regarded as belonging to imagination. As Harris cogently argues, 'this thinking time of imagination appears unproductive' (165). This significantly alters the function of creativity within education as creativity becomes commoditised. A new creative economy calls for new 'modes of education' (Florida 2007: xvii) to accompany new modes of knowledge. In this modern consumption culture we need to ask ourselves, have creativity and innovation become interchangeable and has the aesthetic significance of creativity been diminished? *The Creative Turn* makes a vitally important contribution to these questions.

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TEACHING ASIAN ART: CONTENT, CONTEXT, AND PEDAGOGY, SHENG KUAN CHUNG (ED.) (2012) RESTON

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Growing up in Taiwan and living in the United States for nine years, I thought I had an advantage understanding the Asian art context and evaluating its possible implications in the American classroom. Reading *Teaching Asian Art: Content, Context, and Pedagogy*, I soon realized that Asian art is an extensive and rich topic that involves not only drawing on one's personal life experience and prior knowledge, but also adding extensive reading and expanded research to gain a better understanding. Seeing familiar concepts and key terms explained in a different language in this text and recognizing the amazing diversity and richness of Asian art are the main benefits of reading this book. It has become clear that teaching Asian art requires not only understanding specific art forms, learning associated cultural traditions and accepting religious pluralism, but also considering the variety of issues related to cultural representation, translation, and working to devise more creative and effective teaching strategies.

The art world has long been criticized for being racially and gender biased for ignoring female artists and the talent and contributions of minority groups. Not enough adequate teaching resources have been available, thus limiting the potential of delivering a culturally inclusive art curriculum. The editor of this book, Sheng Kuan Chung, noticed the lack of appropriate, better focused and culturally specific instructional resources. Chung wishes to introduce readers to Asian artistic practices and traditions, and addresses the

concepts and issues related to better understanding and a more successful teaching of Asian art.

Indeed, this book, which is a composite of articles from 41 authors, 'may be the first book on teaching Asian art written mostly by Asian natives from their respective regional standpoints for use in an American learning context' (vii). Its authors include scholars and educators who either have first-hand knowledge or are cultural insiders to the many different Asian artistic practices. Many have lived, studied and worked abroad, and personally experienced different cultures. Artistic and cultural practices from China, Japan, Korea, Laos, Thailand, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines and Tibet are nicely addressed in this collective effort.

The book is organized into four sections: Contextual Explorations; Aesthetic Forms and Meanings; Spiritual and Religious Practices; and Crossing Boundaries. The articles in Contextual Explorations point out the inseparable relationship between art and life; these authors provide contextual information and new ways to appreciate and teach East Asian Aesthetics, literati paintings, Paiwanese indigenous art in Taiwan and wood carving in the Philippines. The articles appearing in Aesthetic Forms and Meanings discuss Japanese flower arrangement, Korean art (*Sotdae*, *Dan Chung* and *Minhwa*), Chinese Yixing ceramic techniques, Tibetan black pottery, Lao art traditions, as well as Malaysia shadow puppet plays and Taiwanese puppet-making.

For those readers who are curious about the symbolism, spiritual and religious practices in Asia, the articles in the Spiritual and Religious Practices section explain the significance of chi and chi-associated concepts in Asian brushwork, Japanese spiritual art, the meaning of Mandala, Bhutanese *thanka* Paintings, Thai ornament, Buddhist art and Chinese burial objects.

Finally, Crossing Boundaries emphasizes the concept of having better cultural connections and inter-cultural comparisons. Examples here include ancient Buddhist cliff sculptures, Japanese Manga, Asian American artists' works and instructional folk pedagogy. Taiwanese glove puppetry and Balinese shadow puppetry are also compared.

In the concluding chapter of the book 'What contemporary Asian American artists teach us about the complicated nature of 21st-century Americans' multi-layered, transcultural, and hybridized identities and art practices: Implications for an intercultural and social justice-oriented approach to teaching art', Elizabeth Delacruz wisely points out the complicated and hybridized nature of identities and offers solid insights into the need to use an intercultural and social justice-oriented approach to teach art.

Overall, the contributing authors explore in depth the contexts of Asian practices, including specific art forms, their historical development, cultural and symbolic meaning, and offer practical pedagogical suggestions. There are many lesson plans offered to encourage teachers to provide their students with an excellent opportunity to experience new ways of art-making, embrace different aesthetic concepts, make cross-cultural comparisons and develop their own personal connections with Asian art.

In Chapter 6, Frank Vigneron's 'Teaching Chinese painting – a problem with words' rightly points out that specific art forms have their own vocabulary, perfectly suited to their different aims and techniques, and these different forms are not always easily communicated in another language. I applaud the editor of the book and its contributors for taking a proactive role and creating an important Asian art resource book written in English. Although not

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inclusive of all regions and religions of Asia, this book does cover a broad range of topics rather than just focusing on the few selected art practices of China, Japan, Korea and India, as most Asian art resources do.

Asia, however, is large and culturally diverse. The continent is the earth's largest and most populous and today hosts 60 per cent of the world's population. Asia is also described as a continent of diversity and contrast. The rich information presented in the book and its new concepts and unfamiliar key terms may seem overwhelming to some readers, but it is an important title, as it shares considerable knowledge in a serious yet unaffected way.

Despite its extensiveness, it is impossible in the course of a single book to encompass everything one needs to know about Asian art. Areas that are not explored in depth include the current social, political and economic statuses in different Asian countries, the changing perception and definition of 'Asia' and 'being Asian'. While some articles do includes examples of contemporary Asian artists, readers may find that they need to expand their understanding further in this area with additional reading due to the vast and diverse creative expressions of contemporary Asian artists' works that continually evolve.

In addition, James Banks (1995) identifies four approaches to multicultural education: *contributions*, *additive*, *transformation* and *social action*. The *contributions* approach celebrates the heroes, heroines, holidays and discrete cultural elements. The *additive* approach adds content, concepts, lessons and units to the existing curriculum, without changing its basic structure. The *transformation* approach wants to change the structure of the curriculum to let students view concepts, issues, events and themes from the perspectives of diverse ethnic and cultural groups. The *action* approach encourages students to make their own decisions on important personal, social and civic problems, and then take action to help solve them. Most of the content of the book fits nicely with the additive and transformation approaches; the social action orientation is mentioned but less so and thus not emphasized fully.

Given the rich contextual information provided in the book, a natural tendency for educators may be to adopt some of the content from the book. However, only partial integration of new content into an existing curriculum by mimicking the art styles of a 'foreign' culture under study without careful and due deliberation runs the serious risk of falling short of the full potential for students' growth of multicultural education. As Asian artworks become the sites of new knowledge to challenge preconceived assumptions and stereotypes, the role of critical dialogue is essential. In the absence of such critical dialogue, students may be only passive receivers of new facts, and not be challenged to question the norm that has been unthinkingly accepted and instead become aware of the active role they can play.

With migration and the new forces of globalization, educators worldwide today face new challenges, namely how best to balance local, national and global norms, and values in the education of their students. This book will benefit art educators, historians and social studies teachers who are interested in Asian art. Accompanied by many excellent guiding questions and new ideas, the book is a good resource for multicultural and intercultural teaching. The true potential of Asia art and multicultural/intercultural education, however, will depend largely on how teachers use the information presented in this book. Becoming a culturally responsive educator involves knowing and learning more about others and oneself. That process may not be easy but

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it definitely is rewarding, and this book is one of many tools that can assist teachers and students in that task.

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