%	8.6%	Japanese trad. dance	4.8%	1.8%
Food culture	6.5%	6.2%			

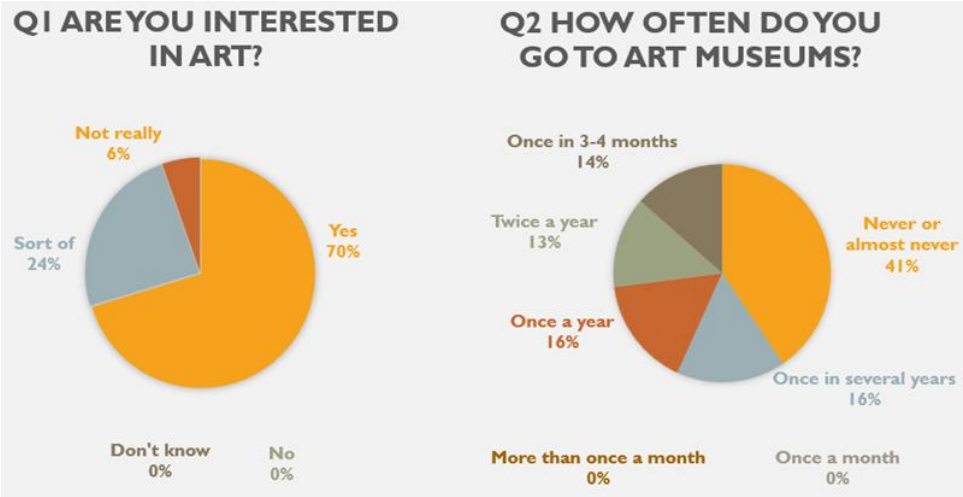
The Polls on Culture by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan (2023), translated from Japanese to English by the author.

To get a better glimpse of university students as art museum visitors, I asked the 37 university students who took my Communication through Art course in Spring/Summer 2021 about their interest in art (Q1) and art museum visit frequency (Q2) (Chart 1) and images of art museums (Q3) (Table 2). I have taught this elective course for English major juniors and seniors at a university of international studies near Tokyo since 2018. I originally designed the course based on my expertise in teaching communication and English at universities and facilitating conversation-based art appreciation for international participants at a national art museum in Tokyo. In the course whose theme is exploring art-mediated communication, students read and discuss theories such as Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, John Dewey's perspective on communication from his book, Democracy and Education and Lev

Vygotsky's constructivist approach to learning and conduct practical communicative activities incorporating artistic elements. One of the activities, for example, is having conversations about artworks by applying art museums' conversational art appreciation techniques.

Of the 37 students, 70% are interested in art and 24% are sort of interested. Conversely, more than half of the respondents rarely visit art museums. 41% never/almost never visited art museums and 16% once in several years. These students' high interest in art does not necessarily motivate them to go to art museums.

Chart 1 | *The results from the survey taken with the 37 students who took the Communication through Art course in the Spring/Summer semester of 2021*



As for images of art museums, the students have favourable views such as 'exciting', 'fun', 'beautiful', 'comfortable' or 'We can enrich our sensibility'. However, these positive views remain minor to the images such as 'quiet (negative)', 'for art connoisseurs', 'formal/strict', 'difficult to approach' or 'We cannot talk'. Thus, it can be assumed that many of the students are distanced from art museums.

Table 2 | *Results from the same survey as Chart 2*

Q3 What are your images of art museums?

No. 1	Quiet (negative*)	n=11	No. 7	Clean	2
No. 2	For art connoisseurs	8		Fashionable	2
No. 3	Formal / strict	6		Free	2
No. 4	Can view various artworks.	5		Huge	2
No. 5	Exciting / fun	4		Interesting	2
	Difficult places to approach	4	No. 8	Can be absorbed in one's thoughts	1
No. 6	Beautiful	3		Can enrich one's sensibility	1
	Cannot talk	3		Can have a slow time	1
	Comfortable	3		Deserted	1
	Quiet (positive*)	3		Historical	1
				Influential	1
				Unusual	1

Quiet (negative) means 'Quiet and strict', for example, while Quiet (positive) 'Quiet and comfortable'.

This paper discusses the art museum experiences university students in Japan would find meaningful for them to possibly become art museumgoers based on the two-year interview research I conducted with 16 students who took my Communication through Art course in 2021 or 2022. Based on the interview findings, I would like to suggest cooperation between the university classroom and art museums to bridge university students with art museums.

Literature Review

Ikarashi (2018), in her survey of Japanese university students' attitudes towards art museums, concludes that they feel disconnected from art museums because art museums are not relevant to their daily lives and they have a uniform view towards art museums. On the other hand, the latest ICOM museum definition states that museums are increasingly required to be accessible and inclusive and to foster diversity and sustainability (ICOM, n.d.). However, university students in Japan seem to be the art museum audience group that has been excluded from this discourse. Even before the current ICOM definition of museum, museum education researchers advocated that museums should increasingly provide socially inclusive environments for free-choice or/and lifelong learning (Falk and Dierking, 2000; Hein, 1998). When it comes to university students, this goal has not yet been achieved at art museums in Japan. Therefore, art museums should understand the changing dynamic in the ways people know, learn and experience the world around them as Suess (2018) insists. For most university students, their four years of university will be their last formal learning opportunity followed by a much longer life free of schooling. Their post-university lives would be enriched if they continued learning in some way. So, my aim as a university lecturer of art-mediated communication and as an art museum educator is to encourage university students to utilise art museums for their informal learning.

Methodology

I conducted two-year interview research in 2021 and 2022. I had semi-structured interviews online with 16 students who had visited an art museum(s) during and/or within one year before their enrolment in my Communication through Art course. The interview questions were: 'Why did you visit art museum(s)?', 'What art museum experiences did you find meaningful?' and 'What are your images of art museums after your visit?' After transcribing all the interviews, I analysed them qualitatively by thematic analysis to seek prominent patterns by categorising the interviewees' remarks into themes. The procedures that I followed were: 1) familiarising myself with the interview texts by actively reading them to search for meanings and patterns, 2) generating initial codes that appear interesting, 3) sorting the different codes into potential themes, 4) reviewing and refining themes at the levels of the coded data extracts and the entire data set and 5) defining and naming the themes to finalise the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In each of the 2022 semesters, students and I visited an art museum, either Artizon Museum or the National Museum of Western Art, together for an optional extracurricular activity (Table 3). The museums and special exhibitions, excluding the above-mentioned ones, were visited by the interviewees on their own. All the art museums and exhibitions were located in Tokyo or the Greater Tokyo Area except for Maki's (5) Van Gogh exhibition held in a local city, Fukuoka, away from Tokyo. Genta's (6) Banksy exhibition was held at a rental gallery while the others were at art museums. Isamu Noguchi: Ways of Discovery, Another Energy, The Splendor of Edo Painting, and Picasso and His Time were special exhibitions held at art museums. Those who visited Hakone Open-Air Museum, Chiba City Museum of Art, the National Museum of Western Art and Hoki Museum viewed their permanent collections. Those who visited Artizon Museum viewed their permanent collection and a special exhibition. Umi (14) did not remember the name of the special exhibition at Mori Art Museum.

Table 3 | *List of the interviewees with pseudonyms*

Name (Gender / Year)	Semester	Interview	Visited art museums/exhibitions
1 Lin-ai (F / 3)	Spring/Summer '21	Aug '21	Isamu Noguchi: Ways of Discovery, Another Energy
2 Daiki (M / 3)			Another Energy
3 Rima (F / 3)		Sep '21	Hakone Open-Air Museum
4 Kei (F / 3)			Chiba City Museum of Art, Hakone Open-Air Museum
5 Maki (F / 3)	Fall/Autumn '21	Feb '22	Collecting Van Gogh
6 Genta (M / 3)			Banksy: Genius or Vandal?
7 Hino (F / 3)	SS '22	Aug '22	Artizon Museum
8 Nami (F / 3)			Artizon Museum
9 Baku (M / 3)			Artizon Museum
10 Tao (F / 3)			Artizon Museum
11 Asumi (F / 3)			Artizon Museum
12 Juri (F / 3)	FW '22	Feb '23	The Splendor of Edo Painting
13 Chiaki (F / 3)			The National Museum of Western Art
14 Umi (F / 3)			The National Museum of Western Art, Mori Art Museum
15 Yayoi (F / 3)			Hoki Museum, Artizon Museum, Picasso and His Time
16 Zen (M / 3)			Hoki Museum, Picasso and His Time

Isamu Noguchi: Ways of Discovery was held at Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Another Energy at Mori Art Museum, The Splendor of Edo Painting at Idemitsu Museum of Arts, and Picasso and His Time at The National Museum of Western Art.

Results

Table 4 shows the themes extracted for each of the three interview questions by the thematic analysis along with the characteristic comments. The emerged themes are: 'A-1 Course influence', 'A-2 Online information', 'A-3 During outing's and 'A-4 Cool images' for reasons for art museum visits (Q1), 'B-1 Interaction with others', 'B-2 Intensive viewing', 'B-3 Information reference', 'B-4 Deep thinking' and 'B-5 Lone viewing' for meaningful art

museum experiences (Q2) and ‘C-1 Approachable’, ‘C-2 Extraordinary’, ‘C-3 Social awareness’, ‘C-4 Discovery’ and ‘C-5 Slow time’ for post-visit images of art museums (Q3).

Table 4 | *Results by thematic analysis*

Q1: Reasons for art museum visits
A-1 Course influence (n*=14) *the number of remarks
I wanted to know about art because of the course and for assignments. (Lin-ai)
I got interested in Banksy after researching him in the course. (Genta)
I thought about myself through art in the course. I thought I would have the same experience at an art museum. (Umi)
A-2 Online information (n=7)
My favourite musician had posted about the exhibition on Instagram. (Daiki)
My friend and I searched the Net and TikTok for recommended tourist places. (Kei)
A-3 During outings (n=7)
My partner and I visited an art museum on a date. (Yayoi)
My partner and I suddenly decided to visit an art museum on our trip. (Rima)
A-4 Cool images (n=4)
Going to an art museum alone to me is cool. (Daiki)
Q2: Meaningful art museum experiences
B-1 Interaction with others (n=17)
My sister and I chatted about artworks casually. We talked about our favorite artworks and kimonos. (Juri)
I enjoyed exchanging thoughts with my friend and found our differences enjoyable. (Chiaki)
My partner and I happened to view some artworks with a stranger in a conversation. (Zen)
B-2 Intensive viewing (n=11)
I looked at all the artworks and read all the labels. (Hino)
My partner and I discussed all the artworks and labels. (Yayoi)
B-3 Information reference (n=10)
My friend and I talked about artworks and their labels. We googled more information on our smartphones. (Lin-ai)

Listening to the free audio guide on my smartphone made my understanding deeper. (Genta)
B-4 Deep thinking (n=6)
I reflected on myself deeply while viewing a Giacometti piece. (Tao)
B-5 Lone viewing (n=4)
When some artworks truly attracted us, we viewed them alone, being speechless and absorbed in the artworks. (Kei)
Q3: Post-visit images of art museums
C-1 Approachable (n=9)
I can have fun experiences at art museums. They have become my free-time destinations. (Baku)
Going to an art museum has become as casual as going to the movies for me. (Nami)
C-2 Extraordinary (n=6)
I can have extraordinary experiences, such as being surrounded by Monet's paintings. (Chiaki)
C-3 Social awareness (n=4)
I started thinking about myself and social problems. (Umi)
C-4 Discovery (n=4)
Even someone like me, who is an art beginner, can learn something new. (Juri)
C-5 Slow time (n=3)
I can spend time at my own pace. (Hino)

As Theme A-1 shows, my course brought art museums closer for the interviewees. Their interest in art or art museums was raised because of their course experiences. For example, interviewees not only became interested in art and art museums but also visited art museums or exhibitions to deepen their understanding of particular artworks or artists because of or for the course research or assignments. Also, someone like Umi (14) visited an art museum out of her expectation that she would have similar positive experiences she had in the classroom at art museums as well. The information available online (A-2) plays a key role in encouraging university students to visit art museums. Gen-Z university students greatly rely on social media apps and the Internet to find interesting art museums, exhibitions or artists. Several interviewees visited art museums on special occasions, particularly dating or travelling, out of their aroused excitement and sudden ideas (A-3). Finally, some interviewees picture cool or refined images of themselves being at an art museum (A-4).

Among the interviewees' meaningful art museum experiences, interaction with others played the most crucial role (B-1). Particularly, the pleasure of inquiry-based art appreciation through a conversation with peers was mentioned by all the interviewees except Daiki (2) who went alone. As Chiaki (13) reflected, interviewees found the differences in thoughts, ideas and interpretations amusing and educative. Interestingly, Zen (16) and his partner, Yayoi (15), were talked to by a friendly elderly lady who happened to be next to them in front of one artwork, and the three of them continued viewing five or six more artworks together while having a conversation. Many of the interviewees had an intensive viewing experience (B-2) by looking at all the displayed artworks and reading all the information labels. Yayoi (15) and Zen (16) first discussed an artwork freely, then checked its caption and further discussed the artwork based on the contextual information about the artwork and artist. They did this for every piece of artwork. In addition to labels, other information available on-site and online was also referenced (B-3). When Lin-ai (1) and her friend got attracted to the texts in foreign languages written on a painting, they used Google Translate on their smartphones to decode the texts. Furthermore, Genta's appreciation and understanding of Banksy's artworks are deepened by listening to the free audio guide that he downloaded on his smartphone. Art appreciation at art museums encourages quality time to think deeply (B-4) and to face oneself (B-5). Here is Tao's (10) remark about the Giacometti portrait painting of philosopher 'Yanaihara' (1958):

This Giacometti painting was different from other colourful and gorgeous paintings nearby. It was monotonous, the lines were thin and overlapping, and I wondered what this was. This piece stood out, so it got me thinking. I learned Giacometti's intention from the label. I understood that for him the process was more important than the result. That's why he drew lines over and over, and it shows how much he struggled to create this piece. This process or struggle was what kept him going. Somehow, I reflected on myself. Today everything is result-oriented, and people pursue numbers. It hurt when I was looking for a job for after graduation. So, I wonder how different our life would be if we took the process more seriously. I want more people to think this way. This is some thought that crossed my mind while viewing the Giacometti painting alone.

Tao was deep in thought about herself, the artwork and artist alone. Kei (4) visited an open-air museum with a free atmosphere where she had loud, enjoyable art appreciation, joking around, playing games and taking photos with her girlfriends. However, similar to Tao, when some artworks truly spoke to Kei and her friends, they viewed them deeply alone.

To summarise their art museum visits, all the interviewees came to have favourable images of art museums. Their images are 'Approachable (C-1)', 'Extraordinary (C-2)', 'Social awareness (C-3)', 'Discovery (C-4)' and 'Slow time (C-5)'. As Baku (9) and Nami's (8) comments indicate, it is highly likely that art museums can be part of university students'

regular past-time casual destinations. Art museums are now approachable for the interviewees, but they still bring them a variety of special viewing and learning experiences. Chiaki was caught in awe while being surrounded by Monet's water lily and landscape paintings. Umi became more willing to think about herself and the social issues surrounding her, such as gender roles than before. Most of the interviewees were art beginners, but as Juri (12) commented, such visitors can have meaningful learning experiences at art museums. In the rapidly changing lives of university students today like Hino (7), having a slow time at their own pace is a precious moment. 13 of the 16 interviewees said that they wanted to visit an art museum again. The rest mentioned that they would go if asked by someone. Through personal correspondence, I know that ten interviewees visited at least one art museum after their interviews and six of them have become frequent art museumgoers. I sometimes visit an art museum together with these six people on informal occasions now.

Discussion and Conclusion

To summarise the results, the interviewees enjoyed their art museum experiences as active agents, especially by having extraordinary experiences, interacting with others, utilising on-site and online information and raising their awareness about themselves and social issues. Museum education experts have insisted that art museums are significant places for informal life-long learning (Falk, 2009; Hein, 1998; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994; Sugiura, 2008). In my study, the university students had enjoyable and meaningful informal learning opportunities, which would encourage their repeated visits and eventually initiate their continuous informal learning. According to Falk (2009), visitors' museum experiences get enhanced if they are given active control over their own learning, which should increase their interest, motivation, self-esteem and experience as my interviewees did. My study revealed that art museums are significant places of informal learning for university students. However, as McCarthy (2006) points out, it is also true that young people may not feel as if they belong to art museums because of the gaps between the culture of art museums and the culture and identity of themselves.

To fill such a gap between art museums and university students, who are an underdeveloped visitor group, promoting cooperation between universities and art museums to encourage their visits will become increasingly important. Ikarashi (2018) advocates 'the construction of a university and art museum model of cooperation' (p. 49) between universities and museums in which they take advantage of each other's characteristics to cultivate and sustain life-long interest in art. Kurahara (2021), in line with Ikarashi, has experience in increasing university students' interest in art by incorporating appreciation education in the university classroom as I have done in my classroom. To conclude, the art-mediated practice in my Communication through Art course is one example

of bridging a university classroom and art museums. Most of my interviewees' art museum visits were greatly influenced by their in-course experiences. This resonates with Dewey (1938) who argues that the classroom should be considered an extension and microcosm of the wider community.

Future Implications

To further verify the effectiveness of the promotion of cooperation between universities and art museums, continuous research is needed as my study is a small case. However, I am convinced that it has shed light on an otherwise ignored group of university students in Japan as visitors to art museums. Therefore, my future tasks would be 1) to conduct follow-up research on the interviewees' post-interview art museum visits, 2) to interview university students who are already art museumgoers and 3) to study art museums' views towards university students as visitors and their efforts to encourage their visit.

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Online Family Program at NMWA in Japan: Adult Participants' Reflections and Post-program Activities

Yoko Saito | Japan

Abstract

Since 2004, the National Museum of Western Art (NMWA) has held an onsite family program, consisting of conversational art appreciation and artwork activity. Closed for renovations and under the spread of COVID-19, the NMWA developed an online "Family-at-Home program" as a new experiment in 2021. The expert curators led the development and implementation of the online program. Through participant observation, I explore curators' communication challenges in an online manner, adult participants' reflections on their experience, and their effects on their post-participation activities. Firstly, curators' knowledge and teaching skills to deepen participants' appreciation and family interaction, securing and training professional educators with adequate budget, and finally well-prepared educational materials and methods to satisfy adult participants' intellectual exploration are discussed based on the findings and implications in anticipation of the proposal to Japanese art museums. I conclude that this new online art appreciation program based on new educational methods may promote joint exploration activities within the family and interaction with other families. The online program could also improve Accessibility, Diversity, and Inclusion in line with the ICOM's new museum definition (2022). Furthermore, it may contribute to the correction of regional disparities in cultural and social rights.

Keywords: online family programs, adult participants' reflections, post-participation activities

Author note

I sincerely appreciate all the support from the staff members of the National Museum of Western Art, and professors at Keio University in Japan.

Online Family Program at NMWA in Japan:
Adult Participants' Reflections and Post-program Activities

Overview of National Art Museums in Japan

Japan has five national art museums, and they have disclosed statistical data for more than 20 years. I created and synthesized the below graphs from the annual reports.

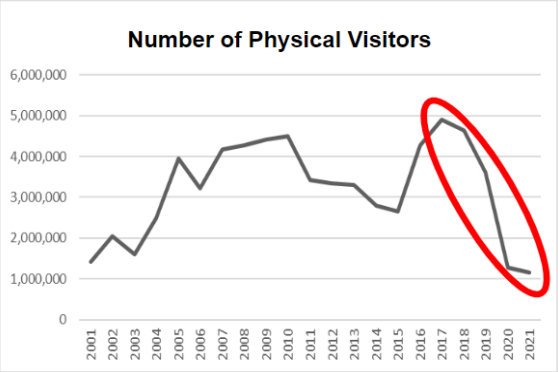


Chart 1 | *Number of physical visitors*

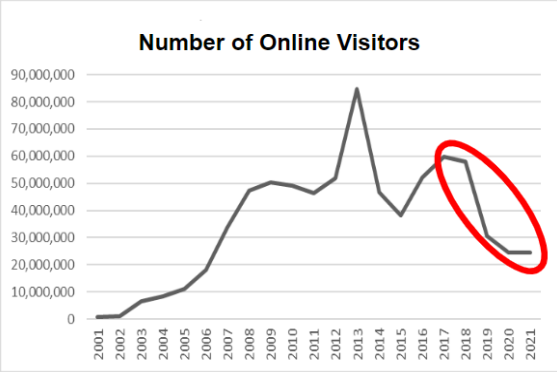


Chart 2 | *Number of online visitors*

On January 31, 2020, the WHO declared a state of emergency due to the spread of COVID-19, and on April 7, 2020, the Japanese Prime Minister declared a state of emergency, resulting in the closure of museums and the cancellation of various programs. In addition to this, the Crafts Gallery of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo was closed from February to October 2020 due to its relocation to Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, and the NMWA was closed from October 2020 to October 2022 for renovation coincidentally.

While the number of visitors remained unchanged from the previous year, the number of website accesses increased by 63% in FY2013 compared to the previous year. This is the result of the updating of the data registration for the comprehensive catalogue search system of the museum's collection, improvements to the interface, the establishment of a special website for exhibitions, and the enhancement of the report page for training programs. Thereafter, the number of website accesses declined sharply in FY2020, when the COVID-19 infection spread, but the rate of decline was moderate at 20%, compared to a 65% decline in the number of visitors.

