

ART EDUCATION

ADVOCACY WHITE PAPERS for

Section 1: What High-Quality Art Education Provides

A Need to Return to Conscience and Consciousness in Art Education

Jerome Hausman

Visiting Professor, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
jerryhausman@gmail.com

Art Education is Not a Frill—It is Essential!

Kerry Freedman

Professor of Art Education and Head of Art Education,
Northern Illinois University
Kfreedman@niu.edu

Patricia L. Stuhr

Professor of Art Education and Chair, The Ohio State University
Stuhr.1@osu.edu

Art Education as a Network for Curriculum Innovation and Adaptable Learning

James Haywood Rolling, Jr.

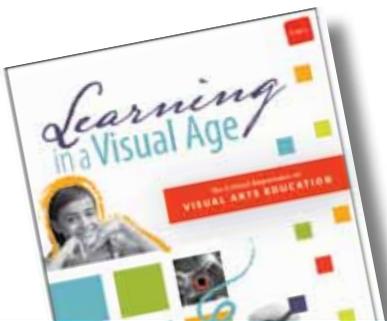
Associate Professor and Chair of Art Education, Syracuse University
jrolling@syr.edu

A Need to Return to Conscience and Consciousness in Art Education

Jerome Hausman

“The **MAGNITUDE** of the challenges confronting us requires responses that are revolutionary—a paradigm shift!”

Often we find ourselves speaking of “change,” “growth,” or “development” as shifting scenarios in our lives. Things do happen in the course of living, sometimes without our conscious awareness, other times, they transpire as a result of deliberate, purposeful actions. Just think of the changes brought about by developments in science and technology in the last 50 years. Add to this other changes that just happen—for example, those accounted for by aging or environmental or societal shifts. Viewed over a period of years, decades, or longer, we can be amazed at how human lives have been altered in the course of each person’s experiences. We continue to celebrate and value experiences associated with our humanity—feelings of community, love, beauty, and awe. All of this happens even as change, growth, and development are taking place. We are being shaped by technologies, as well as environmental and spatial shifts. We also suffer the ravages of time as our bodies grow older and decline. As humans, we strive to maintain a balance between our inner and outer worlds—between events in our internal dynamics, (feelings, aspirations, and spiritual experiences)



Download your electronic version now!

Examine evidence about the capacities that art education develops in students and what it can prepare them to do in *Learning in a Visual Age*.

and those of the external world (actions and events related to others). It is said that our sciences help improve the physical conditions of life, but it is the arts that account for our reasons for living.

Art: New Perceptions and a Paradigm Shift

Anyone involved in art education for the past 50 years can document dramatic developments that have taken place in thinking about the nature of art and the role of art education in our schools. Indeed, we have witnessed a dramatic shift in the perceptions of art education in relation to community life. A major text for the field is John Dewey's *Art as Experience* (1934). He emphasized transactional and transformative experiences in creating and responding to art. Life entails an ongoing process in which we act to bring about change; in turn, we are changed by these very experiences. Creating and responding to art therefore helps to change us. As art teachers, we help our students perceive and understand the joys and insights in creating and responding to art. All of this becomes more complicated when we become aware of all the forms and ideas admissible to the realm of art. In today's world, the extent and magnitude of human-made forms engulfs us all. It can be said that we are all living within a work of art—our environment.

As Piet Mondrian (1947) observed,

This consequence brings us, in a future perhaps remote, towards the end of art as a thing separated from our surrounding environment, which is the actual plastic reality. But this end is at the same time a new beginning. Art will not only continue, but will realize itself more and more. By the unification of architecture, sculpture, and painting, a new plastic reality will be created. (p. 62)

In his essay *The Future of Art* (1964), Ad Reinhardt made a prediction that resonates from the past into the future: "The next revolution will see the emancipation of the university academy of art from its marketplace fantasies and its emergence as a center of consciousness and conscience" (Rose, 1991, p. 62); so too this can be said for the field of art education. The magnitude of the challenges confronting us requires responses that are revolutionary—a paradigm shift! It does not suffice to tinker around the edges or invent a revised rubric for dealing with the same old categories. Teachers are stepping back, evaluating what they are teaching, and reflecting on how it fits with a larger pattern.