Learning Opportunities

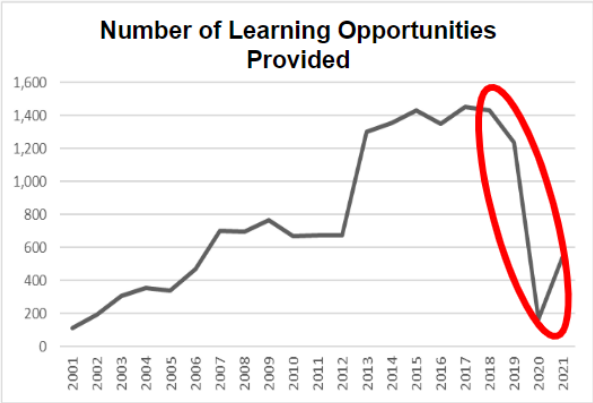


Chart 3 | *Number of learning opportunities provided*

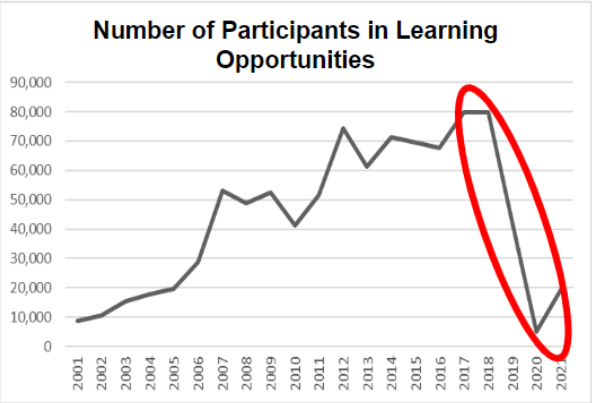


Chart 4 | number of participants in learning opportunities

In FY2020, the number of learning opportunities offered decreased by 87% from the previous year. The number of learning opportunities offered is highly dependent on the number of visitors, and the provision of learning opportunities is largely predicated on people physically coming to the museum. In addition, the number of participants in 2013 decreased by 17% from the previous year despite a 92% increase in the number of learning opportunities offered, indicating that an increase in the number of learning opportunities offered does not always lead directly to an increase in the number of participants.

Digital Archiving

Following the guidelines for the creation and release of databases of national museums established in June 2014, the four museums, except for the National Art Centre, Tokyo, which does not have any works in its collection, have been digitizing image and text data of their collections since before the expansion of COVID-19 infection, and have accumulated the number of artworks released on the National Museums' comprehensive catalogue search system.

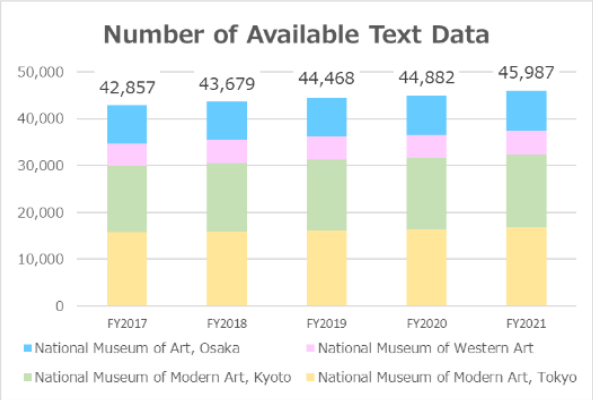


Chart 5 | *Number of Available Text Data*

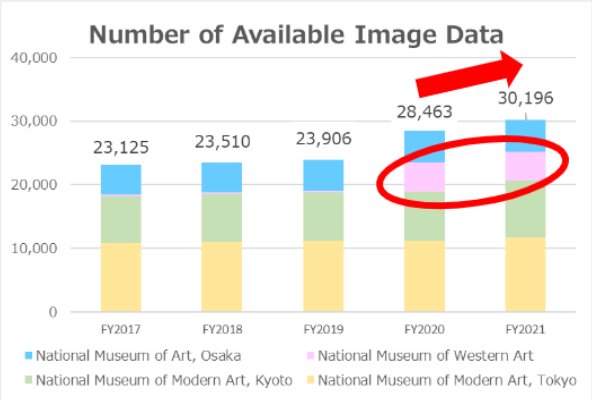


Chart 6 | *Number of Available Image Data*

The year-on-year growth rates of the number of image and text data releases were 1.7% and 1.9% in FY2018, 1.7% and 1.8% in FY 2019, 19.1% and 0.9% in FY 2020, and 6.1% and 2.5% in FY2021. The digital archiving of artworks made significant progress in FY2020 and FY2021, which were affected by the spread of the COVID-19 infection. Among them, NMWA continued to hold family programs, school-related programs, volunteer training, lectures on an irregular basis and actively released image data while the museum is closed for renovation from October 2020 to April 2022.

Literature Review

Marketing Strategy for Museums

Neil Kotler and Phillip Kotler applied positioning strategy to museums, including market segmentation, strengths and weaknesses, the value museums provide, and competitive analysis (2004, pp. 153-168). Museums have things to do from a marketing perspective, which improves the museum-going experience, reposition oneself in the market, and redefine oneself as a designer and deliverer of experiences. They argue that to improve visitor satisfaction, museums need to reassess their assets and resources and create mechanisms to ensure a positive visitor experience. First, the museum should provide high quality information, maintain facilities, and offer a full range of services. Second, the staff should be friendly, courteous, responsive, and competent. Third, the museum should progress with its technological initiatives, which go beyond the expansion of its website and the development of its collection database. In the entertainment industry, private companies know who their customers are, what their services are, how they deliver them, and how to position themselves.

Participants Reflections

The Artizon Museum has been holding family programs that incorporate the findings of recent research into an appreciation of artworks in the collection (Kaizuka, 2020, p. 224). The qualitative research was conducted through face-to-face interviews with 13 families who had participated in the Family Program since 2001, four to 17 years after they participated in the program, to determine (1) what motivated them to participate, (2) what meaning they found in the Family Program, and (3) what reflections they made after the Family Program (Otaka, 2020, p. 199).

All 17 adult participants surveyed indicated that they wanted to avoid crowding and that it was difficult to take their children to museums in Japan. In addition, the following three trends were observed among the adult participants. First, adults who attended for their children talked mainly about their children's learning and rarely mentioned their learning. Second, adults who participated for the benefit of their children and their enjoyment, while their program selection was for the benefit of their children, vividly described their own memorable experiences of learning and enjoyment. Third, adults who

participated in the programs for their benefit viewed the programs as a place to spend time with their children and focused on their own memorable experiences, mainly related to art. Focusing on the adult participants, reflections are diversified based on the reason they decided to join the program. If they participated for their children, they only mentioned children's learning. However, if they participate for themselves, they have more of an impression of the experience itself and broaden their feeling and thinking.

Based on the above results, Otaka concludes that family programs are both a place of intellectual exploration for adults and a rich time for today's busy families to reflect on and interact with their individual and family experiences.

Onsite Family Program at the NMWA

The NMWA's "Doyo Bijutsu" program, launched in 2004, combines an appreciation of artworks with creative and other hands-on experiences (NMWA, 2022, p. 50). The program emphasizes mutual learning between adults and children because education in the home at an early stage influences an individual's sensibilities, way of life, values, and beliefs (NMWA, 2015, p. 12).

The following is a summary of the results of the survey of adult participants, except for the simple answer "I enjoyed it". Most adult participants referred to their fun, joy of finding and learning, and enhanced communication with others. This "others" includes other participants.

Feedback category	Respondents	About	Respondents
A lot of fun	133 (26%)	-	-
Joy of finding and leaning	181 (34%)	Appreciation	66
		Creation	65
		Learning	29
		Combination of appreciation and creation	21
Enhanced communication	128 (25%)	Joy of participating with children	65
		Good for children	44
		What gained from interacting with others	19
Positive comment on the program	46 (9%)	Ideas	17
		Worksheets	16
		Contents	6
		Themes	6
		Age setting	1
TOTAL	**488**		**488**

Table 1 | *Participants Survey Result*

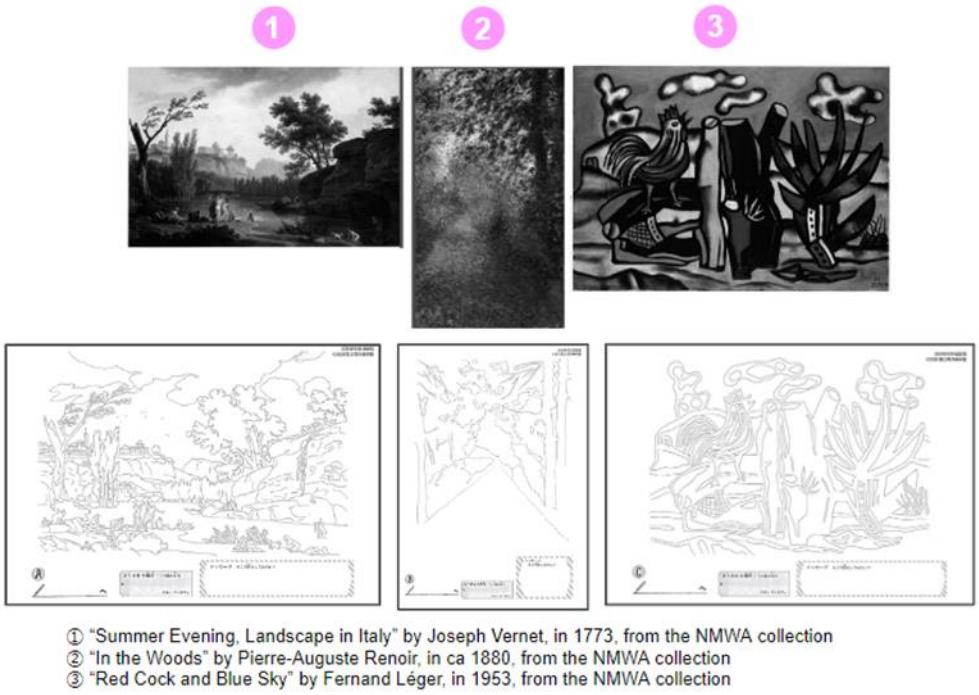
Research

Family-at-Home Program", 1st Online Family Program in the COVID-19 Pandemic

This program's objectives are to enjoy appreciation of artworks through conversation and hands-on experience, to promote family communication and learning, and to promote participants to visit the museum. The target is family with 6-12 years old children and curators conduct the program for 1.5 hours per session. Since this is online programs, educational tools were sent home in advance.

Program 1: "Let's Meet Inside the Picture"

This program was held in August 2021. While viewing the three paintings ("Summer Evening, Landscape in Italy" by Joseph Vernet, in 1773, "In the Woods" by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, in ca 1880, and "Red Cock and Blue Sky" by Fernand Léger, in 1953), the participants conducted an activity to find things in the paintings that they would take with them on their trip and other items in their homes. In addition, all family members drew what they would do and with whom on an A3 worksheet, and all families verbally reported what they had drawn, while each family member drew what they would do and with whom on an A4 worksheet and showed it to each other. The total number of participants in all four sessions was 25. Postcards of the viewed works were mailed to participants in advance, and they participated in the "Family Program at Home" while viewing the works on their computer monitors or postcards.



① "Summer Evening, Landscape in Italy" by Joseph Vernet, in 1773, from the NMWA collection
② "In the Woods" by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, in ca 1880, from the NMWA collection
③ "Red Cock and Blue Sky" by Fernand Léger, in 1953, from the NMWA collection

Figure 1 | *Artworks and worksheets*

The participants appreciated three artworks while discussing their findings and feelings with the curators' facilitation and then drew family memories on the worksheet.

Program 2: "A Stroll through NMWA buildings"

This program was held in March 2022, and the total number of participants in all four sessions was 59. Participants were mailed in advance a set of worksheets, a red ribbon, and a goody bag with instructions to open it near the end of the program.

To appreciate the main building of the NMWA, which is the world heritage, from various perspectives of senses, such as size, sound, and material, the curators conducted an activity in which participants looked for objects in their homes that were the same length as

the ribbon (183 cm), whose length is the same as the outside tile of the building, listened to the sound, and felt the material. The participants wrote answers to the questions on the worksheet and shared their findings with each family.

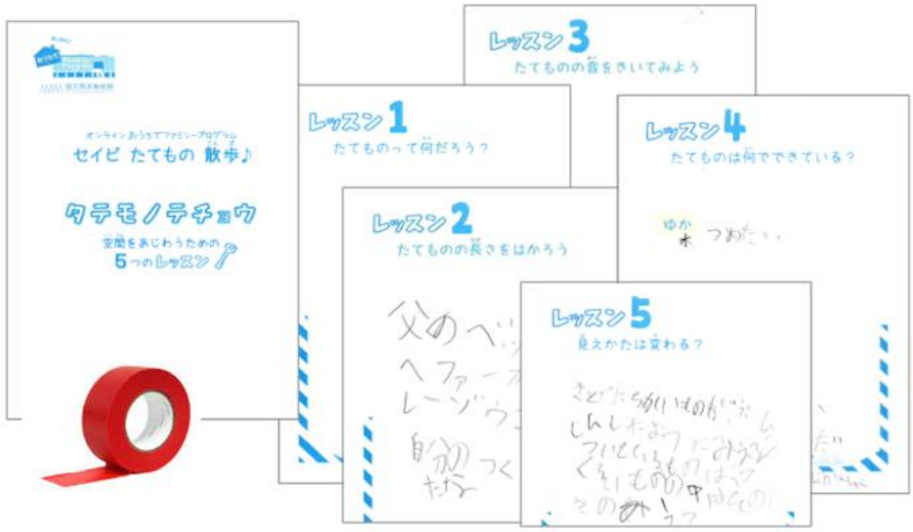


Figure 2 | *"5 Lessons" worksheet and red ribbon*

Research Methodology

Qualitative Study

The qualitative study was conducted to analyse people's subjective reflections from a small number of cases, the meanings associated with their motivations and intentions for the activities, or the interaction between them. Since qualitative research has been subject to criticism in terms of objectivity, a triangulation approach was taken in this study to ensure the validity and reliability of the results (Merriam & Simpson, 2016, p. 116).

Semi-Structured Interview

For the semi-structured interview, I asked open-ended questions that I had already prepared in advance, followed by more detailed questions depending on the answers obtained (Fontana & Frey, 2003, p. 74). In the actual interview, I tried to create a comfortable atmosphere, being conscious of enhancing the interaction of conversation and attitude by, as much as possible, timing his/her responses, and reciting what they said.

Participants Observation

Participant observation is one of the techniques of ethnography, introduced by Bronisław K. Malinowski (1922). In the field of anthropology, where ethnography has developed, the researcher dives into a different culture or society, interacts with the people living there, and describes the culture and society under study (Merriam & Simpson, 2016, p. 119). Ethnographic techniques include in-depth interviewing, story analysis, and recording

the researcher's experiences and impressions, which are used through fieldwork.

Malinowski succeeded in collecting a wealth of data from informal field interviews by placing informants and building relationships with targets. He also maintained a certain distance from the targets so that he could observe and analyse at the same time, rather than becoming immersed in the interview. He conducted the interviews using open questions, answered questions as they arose, and never completely dismissed personal feelings. He made the above observations dispassionately, taking care not to influence his subjects, and he recorded the journal (Fontana and Frey, 2003).

Research Method

Selection of Survey Targets

I conducted with three adult participants and two facilitators. For the child participants, I couldn't interview them due to lack of parental consent, but I recorded my children's statements and family conversations in my journal. I acquired a consent form from each interviewee, and with limited information disclosure not to be identified by the privacy protection law. The information in this thesis is limited to what the NMWA can make publicly available.

Participants A, B, and C each attended a different session of the program. It should be noted that the degree of memory is different among participants, because Participant A joined the program in August 2021, while Participants B and C did in March 2022.

In addition, at the time I interviewed, all sessions of the "Family-at-Home Program" had already been completed. Therefore, it would be ethically problematic for the NMWA to ask participants who had not given prior consent for the survey to cooperate in this study. Therefore, I sought and selected participants who were willing to be interviewed without going through the museum. Note that facilitators D and E are all the implementers of all sessions of the "Family-at-Home Program".

Interviewee	Participant A	Participant B	Participant C	Facilitator D	Facilitator E
Occupation	N.A.	Educator	Office worker (myself)	Curator	Curator
Participants' child	10 years old boy	10 years old boy	10 years old boy	N.A.	N.A.
Participated program	Program 1	Program 2	Program 2	N.A.	N.A.
Date	Sep 3, 2022	Jun 23, 2022	Until Dec, 2022	Jun 24, 2022	Jun 24, 2022
Method	Online interview	Online interview	Journaling	Onsite interview	Onsite interview

Table 2 | *Interviewees*

Interview

I interviewed the participants through Microsoft Teams did the facilitators in person with the questionnaire in hand and recorded the conversation with consent. I tried to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and comfort and asked in an open-question format. In addition, as the observer, I tried to be consistent in my attitude so that there would be no

difference in my attitude. After the interviews, I made transcripts and summaries.

For my memories as a participant, and to avoid influencing my responses to other participants' interview results, I completed my responses to the same interview items before interviews with Participants A and B were conducted.

Since it was not possible to interview the child participants of Participants A and B, I recorded in my journal the activities and statements of my children, as well as topics and related matters that came up within the family.

Findings

Main Findings from Adults' Statements

<table>
<tr><th>Reflection</th><th>Comparison with Onsite Programs</th></tr>
<tr><td>High level of satisfaction

✓ With rich educational materials
✓ With physical participation
✓ Participants connected art works with family daily lives and experiences</td><td>More relaxed family time

✓ Achieved the same objectives
✓ New experience with sense of the extraordinary
✓ Less psychological hurdles by joining from home
✓ Participants recognize "family" program more clearly</td></tr>
<tr><td>Focused on family activities than appreciation

✓ Many commented new findings and awareness of children's growth and change
✓ The balance was adjusted in the March 2023 sessions</td><td>Less interaction or finding with others

✓ Participants barely mentioned interaction with other families</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Challenges</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Encourage participants to deepen appreciation and visit museum

✓ Participants barely mentioned adults' learning
✓ 1 family out of 20 visited after the program of "A Stroll through NMWA buildings"</td></tr>
</table>

Table 3 | *Main findings and challenges*

First, participants recalled the program as an extraordinary, travel-like experience. It was a relaxing family time at home. They could enjoy the program because there is no tension to worry about museum security and other visitors, which usually annoys adults in Japan. The results of this survey revealed that participants had similar perceptions to the Artizon Museum that family programs are a rich time for today's busy families to reflect on and interact.

Second, the participants described them as "blissful," which brought them a high degree of satisfaction. Specifically, through drawing their memories and imaginations on the worksheets of the landscapes and writing about their findings at home related to the NMWA, participants connected the artwork to their own family experiences and daily lives.

Third, the participants vividly described the artworks they found impressive, but their comments were mainly about the joint activities and not so much about the artworks they appreciated.

Fourth, participants discovered new aspects of themselves and their children. The participants were absorbed in the world of the program and noticed their children's growth

and changes through the interaction between adults and children. On the other hand, participants were much less likely to notice something in communication with other families.

Activity after the Program

The main aim of this program was to encourage them to see the real artworks, which would lead them to visit the museum. In the second program “A Stroll through NMWA buildings”, a gift ticket was provided in the educational tools if they visited the NMWA within six months. However, only one of the twenty participating families visited to receive the gift.

Furthermore, although Participant A hoped to feel the aftermath of the program, she did not engage in any aftermath activities, Participant B mentioned an atmosphere in which she could easily visit, and she thought that her child would want to visit immediately, however, this was not the case. Participant C and child visited together to see Le Corbusier's paintings, which he had shown the greatest interest in during the program. They also appreciated other artworks, went shopping at the museum shop, and later, the child happened to find the NMWA in a World Heritage collection, and ensured the fact, showing the collection to Participant C.

Discussion

How to Utilize Resources in Museums

Referring to Kotler's assertion that museums need to reassess their assets and resources and create mechanisms to provide visitors with a fulfilling experience, there is room for the museums in Japan to improve from the marketing and management perspectives. The resources should be their extensive collections and curators’ knowledge and educational skills. The utilization of their collections is still in the process of trial and error, as it was the first attempt to have the “Family-at-Home Program” in an online format, although they have increased the number of images and text data of their collections to increase the number of website visitors.

They depend on curators' knowledge and educational skills to deepen the participants' own eyes to see, think, and see without being bound by commonly held values, to realize that each one of them can see artworks without prior knowledge, and to notice something from the comments of others. For the recruitment and training of curators and other professionals, there should be affordable budgets for organizational and educational development.

How to Overcome Online Challenges

The online format may have increased the difficulty of communication more than the onsite one. It was difficult for the participants to concentrate on the program at home, and to discuss various opinions on a single screen with many participants. For these communication difficulties, updating facilitation skills, and devices to keep children focused

are key. Using more careful educational methods and tools with digital technology and providing opportunities for family activities as much as possible, are considerable.

It was also difficult to create post-program activities without any effort by adults. If museums would like to increase post-program activities, a mechanism should be created. As an example, a proposal to make the program a series of programs, or to prepare an online virtual space where participants can access additional information they wish to know and interact with other participants, could be considered. These would help participants feel the reverberations of the program, amplify the appeal of the artworks and the museum, and increase their connection to their daily lives, thereby increasing the likelihood of encouraging them to come to the museum.

Conclusion

First, an online family program promotes family co-exploration. By utilizing technology, it is possible to draw children's attention into the program world. These allow the "Family-at-Home Program" to have the potential to promote activities and interaction within the family more than onsite programs.

Second, it could improve accessibility, diversity, and inclusion because it is a good opportunity to broaden visitors. People who live far away from museums or have difficulty getting out of the house can participate in the online program. Preschoolers often participate in an online program, which could be an advantage of being together as a family.

Finally, it may contribute to the correction of regional disparities in cultural and social rights, because the national museums are only in Tokyo, Osaka, and Ishikawa prefectures.

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Proactive Learning in Students with Disabilities Using a Telepresence Robot in a History Museum

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Satoshi Ikeda | Hiroshima University (Japan)

Abstract

This study is a joint initiative between the Hiroshima Museum of History and two students on the autism spectrum with intellectual disabilities. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic facilitating the widespread adoption of online learning, some children partially lost their independence and interpersonal relationships with teachers and classmates. Additionally, the frequency of museum visits by children with disabilities was reduced. Therefore, we aimed to develop an art class incorporating robots that students could operate themselves. First, the students learned how to operate a telepresence robot (Double3) using a PC keyboard and controller at school. This was followed by an online session with the museum's curator. A week later, the students remotely operated the robot in the museum to view historical items and artefacts. Based on their viewings, the students showcased what they had discovered through presentation software on their tablets, and they drew pictures of their favourite pieces. This joint practical exercise promoted cooperative learning, shared art experiences, and proactive behaviours. The teacher and students displayed two posters of their combined compilations at the museum, reflecting their proactivity by way of making drawings and slides. These displays increased their interest and sense of autonomy.

Keywords: proactive learning, curiosity, intellectual disability, telepresence robot

Proactive Learning in Students with Disabilities

Using a Telepresence Robot in a History Museum

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many children were restricted from visiting art galleries and museums, and some people had difficulty visiting public facilities owing to their disabilities. In recent years, the use of digital devices in museums and art galleries has been attracting attention, and efforts to devise ways of viewing art, such as mobile museums with exhibitions in various locations, are being undertaken (Hirano et al., 2020; Nikonanou & Bounia, 2014; Sheehy et al., 2019).

In Japanese primary schools, the use of art galleries, museums, and local community collaboration can lead to independent, interactive, and deep learning (MEXT, 2018). Therefore, developing an environment that gradually familiarises children with culture and the arts starting in primary school is necessary. Additionally, efforts to enhance learning activities using information equipment—such as remote-controlled robots (Tanaka, 2022)—are required (MEXT, 2018). For example, paediatric cancer patients have observed a science museum from a hospital via a teleoperated robot (Manabe et al., 2022), and students from a school for physically challenged individuals communicated with university students via an avatar robot (Kishi, 2019). The introduction of teleoperated robots in educational settings has enabled students to actively operate the robots themselves and learn proactively and interactively (Takigawa, 2022). Furthermore, teleoperated robots increase opportunities for people with speech and mobility impairments to participate in society and to talk while expressing their emotions (ElGibreen et al., 2022).

Recently, measures including the dissemination and utilisation of diverse information on the cultural and artistic activities of people with disabilities have been promoted (Agency for Cultural Affairs, 2018). Nakakouji (2016) described museums, such as art galleries and museums, as ‘cabinets of curiosities’ that stimulate ‘creativity’ and ‘communication’ by encouraging people to see the world from different perspectives, presenting new values and connecting people.

Thus, it can be posited that the use of cultural and arts facilities would effectively foster children’s familiarity with culture and the arts and provide them with experiences enhancing their curiosity. Therefore, we aimed to develop lessons promoting proactive learning for students with intellectual disabilities using telepresence robots. Specifically, we aimed to arouse curiosity and the ability to become familiar with culture and art. In this study, being proactive was defined as someone with curiosity and the willingness to engage in activities. Being curious was defined as the intrinsic desire to acquire new information, such as to know, see, and experience (Litman, 2005). This study reports on the perspectives of inclusion, disability, art, and education.

Methods

The participants were Students A and B, students on the autism spectrum with intellectual disabilities in the third grade of a special-needs class at X Primary School. Student A is strongly interested in insects, teachers, and videos and likes to film and record his face on his tablet. He can hold simple conversations with adults. However, Student B faces difficulties when responding to others' questions while attempting to complete assigned activities. Nonetheless, he was familiar with the use of tablets and controllers through his experience of playing video games at home. Both students had difficulty showing interest in something they had not experienced. They could engage with each other when prompted by the teacher but rarely interacted spontaneously. They had different interests; they were indifferent to each other's words and actions. For ethical considerations, this study's aim and the handling of personal information were explained orally and in writing to the two target students, their parents, and the school principal. Their parents and the school principal signed a consent form for cooperation. The consent of the participant children, their parents, and the school principal was obtained for the preparation and publication of this paper in compliance with the X Primary School 'Handling of Personal Information', and data usage was restricted to this study alone. Permission to publish photographs was also obtained.

We used a telepresence robot (Double3) equipped with a camera that could be controlled remotely from any location through a PC browser, smartphone, or tablet. The robot was connected to Wi-Fi and remotely controlled by a laptop and a controller with a cable connection. The laptop was then connected to a TV for a larger image. The robot could be moved in all directions using the keyboard arrows or the controller. Participants could log in to Double3 through a personal device.

The lesson, conducted from February to April 2022, was called Life Unit Learning (8 hrs) for Japan's special-needs students. The Hiroshima Museum of History was approximately 100 km from the school; however, the students did not directly visit this museum during this study. The teacher had already discussed the lesson and the students' actual situation with the museum's curator. Additionally, classes were constructed in collaboration with specialists operating robots, non-profit organisations (NPOs) supporting art activities by people with disabilities, and a university teacher. The unit plan is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 | *Life Unit Learning Plan (8 hrs)*

1	What is a history museum? (1 hr)
	(i) To get to know public facilities such as museums and art galleries. (ii) To have the prospect of visiting the History Museum through the robot.
2	Let's operate the robot (1 hr)
	(1) Learn how to operate the robot from an assistive devices expert (classroom, library). (ii) Listen to the director and curator give a guided tour of the History Museum by robot via Zoom.
3	Get to know robots and the History Museum (1 hr)
	(i) Watch the activities of robots in hospitals and special-needs schools. (ii) Watch the Pocket Curator, a guide application for the History Museum.
4	Visit the History Museum with a robot (2 hrs)
	(i) Visit the History Museum exhibition through the robot. (ii) Review the activities with the museum director and curators.
5	Summarise what you have learned (2 hrs)
	(i) Summarise what you have learned in Microsoft PowerPoint. (ii) Print it out on paper or draw pictures.
6	Tell your friends about the activities you have done so far (1 hr)
	(i) Explain this activity to friends from other grades in the special-needs class.

First, the students learned about the features of public facilities such as museums and art galleries. Then, they learned how to operate the robot using a PC keyboard and controller at school. The students practised the manoeuvres first with the robot in front of them and then with it out of their sight. Simultaneously, they interacted with the museum curator via Zoom. They learned about the exhibits in advance using the museum's application for tablets. A week later, the students remotely operated the robot in the museum to view historical items and artefacts. In the fifth stage, the students prepared two posters about their learning that was displayed in front of the museum. Finally, at the request of the senior students in the special-needs classes, they reported on their activities.

The data were collected from February to April 2022. Specifically, during the classroom sessions, Students A and B were filmed and recorded with a video and digital camera. During breaks, when statements relevant to the lessons were made, their homeroom teacher wrote and organised them in field notes. The student-produced posters were also used as data. Their homeroom teacher and a university teacher specialising in the

combined fields of art and special-needs education extracted and analysed the recorded data to identify the growing curiosity of students A and B.

Results

Scenes of the students showing their curiosity were observed. Excited to hear his voice from the computer and robot, Student A lifted the robot and looked underneath to inspect its structure. He attempted to see if the robot would work manually. When he discovered that it was not working manually, he approached the computer that was operating it and attempted to learn its operation. For his part, Student B stood in front of and behind the robot to experience the thrill of moving himself in time with the robot's movements. He would deliberately approach the robot, and when he almost bumped into it, he would shout and happily with excitement. In remote operations, the students attempted to find interesting objects from the museum. Student A found an insect on display in a high place and stood in front of a TV with a computer screen output to observe it closely (Fig. 1). Student B focused on observing the exhibits and was good at operating the controller. Both students showed interest in operating the robot and shared control of the robot with each other. Although they normally had different interests, their behaviour showed they were interested in operating the robot together. When Student A found it difficult to operate the controller, he handed it to Student B, and Student B would sometimes ask Student A which direction he wanted to go in. They appeared to trust each other.

The students also enjoyed talking with the curator. Some exhibits were open-ended and tested the children's imagination. There were no correct answers, which aroused the children's curiosity. When the curator asked about an image of what the exhibits were used for, Student A replied 'soup bowls', while student B replied 'curry and stew bowls'. The curator did not give one-way commentary but waited for the direction in which the robot moved and for the children to speak. Thus, the children observed the artwork at their own pace. If they wanted to look at the artwork more closely, they could also use the robot's magnification function. When visiting a museum, it is difficult to look high up or deep into the artwork. Using the robot helped overcome this challenge.

In the fifth stage, the students summarised what they had learned in a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation. The children pasted pictures of the activities on the slides and inserted text such as 'inside the museum' and 'curator's name'. They also printed out the slides and pasted them on sheets, drawing pictures around them, recalling foods and stuffed pottery that impressed them from the exhibits or drawing pictures of robots. Their actions were an expression of their heightened curiosity. The posters of their combined compilations were put on display at the entrance of the museum. This joint practical exercise promoted cooperative learning, shared art experiences, and proactive behaviours. Student B, who

appeared to be pleased after he visited the museum with family, informed the homeroom teacher that he had captured a picture of him and his sister in front of the sheets.



Figure 1 | *Looking for an Insect in the Museum through the Robot* (Copyright by the authors)

Discussion

Students A and B approached the robots independently and took an interest in the exhibits. This was considered a sign of high diversive curiosity (Nishikawa, 2021) to seek novel and diverse information. Additionally, the interaction between the curator and the students encouraged them to extract objects of interest, which made their self-initiated remote observation of the exhibition a joyful experience. We found the time set aside in the unit for robot familiarisation to be effective. Student B stated that he wanted to practise in the school library and the fact that his suggestion was adopted seemed to increase his motivation even further. It was also unusual for two people to enjoy sharing one activity; this experience might have brought them closer together.

After the end of the exercise, Student A talked about finding a catering robot in a restaurant, whereas Student B researched and presented images of various controllers to the teacher. Contrary to habit, this indicated Student B's desire to directly interact with the teacher, implying that their diversive curiosity was being sustained. These were signs of finding enjoyment in leisure-time activities and of growing expectations to operate the robot. Imai (2016) states that children's creation of knowledge is a form of independent learning. Through this unit's activities, the students constructed new knowledge and discovered the joy of enlightening themselves. The fact that the children could observe the artwork at their own pace could also have brought out their independent attitude. The robot allowed the children to focus on the works, which enabled them to take the initiative of moving on and returning to see the same works again more freely. If the students had visited the museum in person, they may have been distracted by the curator's pace of viewing and the numerous exhibits.

The children's work that was displayed in the museum may pique the interest of museum visitors in our activities; suggestions could be made on how this type of activity can be used in the educational field. Thus, it is important to inform people outside the school about its activities as a way of communicating with the local community. From the curator's perspective, the lesson was deemed a valuable example of the use of museums in special-needs education. We hope that more examples will be accumulated in the future and that the museum will be recognised as a facility that anyone can use easily.

This study suggests that Students A and B's familiarity with culture and the arts, along with this project, helped promote opportunities to connect the school and the community. Therefore, the lessons developed are beneficial to the students. The use of information devices and the viewing of works of art in familiar places without limiting the location, as in this unit, is expected to improve the opportunities for more children to come into contact with art and traditional crafts.

We faced three limitations: the prospect of mitigating students' unfamiliarity with the museum's tour route, developing mouse and controller instructions for operating the robot, and building relationships through regular interactions between the students and the museum's director and curators.

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Museum Appreciation Project Using Telepresence Robot Toward Inclusion

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Abstract

The International Council of Museums updated its definition of museums in August 2022, describing museums as accessible, inclusive, and fostering diversity and sustainability. In response, attempts have been made globally to include people with disabilities who were previously unable to access museums. However, there is a problem with how people with or without disabilities are perceived. The improvement of accessibility for people with disabilities by people without disabilities creates the perception of the former as 'guests', guests rather than agents. It involves the risk of maintaining the structure and relationship of the disconnect. Therefore, in this study, local governments, museums, NPOs, universities, and people with disabilities of various generations enrolled in welfare facilities or schools collaborated to implement a museum appreciation project using telepresence robots. This project was conducted through three programs between 2022 and 2023. The author considered the theoretical framework of post-humanism and the theoretical positioning of the robot's experience in the appreciation activity. The results revealed that the telepresence robot provided the participants with the following experiences: The first is the coexistence of movement transformations and partially maintained body sensations. The second aspect is the connection between public and private spaces. The third is sharing others' experiences.

Keywords: museum education, telepresence robots, post-humanism, inclusion, people with disabilities

Author note

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Museum Appreciation Project Using Telepresence Robot Toward Inclusion

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) updated its definition of museums in August 2022, describing museums as accessible, inclusive, and fostering diversity and sustainability (ICOM, 2022). In response, attempts have been made globally to include people with disabilities who were previously unable to access museums. However, the perception of people with disabilities is problematic, as support for people with disabilities is essential. However, if we recognise them as people who need help, they will only become guests. In this study, we consider it necessary to avoid this and recognise them as agents who proactively engage in art and reconsider museum appreciation. Therefore, in this study, we propose an art appreciation experience that uses a telepresence robot. Note that the term 'people with disabilities' was used in this study. However, the author used the term meaning to include the social model of disability.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study adopts Braidotti's (2013) post-humanism theory. This critically reevaluates the anthropocentric perspective by focusing on the ambiguity of the boundaries between human and non-human entities. In post-humanism, subjectivity is not limited to the individual; instead, it is an attempt to collaborate across species, crossing over between opposites and arising in an assemblage that transposes them. In other words, post-humanism does not see humans as singular, superior beings but as part of a more extensive network of living and non-living things.

Technology, Body and Art

Many tools created by humans in the past have aimed at extending bodily functions. For example, a knife or pencil can be seen as an extension of the hand and a bicycle or car as an extension of the foot. Generative artificial intelligence (AI), which has been gaining popularity worldwide in recent years, can also be seen as an extension of brain function.

If we look at the field of art and design, Artists and Designers are also using technology to critically question the ambiguity of physicality. For example, Herr sees artificial legs as extensions rather than aids (Herr, 2014). Etsuko Ichihara has an AI robot that learns information about the dead and their personalities and attempts to interact with their remaining family members (Ichihara, 2015). Furthermore, Haynes raises the question of bioethics by presenting the figure of a physically altered infant and asking to what extent people can intervene in the body (Haynes, 2015). Thus, integrating the robot and the body allows for a redefinition of the human, which Haraway (1991) describes as the 'cyborg'.

Implementation Methods

In this study, the author used Double Robotics Inc.'s Double 3 telepresence robot (Double Robotics, Inc., 2023) to move the robot in the museum from a PC at home or at a welfare facility to appreciate the artwork and exhibits. The project was implemented in three

phases, from November 2022 to March 2023. These were not planned from the beginning of the study, but rather, the results and issues were reviewed at the end of each program, and the contents and methods of implementation were developed and improved in an exploratory approach, using them as objectives and hypotheses for the following programs. In addition, because most participants had never operated a robot before, we visited schools and facilities for one to two hours of instruction before implementation.

Research Ethics

In Programs 1 and 3, the research outline was written in a recruitment flyer, and consent for research collaboration was confirmed or denied at the time of application. In Program 2, written permission was obtained from parents. This study was approved by the Joint Committee for the Ethics Review of Educational Programs, Graduate School of Human and Social Sciences, Hiroshima University (Approval No.20210191).

Museum Appreciation Project

Program 1: Introduction to Exhibition Appreciation

In Japan, exhibitions open to people with disabilities are held nationwide. The *Love and Support Art Exhibition 2022*, the focus of this project, has been held since 2012 and features paintings, sculptures, crafts, and calligraphy from people with disabilities who live or work in Hiroshima Prefecture. Approximately 700 works are submitted annually, of which approximately 370 are selected, and 11 are awarded prizes. In Program 1, a telepresence robot was introduced to improve the situation in which exhibitors selected and awarded prizes in this exhibition–a public art exhibition for people with disabilities–could not visit the museum because of physical, situational, or infection risks. The aim was to create an opportunity for exhibitors to move out of their own volition, rather than being guided by us, to find their works in the exhibition space and view them with their families or other visitors.

Three individuals and six welfare facilities applied, and a total of 47 people with disabilities and 32 supporters appreciated the exhibition using the robot. For those individuals and facilities that applied, staff members who were experts in operating the robots visited their facilities and homes to practice operating them in advance. On the day of the exhibition, approximately one hour was allotted to each facility and individual to allow sufficient time to view the robots. The author and others accompanied the participants to the viewing session. They interacted with them by asking them about their creation methods, the conditions of their creation, and the artists' thoughts and feelings (Fig. 1).

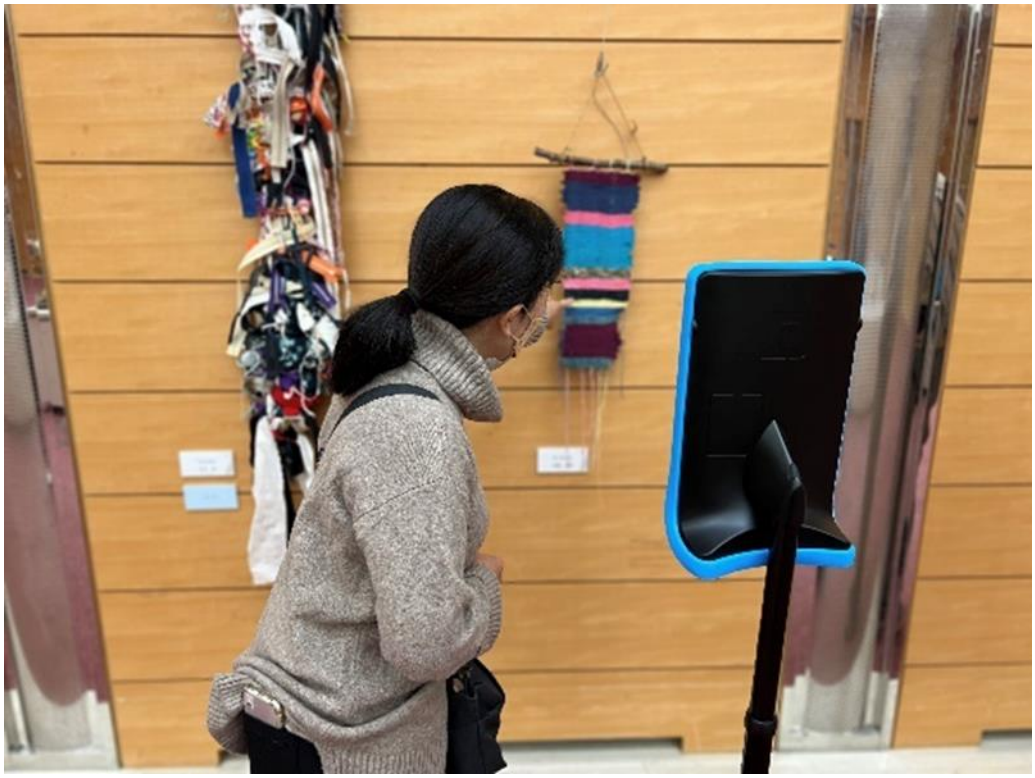


Figure 1 | *Conversation with the Artist about Artwork Through the Robot* (Copyright by the author)

After the appreciation program, an online questionnaire was emailed to participants. Of the individuals and facilities that participated in the program, three and six welfare facilities responded to the questionnaire. In terms of satisfaction with the activities, two individuals and four facilities were ‘very satisfied’, two facilities were ‘somewhat satisfied’, and one individual was ‘undecided’ out of a 5-point scale from ‘very satisfied’ to ‘not satisfied at all’. Reasons given by those who answered with ‘somewhat satisfied’ and ‘undecided’ were the difficulty of using and operating the PCs and communication problems. In particular, time lags between operations, screen roughness and freezing, and other problems associated with the Wi-Fi environment at the venue, facility, and home, as well as fatigue from staring at the screen, were cited. Many of these problems can be resolved if the technical issues are resolved. The respondents were also asked on a 5-point scale whether they would like to participate in future events using robots on a five-point scale. Two individuals and four facilities responded with ‘very much’, and one individual and two facilities responded ‘somewhat’, indicating a positive response.

Thus, in Program 1, the results of the post-program questionnaire survey were positive; however, the organiser led the program and did not include the participants' intentions and wishes, which remained an issue. Therefore, in Program 2, we decided to develop a learning program and consider how to incorporate the robot into the program by

considering activities using the robot with the participants and involving the participants on the management side.

Program 2: Positioning in the Curriculum

In Program 2, we collaborated with the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of History to develop a unit for two students in a special needs class at Elementary School X. Rather than setting the robot activity as the goal, we jointly developed and implemented a program that included a robot practice, what the children saw and learned at the museum, dialogue with the curator, and subsequent research as final outputs. In other words, they incorporated robotic activities as part of the unit.

The implemented program was called *Let's Visit a Museum* from February 2023 to April 2023. The eight sessions (45 minutes each) consisted of the following: (1) Learning about public facilities such as museums and art galleries (one session). (2) Learn how to operate the robot from an expert in assistive devices and listen to the museum director and curator giving a guided tour of the museum using the robot in ZOOM (one session). (3) Learn about the activities of robots working in hospitals and special needs schools and view the 'Pocket Curator', a guide application for the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of History (one session). (4) Touring the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of History exhibits using a telepresence robot and reviewing activities with directors and curators (two sessions). (5) Visually summarise what they learned using MS PowerPoint. Print the created sheets, paste them onto imitation paper, and draw pictures (two sessions). (6) Explain this activity to friends from other grades (one session).

Thereby, this course included a wide range of activities, including preliminary practice of robot operation in the school, a visit to the museum using the robot, conversation with the museum curator, post-exhibition study of the exhibits, creation of an MS PowerPoint presentation as deliverable, and the creation of materials for the exhibit. The artefacts created by the students were displayed at the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of History.