Art in the Marketplace(?)

Historically, art in the marketplace is a relatively new phenomenon. There is a much longer tradition in which artists were either not willing or able to sell their work as commodities in the marketplace. Oh, how things have changed! Think about how much attention is paid to the sale price of a work of art. The commodification of art has crept up on us so that people (including our students) innocently think of art as something to be bought and sold (and, of course, displayed). All of this has extended to our museums and galleries with powerful connections to government, community, and media. In this whole mix, the image of the artist has morphed into a range of individual talented and gifted producers who create forms (commodities) for an ever-expanding market complex.

This paper is a call for a return to the very roots from which artmaking emerged as a human activity, and explores how such a stance can influence the way in which art is viewed in classrooms across the country. In the beginning, there were no museums or galleries. Art was not thought of as an object for sale or display. Ritual, celebration, and the joys of shared experience were at the heart of artistic experiences. Present-day commodification of art has taken us down a slippery slope of commercialism and the conspicuous consumption of art. Worse yet, we are witnessing the commodification of cultural resources.

Art educators find themselves in the position to call for another kind of discipline and clarity in respect to what they conceive and how they teach. They often deal with intrinsic and extrinsic value. They have an opportunity to influence educators of other subjects, as well as concerned citizens in all walks of life, about the centrality of artistic experiences as integral components in their daily lives.

“ **This paper is a call for a return to the VERY ROOTS from which artmaking emerged as a human activity...** ”

Applied Aesthetics: Responding to Art in Everyday Life

I have been privileged to be a member of a group of art educators in the Chicago area: John Ploof, Jim Duignan, Nick Hostert, and Keith Brown, and I are known as the Critical Visual Art Education Club (CVAE Club). In our article *The Condition*

“What our students are taught—and what they do with their abilities to understand the visual world around them and to create visual responses—is of the GREATEST IMPORTANCE.”

of *Art Education* (2010), we outline several as well as aesthetic aspects of experience that are manifest in creating and responding to art in the context of our everyday lives. These and other statements are gleaned from our observations of best practices in art education teaching and learning. The following thoughts and examples examine how they can be realized in actual classroom interactions.

- “We are moving beyond previously defined disciplinary and theoretical boundaries toward broader, more culturally relevant discourses.” *Examples:* Art educators should look to social issues and current events outside the fields of art to spark the interests of students, thus grounding artistic investigations in the lives of young people and their worlds. The best art educators come to the realization that all academic disciplines and fields of knowledge connect and overlap in the context of the everyday. All art, past and present, exists now.
- “Creating, perceiving, and responding to images in our lives should be given balanced attention with verbal and cognitive learning.” *Examples:* Students connect understandings, gained from art images and art looking, to a more personal place of familiarity by deconstructing, discussing, and appropriating popular image forms from advertisements; comics and graphic novels; commercial and popular images on TV movie, video game, and Internet screens; and products in the supermarket and malls. Art of the past helps us to understand the present.
- “Producing and responding to art extends the qualities of the immediate present to another level of awareness. By doing so, art processes can be thought of as a dialogue that brings into existence new understanding.” *Examples:* Studies of individual art media and styles of photography, film, painting, sculpture, and the like can be the starting point for inquiries into the circumstances and interpretations of personal artwork. Students can create

art forms that deal with the same or related issues. What did it mean then? What does it mean now?