In the remote robot activity on 7 March 2023, the museum director and curators dressed in medieval costumes greeted the children. Once the viewing began, the children moved autonomously around the exhibition room with the robot and viewed the exhibits and dioramas of interest. When they stopped looking at something of interest, they moved the camera position of the remote robot up and down or zoomed in to observe the details. For example, when they stopped at an exhibit of medieval pottery and other everyday objects of interest, the curator asked them, 'What do you think this was used to hold?' The children could develop their imaginations by relating them to their daily lives, such as 'to put curry or stew in'. At the exhibition of medieval money, the children compared the shapes of money with those of today, which had been prepared by teachers in advance, and discussed

the differences in the shapes of money in those days. Thus, simultaneous interactive dialogue was conducted via the robot in response to the children's interests during their movements.

Program 3: Joint Face-to-face and Robot Appreciation Activities at an Art Museum

As Programs 1 and 2 were both stand-alone robot activities, Program 3 was developed and implemented to allow face-to-face and robot participants to engage in activities together. This program, titled the 'Talking Appreciation Program for Everyone', was held at the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of Art for People with Disabilities. On 24 March 2023, the day before the program was implemented, a preliminary meeting was held online, where participants introduced themselves and the art they would be viewing. They confirmed the route in the museum, from purchasing tickets to exhibition rooms to using photos and videos. For the robot participants, as in Programs 1 and 2, a robot was brought to the facility, and participants were instructed on how to operate the robot using a PC.

The appreciation session was held on 25 March 2023 from 14:00 to 15:00 o'clock in the exhibition room of the Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum collection. The participants were five face-to-face participants and one robot. The face-to-face participants were all people with disabilities, and the robot included one facility (five viewers). During the appreciation session, the museum curator served as the facilitator and conducted an appreciation activity that emphasised dialogue based on Visual Thinking Strategies for the two paintings. Participants expressed their frank impressions of the work, and new interpretations were generated through dialogue.

However, there are technical and operational difficulties in conducting face-to-face and online activities. Specifically, when the robot participants viewed the artwork on the screen, they could not understand who was speaking among the face-to-face participants, and it was not easy to hear their voices and follow what they were saying. Each person speaks freely in interactive appreciation, and short words can lead to the next conversation. Because they could not hear the exchange, the robot participants found it difficult to speak; as a result, their presence weakened.

Program 3 aimed to bring the face-to-face and robot participants together in the same place and perform the same activities; however, this did not work well in practice. However, in the post-program questionnaire to the robot participants, the question 'If an appreciation program were held, would you like to participate again'? They responded, 'very much'. Although there were some points where it was difficult to hear the participants' voices, they also commented, 'It was good that my peers and staff were able to interact with each other. Even the children who do not talk much thought and talk with us.' Thus, dialogue was created among the members of the facility through paintings. This point can be considered a possibility for the future development of activities.

Conclusion

After completing this project, we consider the theoretical positioning of the robot's experience in the appreciation activity from Braidotti's (2013) post-humanism perspective. We believe that the telepresence robot provided the participants with the following experiences.

The first aspect was the coexistence of the transformation of movement and partially maintained bodily sensations. During this activity, walking was transformed by clicking on a computer keyboard with the fingers. However, museums exist in reality, and the sensation of being there and moving through them remains the same as when visiting them in real life. This experience was different from the experience of moving through artificial virtual spaces, such as computer games or Metaverse.

The second aspect is the connection between public and private spaces. Participants experienced an unfamiliar public space on the other side of the screen from a familiar space where they lived normally. Because the robot exists in real space, the museum's rules are inevitably brought into everyday life, creating tension and responsibility. For example, they cannot approach artworks, bump into people, or enter restricted areas. Thus, for the participants, it was the experience of public rules being introduced into everyday spaces.

The third aspect is about sharing others' experiences. In the case of the group participation, one participant operated the robot. In this case, those participating shared experiences of others' proactive movements. This sensation does not usually occur when visiting a museum face-to-face. It is thought that the participants shared the experience of moving and looking at the robot while considering the intentions of the person operating the robot. This way, the telepresence robot was not limited to mere support but connected various agents, such as people and others, public and private, and others and private, and led participants to a new experience.

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Digital Image Archives as Sites of Negotiation for Critical Art Education

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Abstract

Digital image archives can serve as inclusive spaces for negotiating historical inequalities and necessary reforms in art education. In order to meet today's demands especially of the digital image from the perspective of art education, it is crucial to take a critical look at the visual imagery of fine arts. Institutions digitize selected imagery primarily for representational and documentational reasons, yet these images become emblematic patterns of the respective culture in a digital realm. The focus of a workshop is the digital image archive, that is only marginally addressed within art education. In a workshop, congress participants are invited to collaboratively explore strategies on how to work with digital image archives and are encouraged to question habitualised viewing habits. Fostering a critical and inclusive understanding of the archive in a postcolonial discourse, the workshop aims to promote transdisciplinary learning and critical thinking. Participants conceptualize and develop prototypes for educational tools that they can later use within their work in education, aiming to prepare their students for active participation in a post-digital society.

Keywords*:* art education, digital image archive, image pluralism, postcolonialism

Digital Image Archives as Sites of Negotiation for Critical Art Education

This article outlines three research core themes *1. Unlearning, 2. Image Competence 3. Game Based Learning.* These three themes are framed and addressed within the context of art education, especially engaging with digital image archives in the visual arts.

At first it is essential to contextualizing our research subject and highlight the approach to knowledge that underpins our concept and conduction of our workshop, addressing students and prospective teachers as well as experts. The approach originates from Postcolonial Studies and questions the gaps in (art) history, where individuals and artists from the Global North are spotlighted as the main protagonists (Mörsch, 2021). Therefore, we focus on the concept of 1. Unlearning the Eurocentric perspective and dismantling existing power structures. We aim to contribute to a representation-critical and more inclusive education through art. Further, to gain new insights and forms of teaching practice in the subject of art, trying to address and problematize the epistemic violence and inequality of art history contained in visual art archives. The digital space, with its flexibility and adaptability, serves a convenient platform for this negotiation.

Furthermore, we view the realm of digitization as a productive field for acquiring future-oriented knowledge, that is needed in the 21st century. Guided by this premise, our research in particularly deals with developing skills that align with the evolving practices in perception, reflection and communication brought about by digitization (Klein et al., 2020). Also, we place collaboration and commonality as fundamental starting points for the acquisition of knowledge in the context of our subject of research in art education, as well as collaboration, that is not taken enough into consideration in everyday teaching (Krebber, 2020). However, following Haraway collaboration is fundamental to understand the complexity of structures and society in our lives (Haraway, 2018). Following this necessity, we belief, collaboration is as a significant form of learning. The digital space, working with a laptop presented in Figure 1, with its expanded possibilities for participation (Krebber, 2020), provides the ground for our research and workshop.



Figure 1 | *Workshop digital image archives as sites of negotiation for critical art education* (Copyright by Petra Weixelbraun)

Unlearning: Updates on traditional narratives

We anchor our theoretical considerations in workshops that we implemented over the past year, serving as the foundation for our empirical research. The workshops address embedded epistemic hegemonies and aim to make visible narratives that are hidden or not depicted in the represented art canon. The focus of these workshop laboratories is on envisioning narratives and creating spaces of possibilities that contribute to a more inclusive future at the intersection of art and education (Sternfeld, 2017), shown in Figure 2. Participants engaged with the archive through anti-colonial and anti-discriminatory lens, utilizing it as a tool to explore conceptual ideas for alternative historiography in opposition to hegemonic power structures. The tasks at the workshops were drafting gaming concepts for art education, targeting students but also teachers. These playful instructional formats aimed to cultivate an understanding, that the content presented in the archive carries a pre-formed (art) history, that obscures and excludes many artists who are not part of the Global North or West.

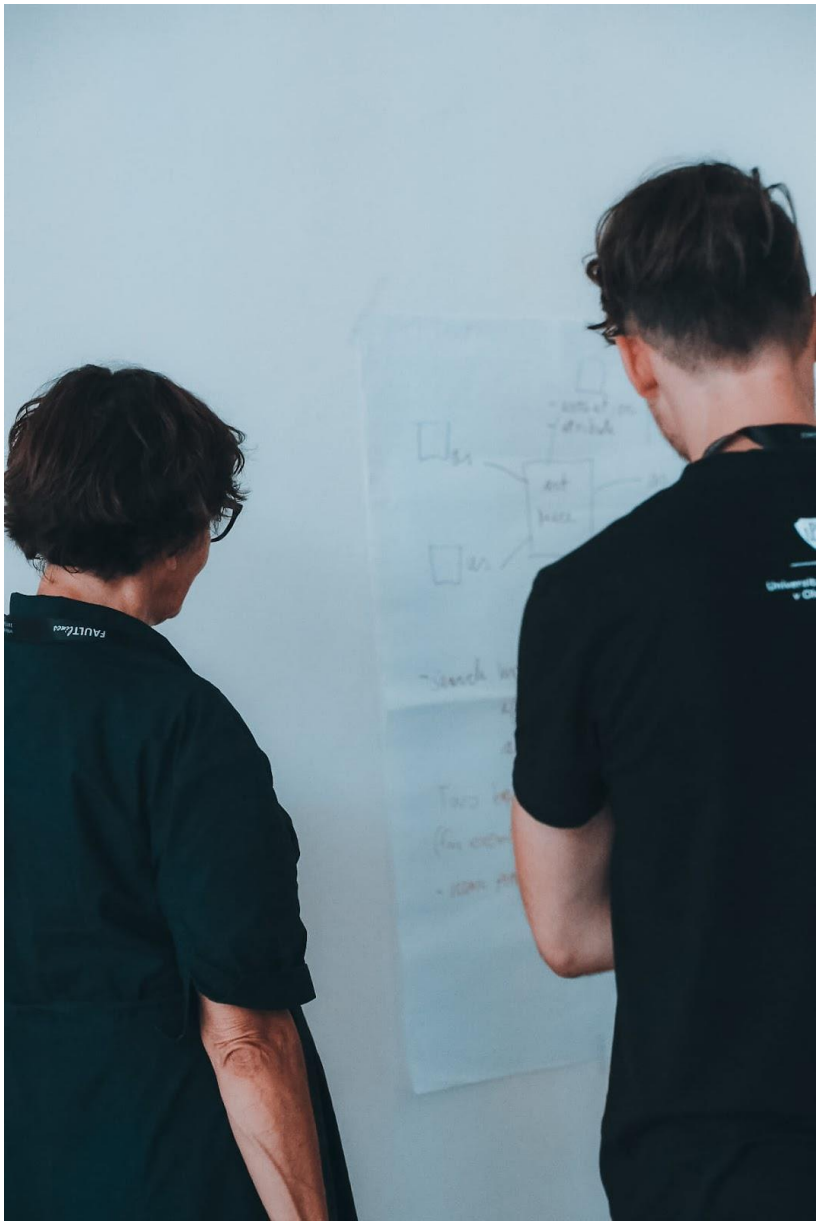


Figure 2 | *Workshop digital image archives as sites of negotiation for critical art education* (Copyright by Petra Weixelbraun)

The fundamental epistemological question that we pursue with our workshop concept at the congress, is derived from the concept of *1. Unlearning*. This involves a deconstructive mode of thinking and practice based on Postcolonial Studies, which paves the way for alternatives to hegemonic ideologies (Spivak, 2008). Image archives inherently carry hegemonic power dynamics due to their historicity, rooted in colonialist and oppressive backgrounds. Through this lens, it is necessary to problematize this aspect and raise awareness for this issue in the context of art and art history in an educational setting. The goal is to sensitize students and future teachers to avoid reproducing a continuation of

the past (Sternfeld, 2018). In this context, we suggest art as a tool for critical practice. Art, cultural products and their education are essential instruments in generating knowledge and concepts of thinking. Castro Varela and Dhawan, drawing on Edward Said, argue that cultural production is always linked to the political profile of a society. In these efforts to update, it is crucial not to simply forget the past but to be aware of historically ingrained relations and inequalities, aiming to change them in a direction that fosters inclusive and equal coexistence in the present and future (Castro Varela/Dhawan, 2009). Spaces of art, in our case, digital image archives of the visual arts, function as places of resistance and the fight for equality. It is necessary to recognize that existing principles of order should not be considered as naturally given; they always harbour the potential for change and the alternative. Art plays a pivotal role in this regard (Mouffe, 2014).

Who is visible? Who has a voice? Who is seen? To whom is a platform granted, and to whom is it not? On the other hand, who is watching and has access to what is presented? Which canon of knowledge is thereby served for whom? These questions seem prevalent in art educational contexts of digital image archives in fine arts and encompass digitized artworks from the early stages of human artistic expression to the present. When selecting educational content, educators must ask themselves: Who or what do I make visible here? What knowledge am I passing on? And what will remain unseen in favour of what or whom? Spivak (2009) emphasizes the necessity of being aware, that there is no universally valid canon. Although she speaks from the perspective of English literature, the same is valid for fine arts: “canons are the conditions of institutions and the effect of institutions. Canons secure institutions as institutions secure canons” (Spivak, 2009, p. 304). To avoid, as Sternfeld (2018) states there is a need for the establishment of a trained critical view on art and its history, that enables us to look even where the authorities of art history do not shine a spotlight.

Image Competence: The digital space as a challenging learning site

The digital image, as the central topic of the workshop, has posed new challenges for art education, students, and teachers. With an unprecedented new plurality of images, the digital image has raised questions on the tangibility of an image. The image competence, as a central core learning competence, is not only inherent in art education but as well is one of its distinctive features. The role of the image must be addressed anew in the mirror of digitalization. What is it, that students need to learn on digital images and how can the image archive help to reach those learning goals?

A major challenge in art education and the usage of digital imagery, is the appearance and disappearance of digital images and the vagueness of their digital localization. Sometimes it is extremely difficult to trace where and from where an image originates, for what purpose it was created, how it is used and finally how it ended up,

where it ended up. A core aspect of the image competence is, to have context-based knowledge on an image and thus to understand the context, where an image originates from. Context-based knowledge on images help the viewer to integrate the image content in a bigger frame, in short: it is essential to combine already gained knowledge on images with new knowledge, to understand new resulting connections. Thus, regarding the digital image, the image competence means, to recognize a certain arbitrariness, that is attached to digital imagery and at the same time a willingness to address and accept that context-based knowledge is created within non-static parameters.

Likewise, on a pictorial dimension within the digital image, the difficulty of a clear and meaningful identification of an image's content becomes apparent (Niehoff, 2017, p.102). Especially in the digital space, it can be challenging for viewers to determine production methods or mediums. Structural and visual analyses can sometimes challenge and demand deeper knowledge on art and the production of images. Workshop participants have to address the fluidity of imagers within the digital image archive and understand the image archive as a site of motion.

Game-based learning: New potentials in art education

Within the workshop a game-based approach to the digital archive was applied. Playing and learning are not contradictory; instead, playing and learning have always been connected. The reason is, that games fulfil the basic needs of learning by being active, enjoyable, social, experiential, and offering immediate feedback. The Digital Game-Based Learning (DGBL) approach plays a special role here by attempting to integrate the fascination of digital games into the classroom and link it to curricular objectives. The idea of DGBL was developed by US educator Marc Prensky, amongst others, who understands DGBL as "any marriage of educational content and computer games" (Prensky, 2007, p.145). Art lessons offer still undiscovered potential for addressing digital aspects more intensively, whereby digital games can be intriguing from both a thematic and also a design perspective.

Hereby, the onset of learning effects through games begins already with learning the rules and mechanics of the game and extends to reflective discussions of values, conceptual ideas, and skills. According to Becker (2017), content-related knowledge, new skills and strategies are learned regardless of the game (type). The digital game is therefore considered a problem-solving space that enables continuous learning through entertainment (Gee, 2009, p. 67). Games are considered particularly useful in learning processes for contextual bridge-building between theoretical learning and practical application, for motivation - even after failures - for the individualization of learning experiences and the possibility of taking different learning paces into consideration (Becker, 2017, p. 52).

In the context of a DGBL approach, both specially designed learning games (Serious Games) and commercial if the shelf game productions (COTS) can be integrated into

teaching and learning activities. However, it should always be considered that the knowledge conveyed through DGBL, or the skills gained should be relevant beyond the game in order to be considered didactically meaningful. In the context of COTS or serious games, learning should primarily take place unconsciously within the game experience. Five factors (Zhonggen, 2019, p. 3) were identified for a high learning effect with digital games: qualitative background stories and appropriate design, realism, algorithmic adaptability to meet individual player needs, interaction between the game and players or between players themselves, as well as feedback and follow-up of the information contained in reflection and discussion rounds. In addition, the game's level of difficulty as well as instructions and explanations should be considered for successful learning experiences.

Due to these factors, it is challenging to provide an adequate supply of educational games as well as COTS games that offer relevant learning content as well as aesthetically appealing designs that are fun to play whilst being usable despite limited school equipment. For this reason, this section will focus on possible aspects of the practical application of digital game-based learning in order to provide interested educators with the most convenient introduction to this field. In particular, the use of DGBL in the classroom involves issues such as the cost of both games and consoles, the time factor, fitting into the curriculum or specific learning skills, comprehensible game rules and content, the availability of technical support and a certain attractiveness of the gameplay in order to promise fun for the students.

Depending on the chosen topic in the art class, a variety of games can be used. If the emphasis is to be placed on both the form, i.e. the design and the technical implementation of the game, as well as on the thematic focus of the content, games such as *The Master's Pupil* inspired by Monet, an approach to modern, abstract art with *Please, Touch The Artwork*, *The Bridge* inspired by M.C. Escher, *Back to Bed* with surrealist influences like Escher, Dali and Magritte, *Pentiment* inspired by illustrations from the 15th century or *The Procession to Calvary* or *Four Last Things* as an ironic exploration of the Renaissance can be considered. All the games listed here deal with the subject of art more or less explicitly but provide quite subtle opportunities for art classes.

Playing these video games serves as a starting point for a content and structural analysis to find out what is interesting about these games and what could be relevant for the realization of an own game. The following questions, among others, can be used for this purpose: To what extent can the game be seen as an interpretation or representation of artistic techniques or themes? How does the game use narrative to convey artistic ideas or concepts? How does the game integrate cultural references or historical contexts and how do these influence the interpretation of the artistic elements in the game? How does the

game represent different cultural perspectives or identities? How does play encourage creative thinking and playful exploration in the context of art?

With free applications for the PC such as *GameMaker*, *GameSalad*, *Twine* and *Scratch*, students can also become active themselves and develop their own small games or game concepts in a low-threshold approach. The previously played serious games or COTS serve as a basis for analysis, which the students can use as a guide to embed essential elements for a self-developed “good” game. Alternatively, students can work on a highly conceptual level, create paper dummies, and use design thinking methods to collect ideas for a collaborative game. This can range from simple prototypes of the game's environment, tasks, rules and goals to detailed elaborations of characters and the game world in a larger digital understanding.

By designing their own game elements or concepts, they can explore their own aesthetic values and understand how form and content intertwine in game development and what design steps are required for a game. After all, it is not only aesthetic considerations that need to be made, but also narration, design thinking and problem-solving are crucial points in the design process to ensure a smooth gaming experience (Patton et al., 2020).

Art education should be representative of a variety of media, especially from the students' environment. An active engagement with digital games or game elements in art lessons offers enormous potential from both a content-analytical and a formal design perspective to promote topic-specific, digital and transformative future skills and also to encourage students as active co-creators of their environment.

Conclusion

Our core research and our workshop aim to address the digital image archive as a learning site and suggest recognizing it as a possibility for exchange, knowledge transfer and as a site of negotiation for critical art education. The workshop’s concept picks up three core themes *1. Unlearning, 2. Image Competence 3. Game Based Learning,* identifying these as a fruitful ground for addressing the digital image and resulting challenges in contemporary art education. Through a game-based learning approach the participants developed educational tools to navigate and work with digital image archives and use them, to unlearn and address pre-formed (art) history, that excludes many who are not part of the Global North or West. The image competence suggests to considerate the digital image with its non-static parameters and grasp the digital image archive as fluid and mutable.

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Walks / Roads / Trips. Visual Literacy: Between Educational, Artistic and Curatorial Approaches

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Abstract

This paper describes a tutorial created within the international project 4EU+ dealing with the theme "Visual Literacy: Understanding Images across Europe – Past and Present 2". In this module, the students had a first-hand experience of the cultural framework of the ways in which images were and are perceived through work on scientific-artistic projects carried out in intercultural groups. During the year, students from Poland, Italy, and the Czech Republic met in online as well as workshops in Prague (Czech Republic), Warsaw (Poland), and Milano (Italy). As part of this project, the students produced a hypothetical exhibition concept that focuses on the theme of migration (especially migration by sea) and studies its different aspects. The exhibition explores the social and political meaning of migration in today's world and tries to incorporate different viewpoints such as the search for national and personal identity, and how those concepts can clash with each other. In this project, we drew inspiration from the a/r/tography methodology, applying it to the overlapping roles of the artist, teacher, curator, and educator. The article presents the artworks as well as pedagogical concepts and curatorial approaches the students experienced within the project.

Keywords*:* art, a/r/tography, exhibition, migration, cooperation

Author note

The authors obtained permissions from the artists Denica Perková, Pavla Gajdošíková, and Eliška Císařová to use their images for this article.

Walks / Roads / Trips. Visual Literacy:

Between Educational, Artistic, and Curatorial Approaches

As teachers of the Department of Art Education of Charles University, we led a group of female students in the international course Visual Literacy: Understanding Images across Europe–Past and Present in the academic year 2022/ 23. In addition to joint lectures on visual literacy and art history provided in collaboration with further teacher colleagues from the Czech Republic (Charles University), Poland (University of Warsaw), and Italy (University of Milan), the course was primarily based on tutorials—intensive project learning in small international groups.

Our students developed a hypothetical exhibition project on a selected theme within the tutorial. We chose a broad theme—Walks / Roads / Trips—for the year described in this text. We piloted a project with a similar structure in the previous year's international course, although the theme was different. The students' assignment was to define and specify this theme in both years, using all the steps and stages of the tutorial.

However, the task was not only to create a curator's concept, although it was the crucial part of the project along with the research of contemporary art production and the selection of artists and their artworks. The students were to select an appropriate exhibition space, visualise the hypothetical exhibition, and complement it with texts (especially the curatorial one) with corresponding graphic design. Presenting the exhibition to the public was an important task as well, meaning to devise and develop educational and accompanying programmes and materials. Yet, the very first step was an effort for a visual expression of the given theme so that the students tried out the practical aspect of an art production and had at least a partial chance to identify with the role and position of the contemporary visual female artist (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 | *My Map, a collage by Denica Perková*, 2023 (Copyright by Denica Perková)

The aim of our tutorial "Visual Literacy: Between Educational, Artistic and Curatorial Approaches. Contemporary Art, Art Education and Curating as a Form of Dialogue and as a Way How to Broaden Critical Thinking" was to combine theory and practice, to which the tandem of teachers corresponded—Pavla Gajdošíková, an artist, and Vendula Fremlová, an art theoretician and curator—and to show these approaches as communicating vessels rather than counterpoints. In this respect, the approach of the a/r/tography methodology was inspirational. A/r/tography research in this project was based on overlapping, sharing, and common reflection on specific themes.

As described by Rita Irwin (2017), this methodology is a complex network that, instead of asking clear questions that produce concrete answers, seeks to mediate given themes in a broad rhizomatic system of perception. It is a contemporary form of research based on practice and dealing with art, education, and the process of creation. In addition to other artistic and aesthetically defined methodologies, this method is one of many forms of research that deal with art as a way to grasp the effort to understand the world.

A/r/tography draws on many sources, but research itself works with the interconnection of frameworks in unlimited "interim" space that creates new bonds between theories, forms, and contents and that is directed towards the understanding of new meanings. It is interdisciplinary space, open and vulnerable, where meanings and understanding mingle; it is an idea and theory of an abstract system. It is writing and creating with tight connections to life: "living mingling"—writing immersed in life, life experience (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004).

Walks / Roads / Trips. Personal Grounds and Research of the Contemporary Art Milieu

Research of contemporary or relatively recent art production working with this theme or the medium of walking was the crucial component of the tutorial and the entire project. Interesting artistic approaches using the theme of paths, or the medium of walking were presented to the students throughout the two-semester course. The artist and educator Pavla Gajdošíková was first to present her art projects focused on mapping space and motion within space in line with the a/r/tography method. Her *Morning Walk* video shows the artist's walk with a child in a pram but shot from the child's perspective. It actually is a daily routine of the mother and her small son, in a cutaway showing a drawing record of the path, a mental map of a kind. The path motif is thus grasped from various perspectives (see Figure 2).



Figure 2 | *Morning walk, video* stills from Pavla Gajdošíková, 2013 (Copyright by Pavla Gajdošíková)

Pavla Gajdošíková described her motivation and interpretation of the work as follows:

> Major changes occurred in my life which I reflected in my art unwittingly. I found myself in a situation when I was bound to a new family member, going on ritual walks with him. I would virtually take the same path with the pram every day, and I decided to record its repetitive character. I drew my daily route with my son every day. This initial idea resulted in the cycle of artworks dealing with a path in broad contexts and meanings. (Gajdošíková, 2019, p. 68)

This very candid statement and the possibility to peep inside "the artist's kitchen" was a source of authentic experiences for the students that not only motivated them towards their own art production but also helped them realise the blending of artistic practice, theory, and education, which is important for the a/r/tography method.

> A/r/tography provided me with an opportunity to fully grasp my work as I had long endeavoured to define my role between teaching and artistic practice. It represents a connection between art and the text as inseparable spheres of knowledge, be it a unit of art and the text or an image and the word. (Gajdošíková, 2019, p. 21)

Within the tutorial, the students became acquainted with pioneering works dealing with the theme of walking, including those of outstanding international figures such as the British artists Richard Long (1945) and Hamish Fulton (1946) as well as the Czech artist Jan Jedlička (1944), who also worked in Italy, and Vojtěch Fröhlich (1985), a representative of a younger middle generation of Czech artists, who in a guerrilla manner broke into the Czech and Slovak pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2022, walking through and opening it to the public.

Suggestions on how to approach, specify, and define the theme were shaped during discussions and consultations between us and our students within the tutorials when the students proposed their revelations within the contemporary art production. They discovered male and female artists such as Francis Alÿs, Keith Arnatt, Bogna Burska, Marina Abramović and Ulay, Kubra Khademi, Robert Flick, Tomas Saraceno, Reena Saini Kallat, and others. Based on their initial research of contemporary art production, the students considered whether to deal with the theme from the actual motion perspective, that is, moving from one place to another, or from the mental motion perspective as aptly described in one of the first attempts to grasp the theme conceptually:

> The theme of travel is very wide, but for me it has two basic dimensions: trips in the sense of discovering new places, and the mental journey of maturing that we take in our heads by learning about ourselves during different experiences. Each of us walks our own paths, both physically—moving from one place to another, and mentally—as we grow up, learn about new realities, and face new challenges. (Henc, 2023, p.1)

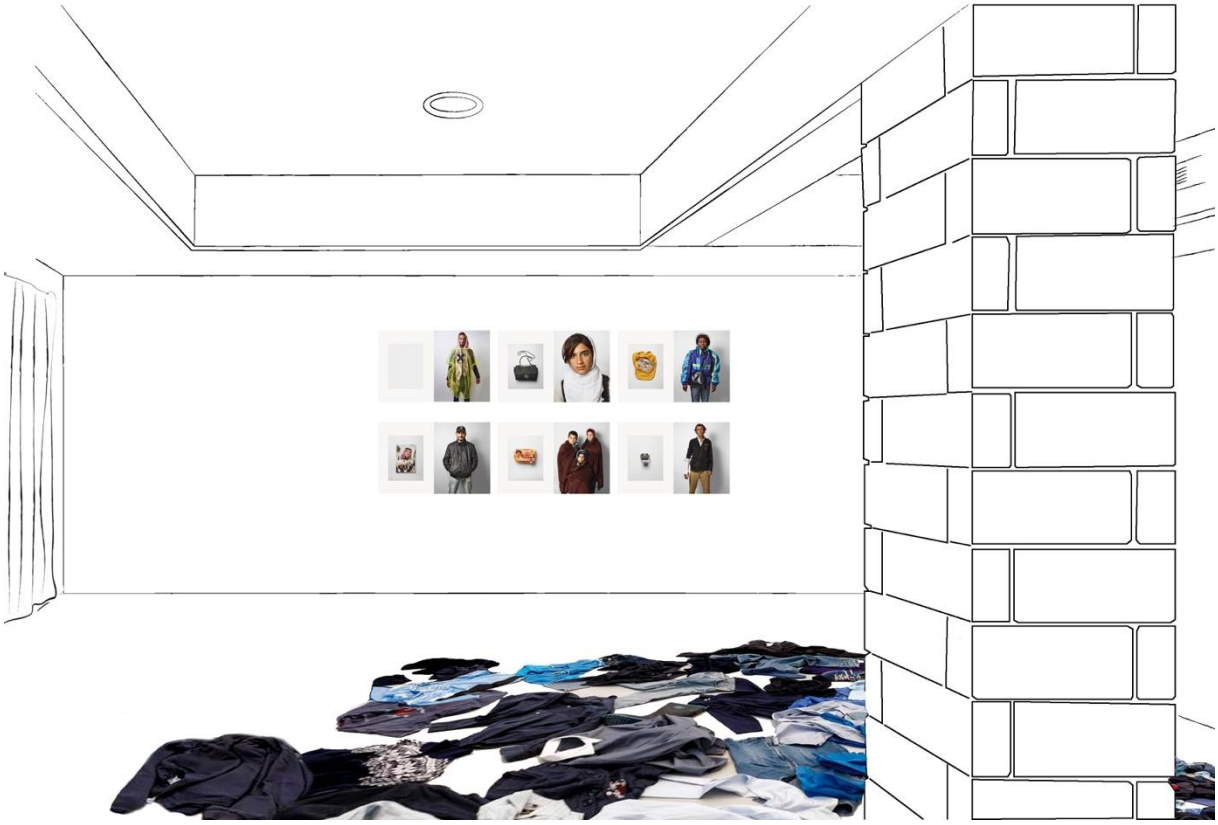


Figure 3 | *Denica Perková installation view of the exhibition The jeopardy of blue, collage* 2023 (Copyright by Denica Perková)

Curatorship as Reimagined Research

We sought to comment on, guide, and offer our view on our students' selection, formed by the curator's, teaching, artistic, and also spectator's experience—in addition to art theory and artistic texts (e.g., the novel *Flights* by the Polish author Olga Tokarczuk, which, among other things, relates to the phenomenon of motion and travel). The exhibition project concept unfolded remarkably also due to discussions led by the students among themselves. Concurrently, they were asked to think about the final exhibition, regarding it as a specific work that not only presents isolated artistic approaches, but also, rather contrarily, demonstrates concrete themes by using these approaches, shows connections between content and form, and endeavours to formulate them through the installation within the given space and its potential. Therefore, we opted for an alternative concept of curatorship through reimagining research as described by Ted Hovet (2022): "curation provides a productive model and metaphor through which students can achieve dynamic, argument-driven, multi-media work while forcing them … to be considerably more creative in how to present it" (p. 4).

In his didactic and highly salutary approach to curatorship, Ted Hovet (2021, pp. 52–53) defined several crucial questions or issues that must be answered or considered when preparing projects and curated exhibitions: Curatorial Statement; Orientation; Discovery/Investigation; Paths and Connections; Design; Arguments; and A System of Acknowledgement of Sources. We offered this structure to our students as a tool to conceive a curated exhibition.

Hovet (2021) defines *Orientation* as "What must the person walking into your exhibition know in order to get the most value from interacting with it?" (p. 52). The tutorial participants provided the answers contained in the following text:

> The person walking into our exhibition should be aware of the general idea of migration: Who migrates and why? Where do people migrate? What are the reasons behind it (e.g., war, poverty and famine, human rights violation)? We would like to focus especially on migration connected to the refugee crisis in Europe. Additionally, each of us has experienced the media narrative around the migration and refugee crisis. It is full of political slogans, populist statements, and it tends to be deprived of individual stories. A person visiting the exhibition—even if involuntarily—keeps those images in the back of his mind. The exhibition tries to reverse the perspective that is present in the discourse that surrounds us. (Císařová et al., 2023b, p. 3)

Formulated by the students through further questions, it is the above-mentioned migration issue that prompted their very engaged approach that literally asked for the education component of an exhibition. While it was included in the tutorial's curriculum and

structure, the students arrived at it individually by realising the issue's exigency and the need for a wider discussion.

The students answered the question posed by Hovet (2021) in his definition of the *Path and Connections* component "What are the paths and connections among selected artworks?" (p. 52), as follows:

> The main parallel to selected works of art is their connection to the sea as a road that people choose to migrate (e.g., the Mediterranean Sea). By sea is not the easiest and fastest way to travel, especially when all one can have is an old pontoon—but sadly for most migrants, it was the only way to make an attempt to start a dangerous expedition. At the sea, many of the journeys start, but also end before people who migrate are able to reach their final destination. We look at the sea as a place that connects the personal stories, stories of whole nations, and stories of mankind all together in one place.
>
> Seas and oceans are also full of life and are inhabited by many fascinating and mysterious creatures, many of them also migrate in the cycle of their lives (e.g., in the spawning season). This duality of the sea is highlighted through the chosen artworks. The second connection is the colour of the sea—blue, which aesthetically unites artworks chosen by us. Also, it is worth noting that people who migrate see the colour blue from two sides (perspectives): both sea and sky, [and] therefore they are surrounded by it. (Císařová et al., 2023b, p. 1)

The "Jeopardy of Blue" Exhibition

The final exhibition concept reflected a socially poignant theme of the migration of refugees (specifically migration by sea), where the students assumed a very engaged attitude towards contemporary art and society. The selected theme was reflected in the exhibition's title, *The Jeopardy of Blue*, and, logically, also in the curator's text. The curatorial statement in this case proved to be an umbrella category that brings a synthesis of all other items, reflections, and texts:

> Seas are culturally connected with travel and movement. For many, they are associated with great discovery journeys or personal journeys on holidays. Seas have carried many people to their happy endings, but on the other hand were deadly for others. It is a privilege to safely travel across the sea, and for many refugees it is not possible to cross this natural barrier safely, and their journeys end in the deep-sea water before they can reach their final destination. (Císařová et al., 2023a, p. 1)

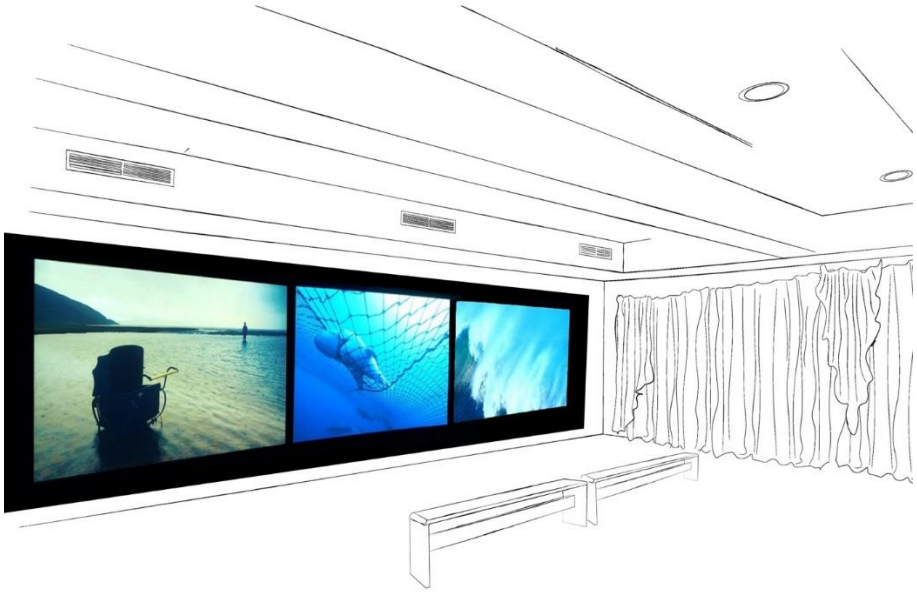


Figure 4 | *Denica Perková installation view of the exhibition The jeopardy of blue, collage* 2023 (Copyright by Denica Perková)

The students designed a coherent exhibition project and adapted it for a specific gallery space. (See Figure 3 and 4) For their hypothetical exhibition project, they eventually chose the private gallery 8smička in a small Czech town called Humpolec, which is an interesting example of a recent conversion of industrial compounds into cultural objects. Since one of the students had personal work experience with the gallery, she was familiar with the space and could introduce it to the other students. In addition to recent and truly attractive visual artworks (John Akomfrah, Kader Attia, Bruno Catalano, E.B. Itso, Reena Saini Kallat, James Mollison, and Hans Schabus), the exhibition also presented the poem "Sea Migration" by Andrew Towle. Excerpts of the poem passed through the entire exhibition, integrating with the individual pieces of art and being regarded as artefacts like the visual artworks. Even in this equal attitude to texts of various types (language, visual), one can find the echoes of a/r/tography as well as the intertextual approach (Hodrová, 2006).

Education as a Committed Approach

As mentioned above, the socially committed focus of the exhibition project naturally brought a need to adequately introduce this theme to various groups of the public and to work with it across the social spectrum. This means not only to settle for an exhibition, where the audience can eventually feel helpless or walk through the exhibition along with other cultural activities consumed on a daily basis, but also to search for and find its educational potential.

The students worked with significant issues dealing with migration and the refugee crisis in creative workshops, discussions, and so forth, including Waves Toward New Home: Migration through the Eyes of Children; What Do You Think of When You Hear the Word

SEA?; Challenging Pathways: Understanding the Migrant Crisis, Faces of Migration; and Workshop: Through the Sand. By so doing, they developed a wide spectrum of accompanying educational activities and even put some into practice (Figure 5). Inspired by the a/r/tography method, the idea of interconnecting the educational, artistic, and theoretical approach thus found its concrete form directed towards more profound critical thinking and is about not just the look and forms of contemporary visual art, but also the state of society.

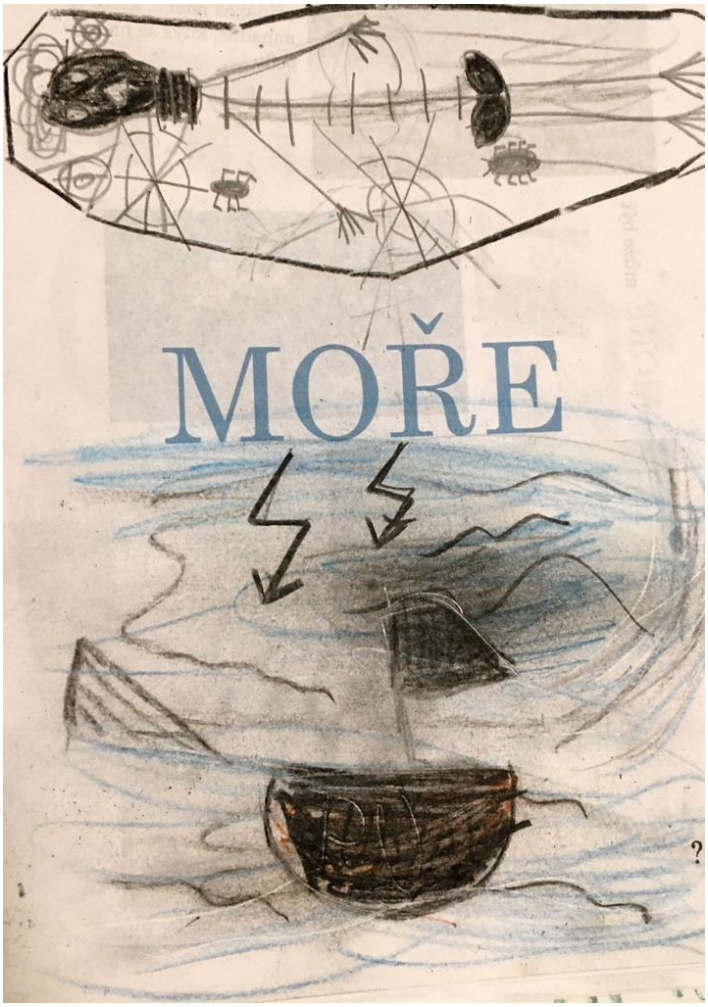


Figure 5 | *Materials from the 'what do you think of when you hear the word SEA?' workshop by Eliška Císařová, 2023* (Copyright by Eliška Císařová)

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We are Different but Similar: Reflecting the Collaboration of Partners from the Global South and the Global North

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Abstract

In 2022, the Munich-based "State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research" published a manual for art education with the title "Global Perspectives in Art Education–Objects from West Africa" (2022). This manual was jointly developed by a team of Ghanaian and German art teachers within the framework of *Exploring Visual Cultures* (EVC). This means that it is–at least in Germany–an unusual product in three ways, regarding its topic (focusing exclusively on objects from Sub-Sahara Africa), its method (each object is interpreted from Ghana as well as from Germany) and its genesis (a joint transnational development). Therefore, it stands out in the German-speaking context and has potential for further projects such as those shared by Patrique deGraft-Yankson (2025) and Jana Tiborra (2025) in this book. My chapter reflects on the collaborative process and the results from a German perspective. EVC is an open and transnational network of art educators, primarily in Africa and Europe. Among other things, it operates a database of "visual objects" (such as works of art, design, monuments, architecture) that are relevant for teaching art in the respective country. The material aims to develop transnational projects for teaching at schools and universities: exhibitions, tutorials, platforms of exchange.

Keywords: Global North-South collaboration, decolonizing pedagogy, multi-perspectivity, transcultural dialogue, curriculum development, visual culture

Author note

All images appear courtesy of the respective museums and institutions.

We are different but similar: Reflecting the Collaboration of Partners from the Global South and the Global North

Goals of the Collaboration

The manual "Global Perspectives in Art Education–Objects from West Africa" discussed in this chapter highlights principles that are crucial for what could be called "contemporary art education" in the context of decolonizing discourses. These principles have been determining the content and the process of development: on the one hand, imagery is always understood as transculturally entangled–regardless of the respective geographical or temporal context (Wagner, 2023), on the other hand, multi-perspective approaches to each example were developed, to avoid a Eurocentric perspective or a hegemonic effect and to break down stereotypes.

Nevertheless, the result of the collaboration between the two teams in Ghana and Germany, the manual, has to be critically reflected upon, especially in relation to these two principles: To what extent was the claim realized? Where did problems arise? What is the project's particular potential? As already mentioned, the manual was developed in a special collaboration between colleagues from Ghana's *University of Education Winneba* and from the German *State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research*. This collaboration made two things possible:

1. With special reference to the contents of the book (artworks and artefacts from West Africa) and its target group (art teachers in Germany), the German authors did not have to talk *about* the visual culture in another region of the world, but they could talk *to and with* representatives of that region about the respective objects.

2. It was crucial for the manual that the information provided by the colleagues from Ghana was not simply *used* by the German colleagues, helping to improve their writing. But *their* (different) perspectives were made the actual foundation of the book. This made it possible to make specific perspectives clear. The dialogue is the core content of the manual, and the manual discusses similarities and differences between the respective standpoints–allowing the German side, to avoid a Eurocentric perspective.