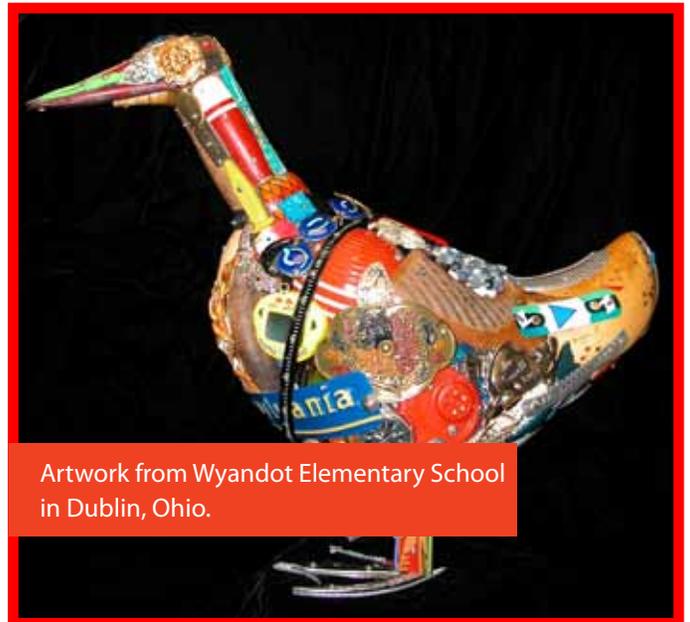
- “Curriculum should be rooted in the life experiences of students, and explore how personal perspectives are intertwined with broader study.” *Examples:* Broad themes can be agreed upon by teachers of art and other disciplines (e.g., history, science, literature). Such themes may include race, class, gender, work, leisure, family, and local/global perspectives, among others. Instructors should give students confidence to create visual forms, write poems/rap lyrics, or tell their stories using life experiences as their subjects.
- “The distinctive forms of art education are its emphasis upon experiences of creative thought and visualization processes.” *Examples:* Explore means of communication with and without the use of spoken language—gestures, images, and/or sounds. Create visual forms for ritual, celebration, or expression of cultural and/or personal values. Examine dreams and daydreams, explore real and imaginary themes, develop “mind’s eye” imaginings based upon reading the written word, describe or make the images seen from reading stories or real experience, reflect upon works of art as starting points for personal expression, or construct other opportunities for rich visualization.
- “Technique is instrumental to the expression and realization of an idea or feeling. Thinking like an artist invites insightful and multivalent ways of seeing.” *Examples:* Explore different techniques with the use of tools and materials. Experiment with different applications of technique to create new forms and ideas. Approach tools and materials from different perspectives to appreciate the values of trial and error and multi-modal reasoning.

Through making and responding to art, students come to recognize and celebrate their own distinctive ways of seeing and doing. Sir Herbert Read (1949) envisioned the power of positive virtue that art education can offer: “Positive virtue is active virtue and active virtue reveals itself in a certain way of life, a natural happiness and playfulness which has almost disappeared from the world today” (p.80). Art teaching and learning that emphasizes consciousness and conscience serve to connect art understanding and artmaking activity with personal values and actions. What our

students are taught—and what they do with their abilities to understand the visual world around them and to create visual responses—is of the greatest importance.

REFERENCES

- Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as experience*. New York, NY: Penguin Putnam.
- Hausman, J., Ploof, J., Duignan, J., Hostert, N., & Brown, W. (2010). The condition of art education. *Studies in Art Education*, 51(4), 368-374.
- Mondrian, P. (1937). *Plastic art and pure plastic art*. New York, NY: Whittenborn, Schultz.
- Read, H. (1949). *Education for peace*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Rose, B. (1991). *Art as art: the selected writings of Ad Reinhardt*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.



Artwork from Wyandot Elementary School in Dublin, Ohio.

Photograph courtesy of Sharon Buda.

Art Education is Not a Frill— It is Essential!

Kerry Freedman and Patricia L. Stuhr

Why do children need an effective visual art education?

In the No Child Left Behind Act, art is a core subject. Nevertheless, not all schools are providing this essential education to their students. Fortunately, you can help!

We are living in an increasingly visual world. Today's grandparents were the first generation to grow up with televisions. Their children were the first generation to grow up using computers, and the grandchildren of that first TV-era generation are the first generation to grow up using the World Wide Web. What is so peculiar about these technologies is that they are as visual as they are textual; therefore, children now need to be able to read images as effectively as they read words. In the United States, visual literacy is taught as part of art education. Meaningful inclusion of art in education can enrich and advance a child's education in measurable ways (Boughton et al., 2002; Freedman, 2003; Freedman & Stuhr, 2005).