The Process of Collaboration

Crucial to the success of the collaboration has been that the collaboration between the two sides had already begun several years earlier. Several personal meetings had already taken place prior to the start of the project in October 2021. This fact allowed mutual trust to be built up. On this base both teams decided to develop the manual together.

In a first step the Ghanaian colleagues decided about the selection of objects and artworks that should be covered in the manual. This means that the Winneba-team as

experts in the field of West African visual culture determined the content targeting German art teachers. It is the very first book for art education in Germany that emerged from such a division of work that looks pragmatic at first glance. I emphasize this because it also implies a conscious ‚surrender of power' as an important dimension of the whole project.

In April 2022 a joint workshop, lasting several days, took place. There, the selection by the Ghanaian colleagues and first drafts by the German colleagues were discussed. This workshop was followed by an intense cooperation between the German 'authors' and Ghanaian 'advisors' or 'co-authors' via email or messenger. The final editing took place in Germany from October to December 2022. After that the printed book (in German language) was delivered to schools in early 2023. It also can be downloaded for free at: https://explore-vc.org/images/downloads/HR.pdf

Background

As already emphasized such a collaboration only works if there is a common basis of trust. Within the collaboration with the Ghanaian colleagues in Winneba we had already discussed and experimented regarding the question how different perspectives from different cultural backgrounds could be included in art lessons–looking for possibilities to foster a transcultural dialogue on eye level. For instance, EVC's object database (containing objects selected as relevant for teaching in the respective context) always tries to give more than one interpretation.

How this principle of multi-perspectivity could now work in a manual for a specific target group was the decisive question now. In the project, we were always concerned with the question: How do we succeed in our principle "We are different but similar"? The crucial challenge was now, how to avoid that the respective perspectives do not just stand side by side, unconnected, but that the differences become fruitful for something new?

Working with multiple perspectives in education means that the interpretations of the objects should allow to understand differences and similarities, but in a first step mainly the differences. I am emphasizing this, as–after all–especially in InSEA, we always tend too much to ignore differences, and to assert universals, which often might become ideological. Thus, we have to clarify and recognize and accept differences, otherwise we cannot speak of diversity. Examples from the manual (2002) might illustrate this.



Figure 1 | *Hairdressing salon advertisement, unknown artist, second half of the 20th century, oil paint on plywood, 60.8cm x 30.2cm. Origin: Togo.*
Image reproduced courtesy of Museum Fünf Kontinente, Munich (Germany)

Example 1 is about a display board of a Ghanaian hairdresser (figure 1). In the manual, the German authors mainly emphasized the advertising aspect. But, for the Ghanaian colleagues a very different aspect was important–which was in turn surprising for the German team. The Ghanaian co-author of the manual, Patrique deGraft stressed a political message, focusing on the assertion of African identity through the design of hair. On the German side however, at that time there was no knowledge about the inner-African discourses around the political symbolism of hair. This means, the Germans simply could not perceive this message. We could now say that the Germans had the chance to learn something new.

But more decisive in our context was and is the different understanding of what an interpretation of an artwork or an artefact is. From a German perspective, the Ghanaian interpretation focusing on the political dimension was questioned. Obviously, the object looks much more like an advertising poster and has not at all to be conceived politically. This means that the Ghanaian interpretation has been steered by a specific political interest, it

was not developed out of the analysis of the display but was (just) triggered by it. This, in turn, was difficult for the German side, where 'faithfulness to the work' is an important principle. (Germans are wary of political instrumentalization of art and culture, not least because their historical experiences in the 20th century.)



Figure 2 | *Rising Sea, El Anatsui, 2019, mixed media, 14,50m x 7 m*
Image reproduced courtesy of Haus der Kunst, Munich (Germany)

Example 2 deals with the artwork "Rising Sea" of the famous Ghanaian artist, El Anatsui. It consists of almost 200,000 bottle tops–connected with wire (figure 2). The two interpretations, one from Ghana and one from Germany, were written in a parallel process. Parallel means that neither of the authors knew what the counterpart was thinking during writing. Only when the writing and interpretation process was completed, the texts were exchanged … and nothing was changed afterwards.

Comparing our notes, both interpretations agreed in some aspects. In others, however, they differed considerably. Similar or common features were, for example, the depiction of the production process and emphasizing the impressive effect of size and material of the artwork. They also agreed that the issue of environmental pollution plays a central role for the interpretation of the artwork.

It was precisely at this point those differences emerged: The Ghanaian author referred to the sea as a deity, a divine entity, a god that can sometimes be friendly, but also unfriendly. Understood in this way, the sea is both frightening and beautiful. It threatens, but it also invites aesthetic pleasure. But, the term 'god' did not appear in the German text, obviously emphasizing a different idea of what sea is, and beyond that what nature is.

These different concepts of nature also manifest themselves in different understandings of art. In the Ghanaian text of the developed manual (2022), the author

started from the work of art, but he always spoke of the sea itself. The German author, on the other hand, always spoke about the work of art–and not of the sea itself. This is a crucial point, bringing a fascinating difference on the table: The Ghanaian author was concerned with the sea, which he brings to the reader through his text (the sea is 'in' the work, it is really present), while the German author was concerned with the artwork, a work that has the sea as its subject. The sea is just a represented motif. For an English version of the text go to https://explore-vc.org/en/objects/el-anatsui-rising-sea.html Unfortunately, this aspect will not be elucidated in detail here. However, this complex idea will perhaps become clearer again with the next example.



Figure 3 | *Deer Hunt. Owusu-Ankomah, 1975, Acrylic on wood panel, 104.5 x 141.5cm*
Image reproduced courtesy of Courtesy of Ghana National Museum

Example 3 comes from another (future) joint textbook for Ghana and Germany we are currently working (for further details, see the contributions by deGraft-Yankson and by Tiborra in this book). Considering what was just said, it is clear that–with such fundamental differences–such a textbook is not an easy undertaking. The challenges can be briefly demonstrated with our work on Owusu-Ankomah's painting "Deer Hunt" from 1975 (see figure 3).

The painting was selected by the Ghanaian colleagues as an example to be taken for the chapter about 'ecological sustainability'. The chapter will have different units, one unit deals with this artwork titled "Deer Hunt" by Owusu-Ankomah's artwork. The painting depicts a situation after a ritual hunt of the Effutu people in Winneba. An antelope has been caught alive, the hunters only using sticks. This ritualistic hunt has been held every year for a

long time. It is part of a festival that is important for the relationship of the Effutu people to their deity: for driving away evil and for a good harvest. But it is also a social event that symbolises and confirms the social structure of the Effutu people.

In the process, at the beginning, the German authors had great difficulties with this image. They understood is as an image of dominant masculinity, an image that art teachers in Germany would not like to promote. The connection to the overall theme 'ecological sustainability' was not at all obvious for them.



Figure 4 | The evening, Caspar David Friedrich. 1820/21, oil on canvas, 22 x30 cm
Image reproduced courtesy of Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover (Germany).

The differences between the Ghanaian and the German approach becomes clear when we see the corresponding artwork, suggested by the German team, Friedrich's painting "The Evening" (figure 4) in which a forest is the central motif at least.

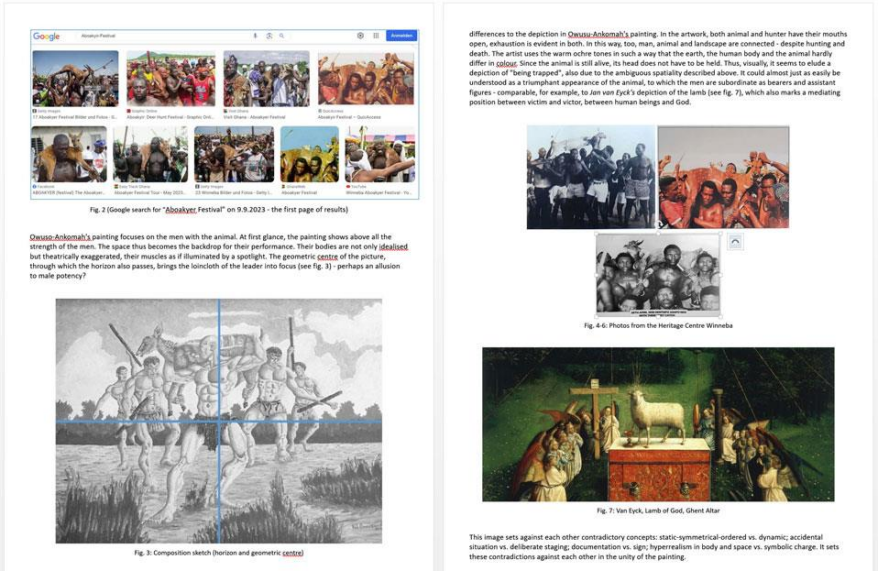


Figure 5 | *Screenshot textbook manuscript, forthcoming*. Copyright the author.

Not only looking at the selection of images but also at the two interpretations of Owusu-Ankomah's "Deer Hunt" (one from Ghana, one from Germany), common differences as already indicated above, came up. The Ghanaian text mainly tells the story of the ritual, whereas the German text examined the image according to two formal principles (figure 5):

1. Compositional analysis e.g. the examination of the geometric centre and the horizon.
2. Comparison, e.g.: with photos on Google, photos from the Heritage Center in Winneba, but also with European art.

This is where we are at the moment. The German and the Ghanaian team will meet soon again to discuss these issues.

Conclusion

I hope I have been able to give an impression of the challenges of a project that follows the leitmotif: "We are different but similar". "Images considered at this stage of our project confirms one phenomenon: *We are different but similar*. This traditional saying summarizes the strong philosophy underlying the Akan belief in diversity. A typical Ghanaian therefore does not only recognize differences but also accepts them as relevant considerations for consensus building and societal transformation." (deGraft-Yankson, 2025).

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Postcolonialism: Can We Imagine a Joint Textbook from the Global South and the Global North? The Project and How it Answers the Situation in Ghana

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Abstract

This chapter is grounded in one of the ongoing projects within the *Exploring Visual Cultures* (EVC) group, specifically focusing on the collaborative development of a common textbook designed for visual art teachers in Germany and Ghana. The project is strategically aimed at conducting a transcultural exploration of the educational implications associated with image identification, collection, sharing, and interpretation. Building upon prior collaborative efforts, this project actively challenges apprehensions surrounding cultural and educational diversity. It delves into the profound concept that even stark differences in perception and cultural experiences can yield enriching educational outcomes. Furthermore, the project delves into the practicalities and significance of transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches within art education, establishing connections between art and various other disciplines. Although still in its early stages of development, numerous insightful dialogues among the participating members have fostered a robust belief in the positive trajectory of the project. The expression of diverse opinions and perspectives during the processes of image identification, collection, sharing, and interpretation has generated a significant synergism, promising a more comprehensive education through art. Currently, the satisfaction derived from the progress made not only validates the potential of a collaborative textbook from the Global South and the Global North but also serves as motivation to propel forward toward realizing the project's objectives.

Keywords: art education, joint textbook, postcolonialism, transcultural, transdisciplinary

Author note

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Postcolonialism: Can We Imagine a Joint Textbook from the Global South and the Global North? The Project and How it Answers the Situation in Ghana

The Exploring Visual Cultures (EVC) project

Exploring Visual Cultures (EVC) is an open and transnational network of scholars, artists, teachers from the fields of art education, art, visual cultures studies and cultural anthropology. EVC began its activities in an *aggressive* exploration into meanings of images from cross cultural (and lately), cross disciplinary perspectives, and how that affects educational impartations, with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) as a focus. It has since its inception engaged in diverse collaborative activities with its transcultural membership from Cameroon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Kenya and South Africa, leading to an exciting buildup of various educational resources, including online art exhibitions, game developments, book publications, a teaching manual (for Art Teachers in Germany) and a website, among others.

The strong commitment to its projects thus far serves as evidence of the network's dedication to staying focused on educational innovation with an ambition to make a positive impact. Consequently, EVC is steadily expanding as it broadens its objectives through innovative, education-oriented projects, providing clear evidence of its determination to contribute to the growth and development of quality global education.

Some practical outcomes of Germany/ Ghana collaboration on EVC

Since its commencement in Ghana in 2019, EVC has been involved in numerous trans- and intercultural activities. These activities encompass the identification, collection, and interpretation of images through various forms of investigation into cultural artistic responsiveness and expressiveness. The focus extends to visual art educational praxis, pedagogies, and the transdisciplinary implications of transcultural learning. In the process, significant conclusions have been drawn regarding how images from diverse cultural backgrounds can stimulate new learning processes and experiences in art education and related disciplines.

The EVC network has produced valuable outcomes, providing assurance of a vibrant future for more in-depth collaborative projects with the potential to transform global art educational goals. An illustrative example is the experimental cross-interpretation of an artwork by two writers from Africa and Germany, which yielded numerous interesting insights. The interpretations of a single image by writers from different parts of the global divide successfully brought together two distinct cultures, showcasing their convergence and divergence on common phenomena. This process highlighted how such interactions foster cultural comprehension and harmony.



Interpretation von Patrique deGraft-Yankson, Winneba, Ghana

Die Arbeit ‚*Rising Sea*' von El Anatsui erregt auf groteske wie auf raffinierte Weise Aufmerksamkeit. Sie zeigt den aufgewühlten Ozean. Dabei besteht das Werk, etwa 14 x 7 Meter groß, aus vielen Stücken flach geklopfter Aluminium-Flaschendeckel, die mit Kupferdraht zu einem massiven, grauen Wandüberzug aus Blech vernäht sind.

Um die Illusion eines aufgewühlten Ozeans zu erreichen, beulte der Künstler Teile des Metallgewebes zu Erhöhungen in verschiedenen Größen aus, die sich dann zu einem unregelmäßigen und zufälligen Rhythmus zusammenfügen. Durch diese Modellierung der Oberfläche stellt er die Wellen dar. Der dabei geschaffene Rhythmus unterstützt diese Wirkung. In relativ geringer Tiefe wird dieser Effekt nochmals wirkungsvoll gesteigert und verwandelt die eigentlich flache Wandarbeit in ein illusionistisches Volumen. Wie die Oberfläche der Ölfarben in Van Goghs ‚*Sternennacht*' lädt so die Oberfläche mit den zusammengenähten Metallstücken die ganze Arbeit mit Energie auf und unterstreicht

Interpretation von Ernst Wagner, München

El Anatsui (* 1944) schuf 2019 die Arbeit ‚Rising Sea' eigens für seine Ausstellung im Münchner Haus der Kunst, und er schuf sie für diese Wand. Die Ausstellung hatte den Titel "Triumphant Scale", und im großen Maßstab tritt auch diese Arbeit auf. Wie in vielen anderen Arbeiten, mit denen der Künstler bekannt wurde, arbeitete er auch hier mit einer riesigen Zahl von Flaschenverschlüssen (hochgerechnet fast 200.000), die alle flach geklopft und dann jeweils auf den vier Seiten mit Kupferdraht verbunden wurden. Diese Herstellung gibt dem Werk eine stabile und zugleich weiche, scheinbar textile Struktur. Die Wirkung ist gleichermaßen monumental und prachtvoll, sie beeindruckt durch die schiere Größe ebenso durch die sinnliche Materialität der verschieden farbigen Weißblechteile, die im Licht schimmern.

Nur aus der Distanz erschließt sich die elementare Komposition mit den drei waagrechten, klar kontrastierten Zonen. Am Boden ein stark farbiger, schmaler Streifen, vielfach unterbrochen, fragil wirkend. Er wird nach rechts immer dünner. Darüber eine sehr großer

Figure 1 | *101 IKONEN: Schlüsselwerke des kulturellen Bildgedächtnisses im Kunstunterricht [101 ICONS: Key works of the cultural visual memory in art classes]*
(all image sources are listed at the end of this chapter)

Building on the insights mentioned earlier and those derived from various engagements, EVC embarked on another project that resulted in the creation of a teaching manual tailored for German art teachers. This manual is centred around African images and is titled *Global Perspectives in Art Education*. The manual fundamentally underscores the development of creative responses to the unfamiliar as the best tradition of the subject of art. The core objective is to provide learners with the opportunity to compare their own attitudes and behaviour with those of others, enabling them to develop interest and openness, mutual respect, and tolerance towards other people with their culture-specific ideas and behaviour (BMZ, 2022).

Other activities included exhibitions, with the *Collective Memory exhibition* standing out prominently. This project featured young artists from Cameroon, Germany, Ghana, and South Africa envisioning their identities within their respective countries. The virtual exhibition led to the creation of a catalogue that illustrates how visual rhetoric enables viewers to accurately interpret how images convey information.

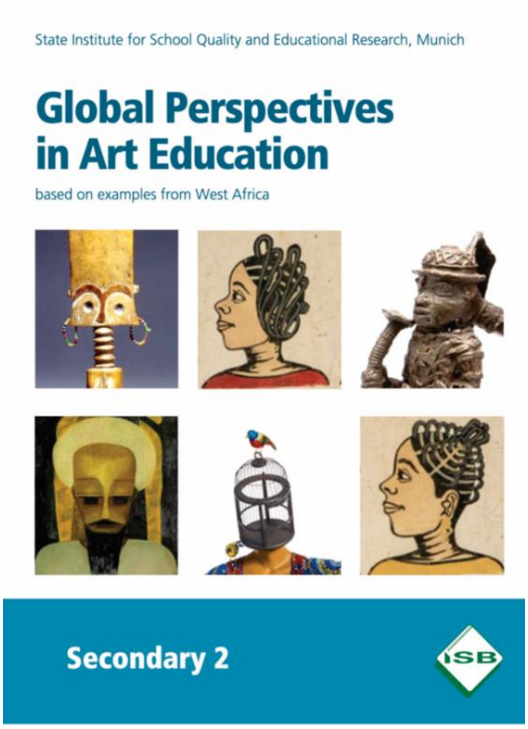


Figure 2 | *Global perspectives in art education, mainly based on objects from West Africa. A manual for art teachers in Germany.*



Figure 3 | *Collective memory; Visual perspective from Cameroon, Germany, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa. A published EVC virtual art exhibition catalogue*

Moving from one stage to another and from one project to the next, insightful observations and conclusions have coalesced into a profound sense of shared achievements among members. The resulting strong and dependable network has consistently served as a driving force for members to explore other interconnected themes of educational relevance. EVC's latest projects have therefore been significantly influenced by prior intercultural collaborative activities, notably the creation of a manual for German art teachers.

To a very large extent, the manual (*Global Perspectives in Art Education*), which can be described as a by-product of an impressive sharing and interpretation of images/artworks between Ghanaian and German art teachers and students, motivated members to take a keen, or probably a keener look at important themes that connect with postcolonial societies, such as decolonisation, sustainability, etc. Activities supporting the conceptualisation and realisation of the manual included practical pedagogical experience with students from Germany and Ghana; virtual and physical workshops and seminars between German and Ghanaian art teachers; group and collective exchanges of images and their interpretations among members of EVC participating countries, and others.

Practicality of a Joint Textbook from the Global South and the Global North

EVC believes that, as a theory, the socio-cultural, political, and economic impact of colonialism, especially in the context of relationships between the Global South and the Global North, makes postcolonialism a topic of significant educational significance (Tikly, 2001). To a significant extent, the EVC network appears to be capitalising on an era in which scholars from colonised countries are poised to articulate and celebrate their cultural identities. This aims to counteract the perpetuation of images portraying the colonised as inferior, thereby mitigating the significance of the concept of *otherness* and resistance (Lye, 1998).

In this regard, EVC's proposal to create a joint textbook for senior high school art lessons in both Germany and Ghana is viewed as a worthwhile experiment aimed at fostering collaborations and overcoming the North-South educational divide through art education. The initiative reflects a forward-thinking approach towards bridging cultural gaps and enhancing mutual understanding between learners from different geographical and cultural backgrounds.

EVC acknowledges the daunting nature of this exercise, as it raises several pertinent questions for consideration, including the following:

- Where does a common perspective on central contents of art education find success?
- When is it appropriate to identify different perspectives, addressing their differences? (This pertains to both the selection of learning content and, above all, the respective approach and proposed methods)

- What bridges can be constructed across the differences without dismissing them?
- How can differences become didactically fruitful?

As implied by its name, images and visual imagery have always been central to the activities of EVC, with a direct focus on what visual objects such as architecture, logos, artworks, photos, and fashion mean; how they are influenced; and how they influence.

EVC holds a strong belief in the centrality of images in art and other educational considerations, as they play important roles in fostering creativity, visual literacy, and a deeper understanding of concepts. As long as this remains universal, regardless of the learner's location within the North-South divide, EVC believes that image collection and interpretation can potentially serve as a common approach to the successful development of a joint textbook.

In some of the exchanges between Ghanaian and German members, a considerable amount of information has been gathered on how students and teachers from the two countries interpret visual elements from different perspectives to express ideas, emotions, and concepts. In all instances, the presence of a range of differences and similarities in images and their interpretations leads to the enrichment of perspectives and points to diversity as a practical necessity for navigating complex challenges and building consensus.

EVC, therefore, recognises that the essence of diversity does not reside only in heterogeneity within its activities. A range of different elements or qualities is always perceivable even within homogeneous environments and systems. Among the Akan people of Ghana, there is a saying, "*Ti korɔ nkɔ agyina*," which translates to *'one head does not make a council*.' This traditional saying, akin to the Ubuntu concept, summarises the strong philosophy underlying the Akan belief in diversity. A typical Ghanaian not only recognises differences in ethnicity, race, gender, age, socioeconomic status, religion, physical abilities, and others, but also accepts them as relevant considerations for consensus-building and societal transformation. In the current project, therefore, the Ghanaian membership of EVC expects different viewpoints and perspectives in the image identification, selection, and interpretation process, considering them as an opportunity for the creation of inclusive and progressive resources for effective learning.