Art education has changed significantly since most art teachers were in school themselves; it is no longer just

about making seasonal projects for refrigerator doors. Part of the reason for change is that the images we see every day have become increasingly sophisticated. Art education now helps children to view and make art in both expressive and analytical ways. It emphasizes visual concepts and skills children need to develop their senses, emotions, social interaction, and cognitive processes.

Just think of the last film you saw that had an impact on you. It made its impact through imagery that supported a story. Your memory of the film may have included details like the color and design of the movie characters' clothing, the emotions shown on their faces, room settings, or landscapes in the background. Visual art stimulates interest and memory, and impacts learning. Learning through the arts reinforces these effects.

Art education can help future generations learn about themselves and their community. Art education preserves and transmits heritage, helping students to recognize and appreciate the diverse perspectives they will encounter in an increasingly global community. Art calls attention to nuance, ambiguity, and the complexity of life. It helps children to learn important cultural ideas and values. Often, it is more powerful in conveying information to children than words. As future generations are learning to read, looking at and making images can help them develop more-complex ideas than reading alone (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2000; Freedman, 2000; Freedman, 2010).

The significant impact of popular art forms on children requires that a good arts education begins early in life. Children are

“**Parents, elders, educators, businesspeople, civic leaders, and policy makers in every community have a VITAL RESPONSIBILITY to see that present and future generations are provided with the benefits that only a quality art education can provide to them.**”



Photograph courtesy of Sharon Buda.

influenced by advertising at a young age. Advertisers look to children's interests for ideas about product development and advertising. Marketing companies work with focus groups of children to find out what they like to look at, and develop images and products based on their interests. At the same time, advertisements work to convince children that they want or need new products through imagery, sound, and words (Freedman, 2003).

A good art education will help children to view all images in a thoughtful manner. Through art education, children can come to understand the damaging effects of visual stereotypes. To promote social justice and cross-cultural understanding, children should begin to learn about the ways in which groups of people are represented in imagery. They can learn early in life how civic leaders use imagery to represent themselves and influence people's voting choices. By learning the ways in which the visual arts can influence people, children are better able to make critical judgments, develop democratic ways of thinking, and become informed consumers prepared to decide how they will allow themselves to be influenced (Ballengee-Morris, Daniel, Stuhr, 2010; Bigelow, Harvey, Karp, Miller, 2001; Freedman, 2000).

Artists in all areas of the visual arts—from fine art to architecture; from fashion to computer-game design— influence people through their works. The creative industries currently make up the largest area of growth in the U.S.

economy, so understanding the work of arts professionals can help today's children prepare for future employment.

How do you know when a school in your community has a quality art program?

A good art program accomplishes the following goals:

- Invite inquiry into significant aspects of life;
- Relate to existing school curriculum;
- Be relevant to general course of study;
- Reflect knowledge, skills, and interests of the children and their community;
- Challenge students to think about how humans think, feel, and believe through the images they investigate;
- Promote inquiry-based learning;
- Focus on life-centered issues;
- Integrate across subject areas;
- Make curriculum relevant and meaningful;
- Provide ways to explore;
- Provide ways to express; and
- Provide ways to solve problems.

Whose involvement is needed to strengthen a school arts program in your community?

- Art educators and classroom teachers of all content areas;
- School principals, administrators, and Board of Education members;
- Diverse and intergenerational members within your community; and
- Local civic groups and businesses.

How can you support a quality arts program in your community?

- Contact your local school system to find ways you can share your time, skills, or arts knowledge with students.
- Promote interaction with grandparents and older adults within the community through activities that engage the experience and talents of this group to positively impact arts education and influence change.
- Solicit participation in service-learning projects to benefit the community through the arts.

- Help schools create partnerships with other individuals or institutions that would connect them with their community, including museums, galleries, public art events, artists and craftspeople, folk art, environmental art, and local customs and traditions.

What steps can you take to get quality art education programs in your community's schools?

- Enlist support from community members, including school board members, school superintendents, school principals, parents and grandparents, teachers, PTA or other school associated organizations, and art education professors and students from local college and universities.
- Host an event to initiate dialogue, interest, and partnerships to enhance and support quality art education curriculum-planning and programming. Invite local and state politicians, school administrators, teachers, university or college art education professors, local arts agencies and institutions, arts-associated businesses, or interested commercial enterprises.

How can you and your community support quality art programs?

- Invite arts teachers and their students to present, perform, or display their work for local social, civic, or church organizations to which you belong.
- Solicit funds for quality art programs from local philanthropic organizations, or fundraise to establish an endowment for this purpose.
- Ask local business owners why they feel that the arts are important to them, and share their responses with your government representatives.
- Vote to support school tax levies that help fund quality arts programs, and elect school board members who acknowledge and value art education.
- Call or visit school board members, and let them know why you support arts education.

Every member of a community can have a great influence locally on the education of all children from different backgrounds, socio-economic groups, and religious persuasions. Parents, elders, educators, businesspeople, civic leaders, and policy makers in every community have a vital responsibility to

see that present and future generations are provided with the benefits that only a quality art education can provide to them.

REFERENCES

- Ballengee-Morris, C., Daniel, V. H. A., & Stuhr, P. L. (2010). Social justice through a curriculum narrative: Investigating issues of diversity. In T. Anderson, D. Gussak, K. Hallmark, & A. Paul (Eds.), *Art education for social justice* (pp.14-21). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.
- Ballengee-Morris, C. & Stuhr, P. L. (2000). Heritage, traditions, and culture in a changing world. *Art Education*, 54(4), 6-13.
- Bigelow, B., Harvey, B., Karp, S.; & Miller, L. (2001). *Rethinking our classrooms, volume two: Teaching for equity and justice*. Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools Ltd.
- Boughton, D., Freedman, K., Hausman, J., Hicks, L., Madeja, S., Metcalf, S., Rayala, M., Smith-Shank, D., Stankiewicz, M., Stuhr, P., Tavin, K., & Vallence, E. (2002). Art education and visual culture. *NAEA Advisory*. Reston, VA: National Art Education Association
- Freedman, K. (2000). Social perspectives of art education in the US: Teaching visual culture in a democracy. *Studies in Art Education*, 42(4), 314-329.
- Freedman, K. (2003). *Teaching visual culture: Curriculum, aesthetics, and the social life of art*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Freedman, K. (2011). Leadership in Art Education: Taking action in schools and communities. *Art Education*, 64(2), 40-45.
- Freedman, K. & Stuhr, P. L. (2005). Curriculum and visual culture. In M. Day & E. Eisner (Eds.), *Handbook of art education research*. Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.



Students in art teacher Larrie Haebel's class at St. Bridgit of Kildare K-8 Elementary School in Dublin, Ohio.

Photograph courtesy of Larrie Haebel.

Art Education as a Network for Curriculum Innovation and Adaptable Learning

James Haywood Rolling, Jr.

Arts practices represent fundamental processes of social research and human development. Graeme Sullivan (2010) makes the argument that “the imaginative and intellectual work undertaken by artists is a form of research” (p. xix). But if the arts are a tool for recording knowledge about the human condition, they are also a catalyst for human *development*, each art practice acting as a methodology or system for organizing sensory, experiential, and cultural data *about* the human experience (Rolling, 2008).

It is the organization of data that recasts it as new information capable of provoking unique emotional responses in addition to stimulating the formation of new public memories, discourse, and beliefs. In the wake of the Information Age, educational policymakers would do well to recognize the critical nature of visual arts and design practices in developing and expanding upon **systems of information** appropriate for learning in a visual age. By immersing learners in acts of creation and/or understandings of the simple and complex symbols, meaningful artifacts, cultural interfaces, and the social and technical networks that have become critical in the 21st century, visual arts and design theory and practice will continue to inform us as to who we are, where we come from, what our purpose is, and where we are going (Rolling, 2008). It is necessary to begin by attaining a clear conception of various systems for defining and teaching art, and rethinking how these different arts and design strategies are employed in organizing information about our common experience that can jumpstart American innovation. Art can be defined and understood through three very different models.