So far, images considered at this stage of our project confirm one phenomenon: *We are different but similar*. We have observed different images and artworks, some of which fall within similar genres or styles and yet bring their individual interpretation and expressions. Considerations and analysis of these objects always result in the recognition and acceptance of unique perspectives and contributions but reveal an interplay of common artistic themes which, though different, produce similar results. Here are two examples of images from Ghana and Germany currently being examined.



Figure 4 | *Caspar David Friedrich, Der Abend* [Evening], 1821,
Image reproduced courtesy of Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover (Germany).



Figure 5 | *Owusu-Ankomah, deer hunt* (1975), Ghana National Museum
Image reproduced courtesy of National Museum Accra (Ghana)

Joint Textbook Writing Guide (JTWG)

While working with the two examples of images from Germany and Ghana shown above, the following *Joint Textbook Writing Guide* (JTWG) has been formulated to provide guidance for writing the various units and chapters:

Table 1 | Proposed Writing Guide

Title of lesson	
Learning material for the students (sources and interpretations) **A source (e.g. image, text, map …) related to the topic (as the starting point)** **Picture caption(s): author/artist, title, year, material, size/dimension, location, copyright**	
Ghanaian write up on the image / interpretation against the topic - from the respective discipline (geography, art, history) (max 500 words) *References: APA Style*	**German write up on the image / interpretation against the topic - from the respective discipline (geography, art, history)** (max 500 words) *References: APA Style*
Connect I Connecting the two interpretations from Ghana and Germany	
From Ghana (250 words)	From Germany (250 words)
Connect II Write up on the image in transdisciplinary approaches. Contributions from the other disciplines.	
Subject X (Ghana): *250 words*	**Subject X (Germany):** *250 words*
Subject Y (Ghana): *250 words*	**Subject Y (Germany):** *250 words*
Learners' Activities: The activities are given under 3 headings: think, create, connect *(The activities are addressing different levels of complexity, from low [1] to high [4])*	
Think **1. …** **2. …** **Create** **1. ...** **2. …** **Connect III** **1. …** **2. …**	

Explaining the JTWG

Image Selection. In this format, two images, one from Ghana and one from Germany, are selected simultaneously on an EVC agreed theme. The current unit focuses on the theme 'Sustainability,' and the lesson centres on 'Forests' (refer to the two images above: Caspar David Friedrich's "Der Abend (Evening)," a German selection; and Owusu-Ankomah's "Untitled," from Ghana).

First Level of Image Interpretation. Each image is accompanied by a 500-word text explaining the meanings and significance of the images, written by the writer who selected the image. These texts are temporarily kept on the blind sides of the writers.

Second Level of Image Interpretation (Connect i). The images are exchanged for cross-interpretations. In other words, a German writer, without seeing the text on the Ghanaian image, would provide their interpretations of the Ghanaian image (in 250 words), and vice versa.

Third Level of Image Interpretation – Transdisciplinary Approaches (Connect ii). Interpretations of the same images are sought from two sets of writers from two disciplines other than art from Ghana and Germany. For instance, one geographer and one historian from Ghana would compose one set. The Ghanaian geographer and the historian would write about the objects from the lenses of their discipline, and vice versa.

Learners' Engagement: Learners read and analyse these diversified interpretations, expressing their own understanding and opinions about the images by thinking about and with the images, creating with the images, and establishing connections and relationships with the images from their own perspectives.

Diversity as an Asset

Recognising differences and similarities in the forms and meanings of images, not only from an intercultural but also an interdisciplinary perspective, is likely to yield numerous productive outcomes. As a working group, gaining better insights into diverse visual cultural elements has expanded the understanding and appreciation of different cultures and ways of thinking among EVC project members. These extensions in knowledge about various visual cultures are likely to result in a more comprehensive coverage of learning experiences than if they were perceived from one side of the divide.

In Ghana, for instance, experiences from EVC projects are influencing new approaches to the integration of traditional symbols and images in the ongoing art and design curricular reforms. This influence is a result of the involvement of three key members of the reform in the EVC network. In other words, collaboration with scholars from other parts of the world has revealed the relevance of Ghanaian traditional symbols and images as essential educational resources in ways that have not been previously considered.

This implies that the operations of the EVC network have proven valuable not only for German art teachers, as exemplified in the development of a teaching manual for German art teachers, but also for Ghanaian art teachers, as demonstrated in the creation of the new Ghanaian Art and Design curriculum. This gives hope for how a joint textbook from the Global South and the Global North can bridge gaps in knowledge and draw attention to relevant perspectives that textbooks produced from a single region might overlook.

Conclusion

From the Ghanaian perspective, therefore, the idea of a joint textbook from the Global South and the Global North is both promising and achievable. It aligns with goals of the art and design curriculum, which include creativity, collaboration and development of global citizenship mindset. Above all, there is significant excitement and anticipation among the entire EVC membership regarding the significance of *a joint textbook from the Global South and the Global North*. As a group, this collaborative effort is seen as a crucial avenue for advancing a more inclusive, diverse, and interconnected approach to art education. Building on the successes of previous projects, EVC's optimistic outlook rests on the belief that such a joint textbook has the potential to serve as a catalyst for fostering cross-cultural understanding, enriching educational experiences, and bridging gaps in perspectives that may exist between different cultures of the world. Hopefully, this joint initiative would transcend knowledge sharing. It would result in the creation of a platform for the convergence of varied cultural and educational backgrounds and contribute to a more comprehensive and globally informed art education landscape.

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Source Figure 1:

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Source Figure 2: Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affair (BMZ). (2022). *Global Perspectives in Art Education based on Examples from West Africa*. State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research (ISB).

Source Figure 3:

E. Acquah, P-H.S.A. Assako, P. deGraft-Yankson, M.C. Kidenda, N. Pauli & A. Sooful (Eds.), *Collective memory. Visual perspectives from Cameroon, Germany, Ghana, Kenya & South Africa*. Kopaed (pp. 16-17).

Source Figure 4:

Caspar David Friedrich, Der Abend (Evening) 1821,
Image reproduced courtesy of the Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, Germany.

Source Figure 5:

Owusu-Ankomah. *Deer Hunt.* 1975. Acrylic on wood panel. 104.5 x 141.5cm.
Image reproduced courtesy of Courtesy of Ghana National Museum

A Critical Friend's Perspective on a Joint Textbook for Art Education from the Global South and the Global North

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Abstract

This chapter presents some observations of the *Critical Friends* of the Ghanaian German "Textbook Project", a project realised by a working group of the *Exploring Visual Cultures (EVC)* network. The *Critical Friends* accompany the project and comment collegially on the process of creating a textbook for art education dealing with the thematic field of *sustainability*. Besides a brief introduction of the concept and the functions of *Critical Friends*, the paper reflects on the concept of the gaze and argues that a critical awareness for the workings of the gaze is an essential condition for transnational and transcultural collaborations in a postcolonial and globalised world. Subsequently, some observations on the different uses and understandings of the *image* and the *sustainability* concept in the textbook are presented. Finally, the paper argues that the process of creating a transcultural and transnational textbook is a process of learning and negotiation.

Keywords: exploring visual cultures (EVC), transcultural collaboration, sustainability, critical friends, postcolonialism

A Critical Friend's Perspective on a Joint Textbook for Art Education from the Global South and the Global North

Working collaboratively and transnationally on a project in the field of sustainability is without doubt a topical, challenging, and demanding undertaking. The aim of this transnational collaboration is to create a textbook which follows multiple objectives: to give learners background information, incentives, and orientation in the thematic field of sustainability; to engage students to reflect critically on image production and reception in the respective thematic field; and finally, to support students in developing skills for a sustainable development. By bringing together positions from Ghana and Germany and thus initiating a dialogue between the so-called Global South and the Global North, postcolonial and transcultural issues come into play which make the work even more interesting for the field of transcultural art education. This ambitious textbook project is being developed as part of the activities of the network *Exploring Visual Cultures (EVC,* https://explore-vc.org/en/). For a more general introduction to the textbook project and to EVC, see the contributions by Patrique deGraft-Yankson (2025) and Ernst Wagner (2025) in this book. In this sense, the project is an inspiring learning process for all involved, and it is also a research-project because it asks the participants to explore the dynamic processes when collaborating in different yet connected cultural contexts on a unifying theme and develop pedagogical materials. Conceptualised as a transcultural project, the focus lies on the in-between spaces and processes of transfer and cultural translation (e.g., Clifford, 1999). This, of course, does not only refer to the discussed materials (for example images) which travel across borders, but also to the genesis of the project which emerges as a process of translation and negotiation.

There is no doubt that the unifying theme *sustainability* is at the centre of the project. However, the individuals with their cultural perspectives, professional socializations, and intellectual-historical backgrounds also shape the materials and the way how the theme is conceptualised and negotiated. An important aspect that will determine the success of the transnational collaboration certainly is the ability to reflect critically on shared and idiosyncratic perspectives; on one's knowledge and assumptions about the topic; one's personal involvement and socio-culturally determined relation to sustainability and related images. Such an exciting project drafted under the auspices of globality can only be realized responsibly by becoming attentively aware of implicit or tacit knowledges and hidden professional ideas that shape 'our' particular view on the topic.

As it is very difficult to reflect on the limitations of one's point of view (the so called 'blind spots') or on hidden knowledge and power structures, an external observation partner can help. This role is taken by *Critical Friends*: Avitha Sooful (University of Pretoria, South Africa), Ansgar Schnurr (University of Giessen, Germany) and Jana Tiborra (University of

Giessen, Germany) who accompany and comment collegially on the working process and intermediate results and give impulses for the further development. Their tasks and initial findings are briefly described below.

The Constitution and Situatedness of the Gaze

One of the *Critical Friends'* central tasks in the transnational project is to reflect on the various *gazes* and perspectives of the people involved. Contributors and critical friends speak and write about images and sustainability from their situated perspectives, and each perspective has its blind spots. Gazes are never neutral nor unbiased, they are neither purely individual nor universal. The gaze as a conception has also received immense attention from a postcolonial perspective, and therefore it is even more important for the textbook project.

Queer theorist Antke Engel writes, referring to art and film scholar Kaja Silverman, the gaze was a set of "historical-cultural and symbolic rules that determine how something can be represented and made intelligible." (Engel, 2009, p. 206, own translation). The gaze can be conceptualised as a symbolic order of the visual that is superordinate to the individual and shapes how it sees and understands the world (Prinz, 2015, p. 364). In other words, 'our' view of the world has been formed in a historical and cultural context, it is formed by power relations, and yet it is powerfully forming those relations by re-enacting the gaze regime. The international collaboration asks for a critical reflection of the situatedness of gazes (Haraway, 1988) and further, for a *negotiation* of differently situated gazes and forms of knowledge.

For art education, the gaze of the individuals is an essential factor as it describes the way and mode in which individuals perceive and interpret the world. Conceptions of self and world can be manifested in specific gazes. The aim of art education is to reflect critically on the workings of the gaze and to form and transform it through the medium of art.

However, since the gaze quite often works unconsciously and cannot be perceived directly itself, such a reflection can be challenging. How can 'we' become aware of 'our' situated gazes, 'our' viewing habits, preconceptions, unreflective attributions, and blind spots? And how can 'we' widen and transform established patterns of perception and representation and, subsequently, reveal hidden power structures? Who are 'we' and whose gaze is not represented in the discourse? These questions are not only central to the work on the textbook, but they also refer to an essential task for art education in a global context: to explore the possibilities for change and transformation of too narrow viewpoints and one-sided perspectives.

Means to Reflect and Transform: Subaltern Forms of Knowledge—Irritations

As a first answer to the questions mentioned above, postcolonial critique puts forward the revaluation of forms of knowledge and cultural traditions which were disqualified, repressed, or excluded during the modern European colonial expansion – processes which Boaventura de Sousa Santos has described as *epistemicide* (Santos, 2018).

Those subaltern forms of knowledge (Spivak, 1985) that have been developed by marginalized and oppressed groups in contrast to dominant colonial epistemologies, however, can challenge and even undermine the dominance of the western and Eurocentric perspective. If the mythologies, traditions, and images of the Akan or Effutu (Simpa) people of West Africa are given an equal place next to images stemming from the 'western' canon of art to contrast and question them, this can be a step towards epistemic justice. According to bell hooks, multi-perspectivity and a polyphony of different voices are means to disrupt "a continuation of a hierarchical idea of knowledge" (hooks, 1989, p. 128). The textbook project will thus try to initiate a fruitful and polyphonic dialogue between images which stem from diverse cultural backgrounds and are discussed from various socio-cultural perspectives.

Second, speaking from a pedagogical point of view, it can be stimulating to confront learners (but also oneself) with situations that might be irritating. Irritations are discussed as triggers for educational and learning processes (Bähr et al., 2019). Irritations break through the usual flow of perception; they do not fit seamlessly into existing conceptions self and world but rather act as 'troublemakers'. They can pose a challenge to what once appeared self-evident or taken-for-granted, they ask us to think further and differently, and to take a fresh and new perspective. Subsequently, irritations test the foundations and legitimations of our knowledges. Thus, they can trigger transformation processes that deeply affect the subject and can lead to the development of new and other conceptions of self and world. Therefore, it is beneficial to use the potential of irritations wisely. For the textbook project, that could mean to not erase irritating or controversial content. Rather, such irritations should become visible since they challenge the reader in a positive way and ask them to develop skills for critical thinking.

The Critical Friends

Another strategy to critically reflect on situated and limited gazes are the *Critical Friends,* which are implemented in the work on the textbook, too. The Critical Friends are not directly involved in the creation of the learning materials and guiding concepts, but they accompany the project and comment on the working process and results in the form of questions and observations.

The idea of a 'critical friend' or 'critical colleague' was first developed by Stenhouse in 1975 for the field of pedagogical action research (PedAR). In this context, action research aims to improve teaching and learning processes in school contexts. The PedAR reflects on the ways people look on problems and develop strategies. It uses the metaphor of a "reflective lens" to describe how the participants observe specific contexts (Norton, 2018). As David Kember (et al.) describe Critical Friends have a "… a 'dual' or 'overlapping' role to facilitate the progress of research by developing the reflective and learning capacity of the teacher–researcher" (Kember et al., 1997, p. 464). Innovative development, thus, starts with

the reflections and learning processes of the educators. For this reason, Critical Friends should provide impulses through pointed observations and critical questions that generate knowledge about patterns and practices of thinking. Interestingly, a third level is added to Kember's (et al.) description: the own learning processes of the Critical Friends because they are also embedded in power structures and should reflect those, too. Presumably, the idea of a perfect, 'autonomous' expert would also be incompatible with the approach of postcolonial theory.

Visual Representations and Image Conceptions

When working as Critical Friends on the textbook project, we did not have a fixed system of categories or norms that guided our examination. Rather, we developed a set of guiding concepts in the process of reading and discussing the working papers that have been developed and exchanged between the colleagues in Ghana and Germany. As one aspect, we saw the specific conceptions of *image* and *imagery* as a fruitful entry point for critical reflections. According to the guiding principle of cultures as travelling concepts (Bal, 2002; Clifford, 1999), it is particularly fruitful to examine how images travel across borders and are negotiated in spaces in-between cultures. What should be avoided, however, is a fixation of differences/images in a dualistic order. Rather, a phenomenon as mutable and processual as the image offers a starting point to approach the fluidity of differences. So, in how far are pictures and image conceptions observed in the textbook different *and* similar? How can those perceived differences and similarities be negotiated following the norm of equality-in-difference (Bhabha, 2011)?

Research in the field of Visual Culture Studies has brought up various conceptions of the image (Alloa, 2011; Belting, 2006, 2008; Boehm, 2006; Bredekamp, 2015; Schade/ Wenk, 2011). However, what seems extremely fruitful for us as European commentators may prove to be a too western conception, as our references show. Perhaps it makes more sense to speak in a broader way of *visual representations* and to keep the theoretical-conceptual understanding of what appears visually as open as possible. Our observations presented below must certainly be read in this light.

Sometimes, and particularly in everyday practices, visual representations/images are used more like *tools* that are intended to convey a clearly defined message and have a particular effect on the viewer. According to such an understanding, pictures can be used to communicate the urgency of environmental issues (like plastic pollution) to cultivate a sensitivity for those issues, and subsequently, they can also rise interest in methods of upcycling. In other approaches, images are conceptualised as *coded, ambiguous semiotic systems* and viewers are actively involved in the process of decoding and constructing the image's meanings (Ecco, 1989). In the textbook, this can be related to more western

understandings of art, for example. Images, then, can stem from a narrow canon that powerfully produces *limitations* and exclusions and can be *normative* in a one-sided way.

Of course, both conceptions of the image mentioned here are meaningful and serve particular functions, and both can provide important yet different experiences for learners. While analysing and reflecting on the implicit image concepts we encountered in the drafts of papers, we suggested maintaining a diversity of forms, functions, and concepts of image/visual representation, but making them *transparent* to learners. It seems important to enable learners to critically reflect on how and why images affect. In this respect, the analysis of the different speaker positions and intellectual-historical backgrounds can further stimulate a multi-perspective presentation and mutual moderation of the visual materials.

Concepts of Sustainability

Sustainability is a concept that is almost omnipresent in many social contexts, in education, in academic discourses, politics, or everyday life and practices. This is not surprising given the urgency of the issue. Such ubiquity, however, can lead to a gradual enforcement of a 'common understanding' of sustainability, and it eschews a critical negotiation of the meaning of the concept which might be more than necessary given the complexity of that concept. Consequently, one has to ask critically: Which understandings of sustainability have become generally accepted in specific discourses, and why? Which dimensions of the sustainability concept (or which particular goals) are put into focus and which are pushed into the background? What is perceived and framed as sustainable?

Reading the working papers of the textbook, we encountered very different perspectives on sustainability. For 'our' perspective–situated in western-European discourses on sustainability–the papers by the colleagues from Ghana were particularly fruitful and inspiring since they offered fresh and new approaches of sustainability taking into account, for example, issues of sustainable production and consumption or religious tolerance as a pillar of equality. Thus, they exceeded common discourses in our frame of reference, and they clearly shed some light on 'our' blind spots.

The first drafts of papers offered by the colleagues from Germany seemed more reduced and condensed in their approach of sustainability when they clearly focus on the ecological and environmental dimension, on nature and climate. When they examine environmental sustainability in depth and with a critical stance, other dimensions of the sustainability concept fade into the background.

All in all, the textbook project will offer in-depth examinations of sustainability from particular local, temporal, and cultural perspectives. Thereby, it can establish connections for a wider, international, and transcultural discussion. The transnational negotiation of sustainability can shed light on the (in)equality of burden sharing and the different yet equal evaluation of sustainable development goals.

Negotiation

Coming now to an interim conclusion after several months of work on the textbook project, our work as Critical Friends has shown us so far that the creation of the transnational textbook can (and must) be understood as a process of negotiation. Negotiation is a crucial aspect of transcultural engagements (Mae, 2017, p. 6). Speaking from a pedagogical point of view, we want to posit negotiations as processes of education and learning. We are convinced that the abilities to critically reflect on the normative settings of the gaze and to negotiate between different gazes are essential competencies for a future art education in a globalised world. They are the foundations to develop forms of just and equal cooperation. In addition, it is important for democracy education to be able to put one's own point of view into perspective and to attentively perceive, question, tolerate, and appreciate differing and unfamiliar points of view (Schnurr, 2021). These processes can be experienced and learned in the textbook. Consequently, the contributors are all part of a complex learning and education process – learning to negotiate effectively.

Of course, this negotiation and learning process also affects the learners and readers of the book. It is of particular importance in the further process of writing, conceptualising, and editing to not flatten or erase differences or tensions which underly the creation of the book. It is important to make differences or contradictions, complexity and multi-perspectivity visible since they are the traces of the underlying negotiation processes. In so doing, the textbook will present its content as something disputable which asks learners to participate in the negotiation and learning process.

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Creating an Ichiza-Konryu Learning Experience: The Significance and Challenges of an Online Conversational Art-Appreciation Programme

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Abstract

'LTA! Online' is an online programme offered by the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo since February 2022. In its one-hour programme, participants from Japan and overseas appreciate three artworks through a participant-centred, inquiry-based conversation in English navigated by a facilitator. They deepen their understanding of Japanese modern art and culture and share cross-cultural experiences. This presentation discusses the significance and challenges of 'LTA! Online' from its four freelance facilitators' perspective. First, the advance organiser (e.g., self-introduction and theme sharing) is effective in the programme sequence. Second, LTA! Online embraces diversity. In our already divided world, participants from diverse backgrounds conversely unite themselves by appreciating differences. Third, participants benefit from online technologies. They connect to diverse people despite physical, financial and/or social issues. They also enhance their art appreciation through unique online visual experiences. Thus, participants and the facilitator co-create harmonious learning. This resonates with *Ichiza-konryu*, a Japanese tea ceremony concept; the host welcomes guests wholeheartedly, and everyone engages in the shared moment respectfully. The facilitators find 'LTA! Online' highly rewarding and yet demanding. Consequently, they are required to make a continuous effort to acquire needed high skills.

Keywords: online art appreciation programme, advance organizer, cross-cultural experiences, online viewing benefit, *Ichiza-konryu* learning experience

Authors note

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Creating an Ichiza-Konryu Learning Experience: The Significance and Challenges of an Online Conversational Art-Appreciation Programme

During the pandemic, art museums worldwide tried new ways to reach out to their audience. For example, they provided their collections and programmes online. Let's Talk Art! Online (hereafter LTA! Online), a cross-cultural conversational art-appreciation programme in English by the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (hereafter MOMAT), was borne out of the museum's striving mission of contributing to their audience's artistic and cultural pursuit during the pandemic. LTA! Online is the first online programme for international participants offered by museums in Japan (National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, n.d.). This paper discusses the significance and challenges of LTA! Online from the perspective of its four facilitators by drawing upon the *Ichiza-konryu* concept of the Japanese tea ceremony. Images in this chapter are reproduced courtesy of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

LTA! Online Overview

In March 2019, MOMAT launched face-to-face Let's Talk Art! (hereafter LTA!), the first cross-cultural, conversational art-appreciation programme in English offered by Japanese museums (The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, 2019), for the increasing number of international visitors. Due to COVID-19, LTA! was closed in February 2020 and was replaced by LTA! Online in February 2022.