Three Models for Making and Teaching Art

One model defines art as **a system of production**, a cause-and-effect intervention resulting in a stockpile of natural and manufactured materials, with a focus on technical mastery “that has as its basic intent a cognitive interest in the control of objects in the world” (Pearse, 1983, p. 159). Within this model,

arts and design practices seek to produce precious objects, using techniques to shape their beauty and aesthetics as validated by the arbiters of good taste (Jagodzinski, 1991; Stankiewicz, 2001). An example may be seen in the oil paintings of the High Renaissance Masters collected at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

Another model defines art as **a system of communication**, the expression of situated knowledge about a person’s relationship with his or her social world (Pearse, 1983, p. 160). Arts and design practices within this model express and reinterpret “the ways in which we immediately experience an intimacy with the living world, attending to its myriad textures, sounds, flavors, and gestures” through selected artistic media (Cancienne & Snowber, 2003, p. 238). An example may be seen in the body art of the Maori people, with meanings that are permanently etched and yet are as temporary as the human flesh they are tattooed upon.

A third model defines art as **a system of critical reflection**, a form of intervention and activism rendering invisible assumptions, values, and norms visible “in order to transform” and critique unjust social relations, and to empower marginalized individuals and communities (Pearse, 1983, p. 161). Arts and design practices within this model challenge “taken-for-granted theories and concepts that govern our disciplines and circumscribe our thinking” in order to reveal “the ongoing inequity and social injustice that shape our society” (Ladson-Billings, 2003, p. 11). An example may be seen in the large body of diverse works of art created during the Harlem Renaissance, shattering destructive stereotypes of African American identities.

“...visual arts and design theory and practice will continue to inform us as to who we are, where we come from, what **OUR PURPOSE** is, and where we are going.”

Of these three models, the prevailing definition of the arts as a system for the production of valuable commodities has dominated in shaping art-teaching approaches, educational policies, and socio-cultural responses to the arts in the latter half of the 20th century (Rolling, 2008). However, Kearney

(1988) explains that “modernity is where we grew up,” but “postmodernity is where we now live” (p. 18). A 21st-century art educator is not obligated to maintain a fixed model of practice that cannot flexibly address the fluctuating needs of contemporary life. Pearse (1992) suggests a dynamic model for defining art and practicing art education that reflects an era of competing models. Within a more pluralistic conception of art education, none of these three competing models of arts and design practice are obliged to represent the sole primary explanation or expectation for a definition or practice in art education. In fact, we may come to expect the unexpected as we contemplate learning in a visual age in an approach akin to Julia Marshall’s (2008) definition of arts practice as making “conceptual collages” (p.39). This approach to innovation in learning and the representation of knowledge creates new ideas from diverse and seemingly incompatible concepts.

A High-Quality Visual Arts Education is Informational

A pluralistic and adaptable framework for an art education curriculum reestablishes the **informational** quality of arts practices, infusing outcomes for arts education learning with greater meaning-making potential, and providing traditionally unrelated subject areas with greater cause to incorporate the arts as a resource during curriculum planning. Arts and design practices are self-organizing behaviors through which we combine meaningful information about our experiences and circumstances utilizing a range of medium-specific, language-specific, and/or critical methodologies. Thus, the methodology by which Edvard Munch organized information about human suffering in paint on a canvas in *The Scream* (1893) was different than the methodology Käthe Kollwitz employed for organizing similar information in her drawings and etchings of *Woman with Dead Child* (1903), and different again from Alvin Ailey’s methodology for organizing such information through his dance choreography surveying the African American experience in *Revelations* (1960). Each difference in approach recalls Charles Wright Mills’ (1959) claim that “(e)very [wo]man is his [or her] own methodologist” (p. 123).

Historically, an understanding that the arts convey critical information is well established. The arts inform us deeply about the human experience when a number of **simple symbols** are brought together by an arts practitioner to work in concert as a **complex symbol**, often in the context

“Works of art that act as cultural interfaces...provide us with arrays of emergent **ROSETTA STONES** that inform the growth of connecting cultures across oceans, time, and potential barriers of understanding.”

of a larger group of meanings. These complex symbols are easily converted into **meaningful artifacts** that persist in the public view and memory over extended periods of time, informing us of other human beings throughout history with diverse systems of cultural practice, behavior, linguistic, and metaphorical meaning.

The Rosetta Stone (ca. 196 BC) contained one message in two languages and three scripts, including ancient hieroglyphics, a more recent vernacular Egyptian script, and Greek. It established a **cultural interface** allowing for exchanges of meaningful data from one system to another so that ideas might be traded and social understandings informed. Works of art that act as cultural interfaces—whether in visual, dance, musical, or theatrical forms—likewise provide us with arrays of emergent Rosetta Stones that inform the growth of connecting cultures across oceans, time, and potential barriers of understanding.

Even greater potential exists to draw diverse systems of meaning and cultural interfaces to work together within complex human **social networks** or **hierarchies**. Whatever the intent or situation, arts-based information always is organized with a recurring purpose: to be literally *re-cognizable*—recalled in cognition—so as to remain accessible to personal and public memory, and thus retain its social significance. The arts offer a complete integration of word, image, and life experience as data; information is thus networked for common points of reference. With these structures for learning in mind, educators in the 21st century have an opportunity to develop and elaborate on working models presenting human artistic and design behaviors as ways of both knowing *and* doing that are crucial to innovation, social progress, and entrepreneurship.

If we begin anew with the assumption that arts and design practices in the 21st century share a considerable

responsibility in the securing and preservation of basic local and global human needs, the purpose of an adaptable and networking approach to the arts in education—one that favors no one particular model—is **to give form** to overlooked knowledge and unseen meaning; **to inform** the expression of new meaning-making and innovation; and/or **to transform** the many gaps in our comprehension of the rich human experience toward new inquiry and engaged possibilities.

A Pluralistic Approach to Learning

An adaptable and networking-oriented approach to the arts and design in education—one that favors no one particular model—also provides greater adaptability for connections across content areas and disciplines, as well as the opportunity to **transcend** the concepts and limitations in any one area. The greater effectiveness that educational reformers seek is best predicated on the clearly mixed origin of human understandings; there is no single best way to create and record new knowledge. By embracing the natural blending of many arts and design practices, no one model of knowledge acquisition is elevated above another, and opportunities for innovation and invention in between the creases is increased.

Viewing the arts as a system of production invites curricular collaboration with other disciplines that teach learners to think empirically in a medium or material. Art educators with an affinity for techniques and practices that generate beautiful forms, structures, and singular solutions find curricular kinship with industrial and interactive designers, as well as with architects, poets, filmmakers, and scientists.

Viewing the arts as a system of communication invites curricular collaboration with other disciplines that teach learners to think expressively in a language. When art educators exhibit an affinity for interpretive practices that navigate the signs and symbols humans make in order to convey valued signifiers, they find curricular kinship with writers of all kinds, mathematicians, musicians, dancers, and a multicultural array of ethnic, religious, and social communities.

Viewing the arts as a system of critical reflection invites curricular collaboration with other disciplines that teach learners to question their contexts, confront injustice,

and seek to understand the gaps in given knowledge. Art educators with an affinity for more-critical practices that question situated or embodied contexts find curricular kinship with feminists, iconoclasts, revolutionaries, cultural theorists, mass-media dissenters, political activists, and environmentalists.

A pluralistic and adaptable model for art education draws upon any and all of these prior models without partiality and answers Julia Marshall's (2006) challenge for a more substantive integration of art disciplinary content with the humanities, as well as with other traditionally unrelated subject areas such as the sciences, technology, engineering, math, social studies, and entrepreneurship.

A High-Quality Visual Arts Education Develops Habits of Innovation

An adaptable and networking art education curriculum framework also aids in the development of persistent **habits of innovation** in an experiential learning model suggested by educational philosopher John Dewey. According to Dewey (1916/1966), a habit is an active, insistent, and immediate expression of growth; a capacity that enables a student to develop through continuous encounters with novelty as they “retain and carry over from previous experience factors which modify subsequent activities” (p. 46). Habits represent our “preferred modes of encounter and encountering, acting and interacting” (Cuffaro, 1995, p. 19). Habits are formed in the process of “trying and discovering, modifying and adapting” (Cuffaro, 1995, p. 19), and serve as evidence of enduring learning.