In a one-hour LTA! Online session, a facilitator and international participants from different countries gather on Zoom. For example, participants from Japan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan, India, Ukraine, Bulgaria, the UK, the US, and Colombia among others participated in the programme. LTA! Online's purposes are understanding Japanese modern art and culture and sharing cross-cultural experiences. The participants talk about three artworks from MOMAT in a participant-centred, inquiry-based conversation in English led by the facilitator by exchanging thoughts and opinions freely. The facilitator chooses three artworks and the theme and makes a facilitation plan in advance. S/he asks open-ended questions and provides information about artworks, artists, and Japanese culture in the conversation while prioritising the participants' spontaneous interaction. "The facilitator makes careful planning as s/he needs to be flexibly responsive to participants' interests, questions and impressions" (Otaka, 2022b, p. 103). Everybody including the facilitator is equal and learns collaboratively through a democratic exchange of ideas (Otaka, 2022b). The LTA! Online session consists of warm-up, art appreciation and wrap-up sessions (Table 1).

Table 1 | *LTA! Online Structure*

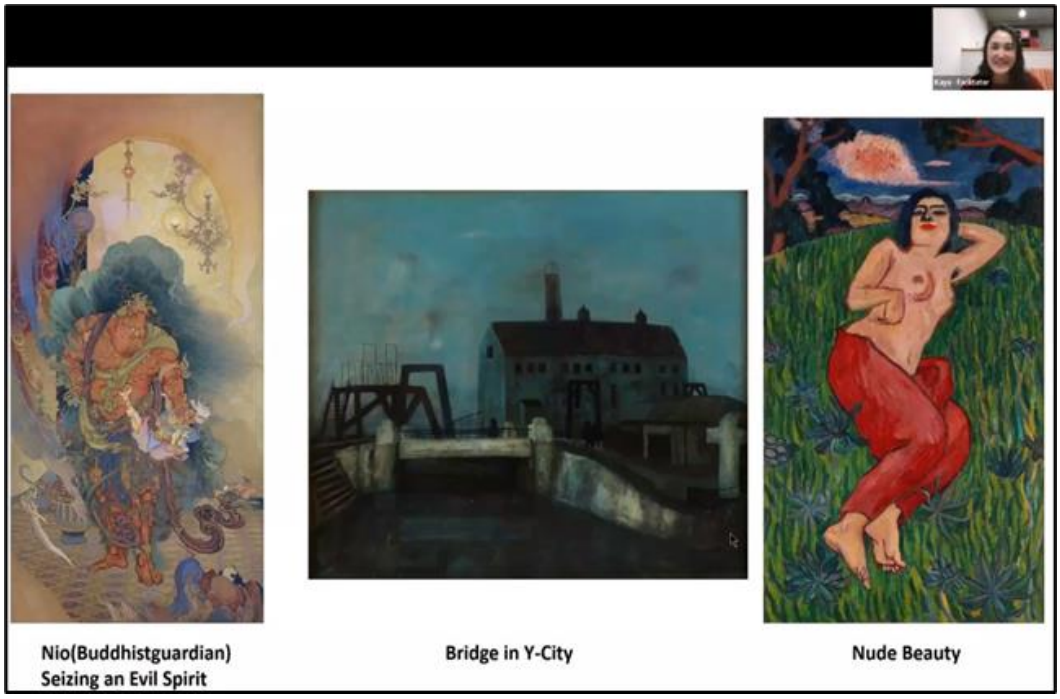
Warm-up **10 mins**	**1. Opening**	-Greeting
	2. Advance Organiser	-Self-introduction -Programme style and purposes -Theme-sharing
Art Appreciation **40 mins**	**3. Artwork 1**	-Talking about artwork -Information about artwork & Japanese culture
	4. Artwork 2	-Same as Artwork 1 -Comparing Artworks 1 and 2
	5. Artwork 3	-Same as Artwork 1 -Comparing three artworks
Wrap-up **10 mins**	**6. Reflection**	-Commenting on the programme -Online questionnaire
	7. Closing	-Greeting

The Significance of LTA! Online

Advance Organiser

LTA! Online's effectiveness owes to its advance organiser. An advance organiser is an orientation activity at the beginning to facilitate learning (Falk & Dierking, 2000, p. 117). It is a warm-up technique to get participants ready and connect them. The LTA! Online advance organiser has a self-introduction, the confirmation of the programme style and purposes and theme sharing. Everybody introduces themselves with their name or nickname, cultural background and where they are accessing from. Then, the facilitator reminds the participants that art knowledge is not necessary, that they learn in an inquiry-based, collaborative conversation and that all ideas are equally appreciated in this democratic conversation. The facilitator introduces the theme and asks the participants a theme-related question. In one session in February 2023, the theme for the artworks (Figure 1) was 'Green' and the question was 'What are your images of green?' An Indian participant answered, 'greenery in the environment and calm', an Afghan 'trees, leaves and flowers', a Nepali 'leaves' and a Japanese 'fresh'.

Figure 1 | *Screen-shot image of an LTA! Online session*



Note: Artworks from left: 'Nio Seizing an Evil Spirit' by Kano, Hogai (1886); 'Bridge in Y-City' by Matsumoto, Shunsuke (1943); 'Nude Beauty' by Yorozu, Tetsugoro (1912.
(Reproduced with kind permission of the National Museum of Modern art, Tokyo)

The LTA! Online advance organiser is significant; participants can increase their readiness and curiosity for their art appreciation. In the self-introduction, they understand whom they are learning with. The reminder of the programme's style and purposes makes them feel secure about how they will learn. Theme sharing allows them to anticipate what they will learn. Otaka (2020), the programme designer and former supervisor, points out that the group forms a democratic learning community where everybody grows together and reconsiders their assumptions valid in their own culture (p.11). Such group-building sustains a meaningful learning process throughout the programme (Otaka 2020). Thus, the LTA! Online advance organiser greatly contributes to the programme's success.

Cross-Cultural Experiences

In the world, all kinds of differences exist in terms of culture, language, generation, age, gender, and so on. In recent years, it seems that disparities have become more serious due to pandemics and wars. Differences could divide the world apart, but LTA! Online programme attempts to make people understand these differences and embrace different cultures and diversity. Here we focus on the aspect of cross-cultural experiences in the programme.

LTA! Online brings participants with diverse backgrounds together to view art and engage in dialogue. After starting the programme online due to COVID-19 in 2022, we have

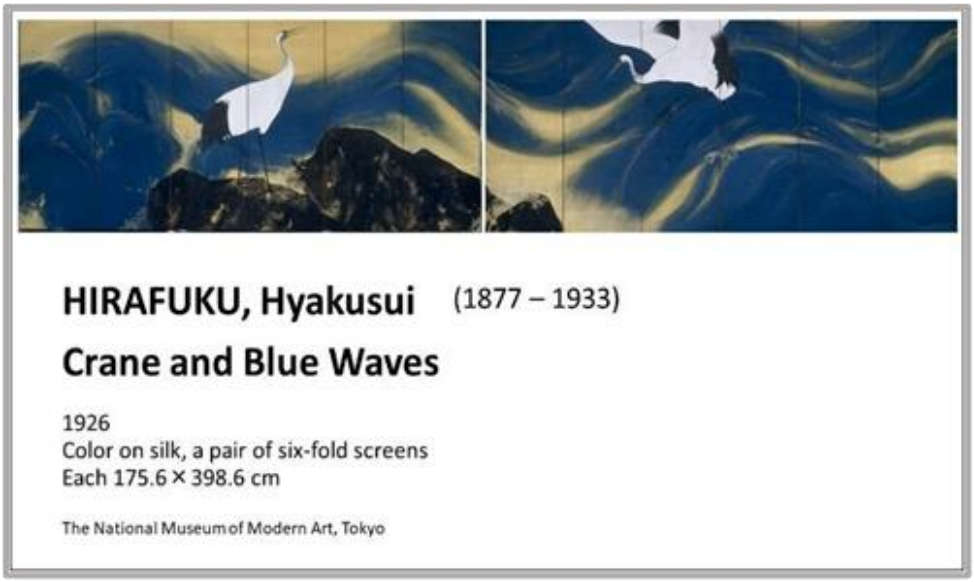
got more diverse participants from around the world. They had never met each other before and might not meet in the future unless online. Direct experience of meeting and listening to the real voices of participants from, for example, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and other countries online makes participants feel that what seemed like a distant story from across the ocean is now something closer to them. As participants share their feelings and impressions while viewing works of art according to the theme, they often discover ways of thinking that differ from their own in the comments made by other participants. In the atmosphere of welcoming any ideas, participants make active comments on the artworks, listen to others' opinions, and ask questions. Discoveries from the opinions of others as well as contextual information from the facilitator stimulate participants' intellectual curiosity. As Hubard, the Art Museum Education expert, suggests, art could be a powerful tool for sharing humanity.

> Artistic and aesthetic process...help us to feel experiences in a way that straight facts cannot. News stories can make us feel disconnected from what is happening elsewhere. … Art gives us that firsthand knowledge of the emotions and motivations that drive experience. (Hubard, 2020, p.120)
>
> … educational opportunities involving original works might amplify the sense of feeling someone else's experience, and of sharing humanity, … (Hubard, 2020, p. 122)

Furthermore, by comparing cultural traits depicted in artworks with participants' own cultures, the programme brings about cross-cultural experiences among the group. In the programme, Japanese culture, which is expressed in the artwork, is introduced, and then participants discuss how it differs from or is similar to the participants' culture. Here are some examples of artworks and participants' reactions to them.

'Crane and Blue Waves' (Figure 2) by Mr Hirafuku, Hyakusui is painted on two folding screens in which we can see two cranes and high waves. When a group saw this painting, a Japanese participant pointed out that the shapes of the crane's mouths resemble A-Un, the shape of the mouths of Nios, the Buddhist guardians; one mouth opened, saying 'a', while the other closed, saying 'un' (Figure 3), which symbolises the cause and effect of all creation in esoteric Buddhism. Although it is hard to connect birds' mouths with Buddhism for most people, that way, participants found different cultures in others' comments and were also encouraged to share what the bird symbolises in their own cultures.

Figure 2 | *Screen-shot image of an LTA Online session*



Note: 'Crane and Blue Waves' by Hirafuku, Hyakusui (1926).
(Reproduced with kind permission of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo)



Figure 3 | *Statues of Nio: Todaiji Temple, Nara (Japan).* Free image from Photo AC /AC Works Co., Ltd.

'Nude Beauty' (on the right in Figure 1) by Mr Yorozu, Tetsugoro depicts a half-naked woman lying down on the grass. Female participants from Bangladesh and other Muslim countries joyously expressed their impressions of the depicted woman as 'relaxed, confident, and enjoying her freedom', or 'enjoying herself in nature, not ashamed of her body'. They

regarded the woman as a symbol of freedom and liveliness. Meanwhile, non-Muslim participants pointed out that she 'twists her body strangely and looks uncomfortable'. Various circumstances, including gender notions in culture and society, could affect the interpretation of artworks. Then the conversation proceeded to the participants' thoughts on relationships between men and women as well as female roles in their cultures.

From these reactions of participants, it can be said that comments on the artworks often reflect participants' own cultures and evoke cross-cultural experiences among the group. Common comments from participants are that they enjoyed hearing different points of view and opinions of other participants through appreciating artworks. Fostering diversity begins with recognising and respecting others who think differently. LTA! Online programme fosters diversity, makes participants enjoy democratic conversation, and has a great potential to contribute as a 'place' for cultivating intercultural communication. This experimental forum offers participants equal opportunities to experience understanding and acceptance of others through the exploration of artworks.

Online Practice of the Programme

The three aspects of significance regarding the online practice of LTA! programme have been recognised: physical advantages, flexible presentation of the images of artworks, and the effective introduction of artworks. The first significance is the physical advantages include flexible accessibility from the participants. This programme is open to anybody, thanks to the Internet connection as Burke and Jorgensen (2020) pointed out. The participants can enjoy themselves in comfortable locations. So, they would not feel mental/physical distraction nor pressure to express their ideas. They can immerse themselves in their special art appreciation experiences. Having participants' nicknames shown on the screen, they can directly talk to each other. As Yoshikawa et al. (2021) mentioned, they can refer to the comments from other participants, using nicknames. This environment enables the participants to "benefit from …. their connectivity with one another, …. and supports and help from their peers" (Sun & Chen, 2016, p. 169). The facilitators attentively observe the participants' comments and facial expressions and then ask relevant questions to enhance their collaborative learning.

The next aspect is the flexible presentation of artworks, which makes significant impact on participants' art appreciation process. By enlarging the images on the monitors, the participants can appreciate fine details which may easily be unnoticed and feel the subtle texture of those works. Often this "exceeds actual viewing experiences" as Otaka indicated (2022a, p. 54). That could stimulate the participants' interest in the characteristics of Japanese art and even culture. On the other hand, by reducing the size of the images on the monitors, large-scale artworks were effectively presented. The participants are allowed to appreciate the whole pictures like folding screens, which is quite difficult to have from actual

viewing at the museum. Viewing part by part of these large artworks also helps the participants notice small details and the stories artists may have intended to depict in their works. Using these techniques, the power and quality of the artworks can be demonstrated sufficiently one.

Figure 4 | *Screen-shot image of an LTA Online session*



Note: Various art works shown at once.

(Reproduced with kind permission of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo)

The last significance is the effective introduction of artworks. While closely following each participant's comment, the facilitators switch and move the images on the monitor to correspond to the flow of conversations promptly. They would also direct attention to specific parts of the artworks to indicate Japanese cultural significance. This invites the participants involvement in interactive cross-cultural conversations. Another facilitators' engagement is to provide contextual information on artists and their time with visual aids. Additional information could enrich their learning experiences and deepen their understanding of Japanese art and culture. One participant commented in the questionnaire, 'With the explanation and discussion, I could appreciate the artwork much more'. This offers the participants opportunities to further probe into the stories and meaning enclosed in the artworks. The most significant advantage of online practice is to appreciate the three facilitator-chosen artworks on one screen to compare and contrast them in the final part of the program (see Figure 4). The participants could find the similarities and differences among the three and come to their realisation of the diversity of modern Japanese art as described in Otaka's paper (2022a). This process allows the participants to reflect on what they have discussed together and to appreciate their collaborative learning experiences.

Discussion

Ichiza-Konryu-Learning Experience

As its significance in terms of advance organizer, cross-cultural experiences, and online practice has been discussed, LTA! Online is an innovative programme where participants from diverse cultural backgrounds and a facilitator create a harmonious learning experience together through friendly and inclusive interaction online. This unique learning experience resonates with *Ichiza-konryu*, a philosophy of the traditional Japanese tea ceremony. According to Zen Buddhism scholar Suzuki (2005), "In spite of the strict social hierarchy established during her feudal days,…In the tea-room,…guests of various social grades are entertained with no discrimination;…they talk with due reverence to each other on subjects in which they both are interested" (Suzuki, 2005, p. 202). As Murai (1983) noted, "*Ichiza-konryu* is an important goal of traditional Japanese tea gathering in which the host and guests connect with one another and construct a community together as one" (Murai, 1983, p. 82).

The participants reflected in the questionnaire that they had *Ichiza-konryu* like experience in LTA! Online. For example, 'I really enjoyed hearing new perspectives from people I had never met before. With COVID, it is difficult to make new connections, so this was a very enjoyable experience' (American participant). 'I think it's a wonderful program. It's a cultural exchange with people from all over the world. The program structure allows you to feel free to share your thoughts' (Hispanic participant). In a session in January 2023, a Muslim Indonesian said that the session was unforgettable because it was her first time to be confident in such an event, and she enjoyed sharing thoughts and connection with others even though it was not easy for her as a woman wearing niqab. She said, 'I hope to see facilitator Mayuko in person and to visit the museum in Japan'. As seen above, the participants and facilitator co-created a democratic learning community, showing mutual respect. We as the facilitators recognised a successful *Ichiza-konryu* moment when participants talked to each other even without our support.

Facilitators' Challenges and Rewarding Aspects

To achieve successful *Ichiza-konryu* learning experience, an important role of the facilitator is connecting each participant with other participants and Japanese art. It requires "(1) the ability to support individual and group learning by responding flexibly to participants' interests, questions, and impressions, and to construct a democratic learning community and (2) knowledge of contextual information related to artworks to respond to participants' various reactions naturally" (Otaka, 2022b, p.102). Additionally, we found from our experiences that keeping flexibility and participant-centred learning in mind is extremely important.

To fulfil the role, facilitators need to make a continuous effort such as making an elaborate facilitation plan including effective questions, doing research on artworks, rehearsing and reviewing the plan. It is also crucial for facilitators to be sensitive to world affairs, interested in other cultures, and familiar with their own culture. Despite the vast preparations, the facilitator's questions and contextual information should be given along with the flow of the conversation and participants' observation. Moreover, the session is for one-time-only. Therefore, facilitators have to keep themselves constantly updated.

The facilitators' tasks are demanding and yet highly rewarding because of the following reasons. First, LTA! Online enables both facilitators and participants to gain new insights every time in a once-in-a-lifetime session, which will be a great motivation for continued learning. Second, the programme nurtures our consciousness of acceptance, empathy, and understanding of others, and gives us a great opportunity to meet people. Third, the challenging nature of the tasks allows facilitators to feel a sense of growth. Lastly, LTA! Online is purely fun. It is exciting for facilitators to see the participants, who meet each other for the first time, gradually get relaxed and engaged in their conversation and cultural exchange.

Conclusion and Implications

LTA! Online is a significant programme in which culturally diverse participants and a facilitator create an *Ichiza-konryu* learning experience together even online. Thus, LTA! Online creates a democratic learning community with diverse participants and ultimately unites today's divided societies with increased disparities and discrimination through art as a *bridge over fault lines*. It is especially important more than ever. For further discussion, we suggest two points; first, what future possibilities would virtual programs have in the post-pandemic phase? Second, what implications could our experiences have for other museums as well as MOMAT in the future? As LTA! Online is the first example of its kind in Japan, we hope our insights from our practitioners' points of view would contribute to educators and educational programmes of art museums both in Japan and overseas.

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Mayuko Omori, former Let's Talk Art! programme facilitator at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Japan). Education major, specialized in Adult and Community education. She was a docent at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and The Dallas Museum of Art (USA). Currently, Mayuko is a volunteer trainee at the Art Institute of Chicago (USA).

Melissa Granovsky (she/they), a Jewish-Métis PhD student in Arts Education at Concordia University and also serves as the Mentorship Coordinator at Indigenous Friends Organisation. Committed to inclusivity, she employs a two-eyed seeing approach and Universal Design for Learning best practices as a means of fostering belonging for all students in diverse educational settings.

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Rébecca Bourgault, visual artist, higher ed educator, scholar, and community artist. Degrees include an Ed.D. from Teachers College, Columbia University, New York (USA), MFA from the University of Calgary (Canada). She has taught art and art education in Canada and the USA. Research interests include socially engaged art practices, arts in the community, and arts research methods and pedagogies.

Sana Noor, chairman at Nightingale Art, a company operating in the field of creative industry, in Pakistan. She is the author of two short stories 'Samjhota' and 'Meray Bakht ka Sitara' written in Urdu language. She has been part of the Transforming Narratives Cultural Leadership Programme by British Council and Arts Council England, and as part of this programme she has written a short film script 'Weeping Willow'.

Satoshi Ikeda, associate professor at the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hiroshima University (Japan). His main research area is the intersection of art and disability. He aims to empower people with disabilities and realise a symbiotic society through qualitative research, surveys, action research, workshops, and other art practices.

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Steve Willis, PhD, taught art in public schools for 23 years before coming to Missouri State University Springfield (USA), where he is a Professor of Art Education. His research interests are in issues of equity, and spirituality in art. He has presented and published nationally and internationally. Steve is a member of the NAEA, InSEA, and USSEA. His artwork is concerned with spirituality (http://night4hawk.wixsite.com/stevewillis).

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Tereza Sikorová, doctoral student at the Department of Art Education at Masaryk University (Czech Republic). She is active as a choreographer, performer and dancer. Her work is a synthesis of physical theatre and contemporary dance finding its own decentralized position in the field of contemporary visual arts and education.

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Yang Zhen, doctoral candidate at Musashino Art University, Japan, specialises in enhancing artistic appreciation among non-art majors. Her international education encompasses studies in Italy and Japan, blending Italian aesthetics with Japanese Zen. Her work aims to broaden accessibility and appreciation of contemporary art through uniquely designed workshops.

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Yoko Saito, art museum researcher as well as a working mother with two children in a private company in the energy sector. Her research interests include the art museums' roles, learning in art museums, and art museums management. She received her M.A. in Art-Museum Administration from Keio University in 2023 (thesis title: "Online Family Program at NMWA in Japan: Adult Participants' Reflections and Post-program Activities").

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Yuko Shimomura, began teaching in Japan and pursued a degree in education in Canada, achieving her Master of Art Education from the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia. She also received an Outstanding Master's Thesis Award in 2023 from the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies.

Yumiko Tamura, former Let's Talk Art! programme facilitator at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Japan) from 2019 to 2023. She believes that art is a great medium through which people can connect with different cultures and backgrounds. Yumiko's current interests include Japanese culture and artists in the 19th and 20th centuries.

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