Dewey argued that character would not exist if each habit “existed in an insulated compartment and operated without affecting or being affected” by the interpenetration of other habits (Dewey, 1930, p. 37). An acquired adaptability to product-oriented, expressive-communicative, and critical-activist arts learning models and their interdisciplinary networks cultivates a powerful “continuum of habits in terms of the [learning] environments we create” (Cuffaro, 1995, p. 21). According to Dewey, the acquisition of new habits of mind is perpetuated by continually unsettling prior habits through the introduction of novelties. The introduction of novel symbols, artifacts, cultural interfaces, and social networks for learning through arts and design practices generate new *impulses* that Dewey describes as the agencies

of change, "giving new direction to old habits and changing their quality" (Dewey, 1930, p. 88).

Conclusion

A more adaptable approach to arts education practice is required to address the inherently pluralistic character of learning in a visual age. Definitions of art range from a model that focuses on thinking through observation, experience, and/or experiment toward mastery of the properties of mediums and materials; to a second model with its focus on thinking expressively through a symbolic language; to a third model that focuses on thinking critically about images and ideas within given contexts by interrogating the status quo. An adaptable framework for an art education curriculum transcends competition between these three different models of pedagogical practice, creating opportunities for learners to become adept at negotiating disciplinary boundaries separating product-oriented, expressive-communicative, and critical-activist arts and design approaches. An adaptable curriculum framework is thus able to network information about human experience, serving as a catalyst for innovation and invention in learning.

As we enter the 21st century, we face a crucial opportunity to reposition arts and design practices as an engine for innovation in public schooling reform, and place those practices at the forefront of curricular innovation and integration with school subjects across the general education spectrum. In a visual age where knowledge is conveyed digitally and our access to images is immediate, the study and practice of arts and design education offer necessary tools for any nation that aspires to retain leadership in the global exchange of information.

“As we enter the 21st century, we face a crucial opportunity to reposition arts and design practices as an **ENGINE FOR INNOVATION** in public schooling reform...”

REFERENCES

- Cancienne, M. B., & Snowber, C. N. (2003). Writing rhythm: Movement as method. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(2), 237-253.
- Cuffaro, H. (1995). *Experimenting with the world: John Dewey and the early childhood classroom*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Dewey, J. (1930). *Human nature and conduct*. New York, NY: Modern Library.
- Dewey, J. (1916/1966). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- jagodzinski, j. (1991). A para-critical/sitital/sightical reading of Ralph Smith's *Excellence in art education*. *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education*, 11, 119-159.
- Kearney, R. (1988). *The wake of imagination: Toward a postmodern culture*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2003). It's your world, I'm just trying to explain it: Understanding our epistemological and methodological challenges. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(1), 5-12.
- Marshall, J. (2006). Substantive art integration = exemplary art education. *Art Education*, 59(6), 17-24.
- Marshall, J. (2008). Visible thinking: Using contemporary art to teach conceptual skills. *Art Education*, 61(2), 38-45.
- Mills, C. W. (1959). *The sociological imagination*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Pearse, H. (1983). Brother, can you spare a paradigm? The theory beneath the practice. *Studies in Art Education*, 24(3), 158-163.
- Pearse, H. (1992). Beyond paradigms: Art education theory and practice in a postparadigmatic world. *Studies in Art Education*, 33(4), 244-252.
- Rolling, J. H. (2008). Rethinking relevance in art education: Paradigm shifts and policy problematics in the wake of the Information age. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 9 (Interlude 1). Retrieved May 11, 2008, from www.ijea.org/v9i1/.
- Stankiewicz, M. A. (2001). *Roots of art education practice*. Worcester, MA: Davis Publications, Inc.
- Sullivan, G. (2010). *Art practice as research: Inquiry in visual arts*. (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

