
Art School Critique 2.0

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Art School Critique 2.0
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Foreword

Judith M. Burton

By now it is a truism to say that the very essence of our thinking about art school education and its implications have changed. Our ideas about who is an artist and how they work have become more diverse and elastic, as have the demographics of places and spaces in which artists practice and exhibit. The shaping forces directing such changes include the ever expanding world of technology, intense interest in cross and interdisciplinary collaborations, the embrace of social and cultural issues such as gender, race, ethnicity and justice, the artist as active entrepreneur creating new markets, and the findings of neuroscience which gives credibility and profound importance to complex ways of thinking that are characteristically those most closely associated with the arts.

Given this panorama, probably we can no longer think of the critique as merely confined to cozy (or not so cozy) conversations before one or many works of art taking place in studios or museums. Rather, given the socio-cultural climate of our times the critique needs to become a fundamental activity of mind capable of being applied to a broad spectrum of events and practices (often hotly contested)–a way of negotiating multiple and diverse view-points within the kind of thoughtful reflection that is informed by and aware of larger contexts both historical and present, local and global. Future minds must become more flexible, informed, sensitive, imaginative–yet robust–in their ability to embrace our exploding world of possibilities and negotiate conflicting values. The way that we educate students, thus, must validate the integrity of the young artist's mind and personal sensibility while enabling them to stretch across all sorts of boundaries, contexts and practices. This mandate carries with it the development of skills to ponder and poke beyond the surfaces of the world and give aesthetic presence to those comfortable and uncomfortable truths and ethical concerns that make us only too human in both our separateness and togetherness.

Introduction

Richard Jochum

Critiques – the presentation and review of student work in front of a teacher or critic and peers – have long been a common and powerful learning tool in the arts. Apart from allowing a deep engagement with the produced work, they also serve as a unique assessment device. Critiques provide a rich learning experience but can also be jarring.

With art schools redefining their roles in the larger context of academia, are critiques still necessary? How have recent changes to the learning landscape – such as student-centered teaching models, an increased focus on collaboration, and the proliferation of online classrooms and resources – changed the nature and practice of critiques?

Art School Critique 2.0 was a symposium that took place at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City on November 17 and 18, 2016. The symposium – a series of workshops, courses, and events on teaching and learning of studio art in the 21st century that marked the third collaboration between Teachers College and the University of Applied Arts in Vienna – consisted of a multifaceted exchange of ideas with short presentations, break-out sessions, panels, and workshops. It explored multiple aspects of critique, including the affordances and shortcomings of critique in studio art teaching today.

Sessions included:

Art as critique: If artists are not just makers of artifacts but also makers of culture, what broader social issues do they address? What does artistry mean in light of expanded practice, pervasive technology, and diminishing boundaries between art and public design? What are the values that guide their practice? How can art be understood as a critical practice? This session encouraged artists and educators to reflect on the role of their work as it contributes to culture, society, and education.

Critique as collaboration: How does critique fit into a student-centered learning environment, in which students are understood as independent learners in charge of their own education? How is critique being incorporated into an art making practice that has become hybrid, uses more than one material or concept and relies on collaboration? What is the role of the teacher in a critique? Critique has a rich history in the education of artists, writers, musicians, architects and designers. What can we learn from how critiques are conducted in other disciplines? This session situated critique as a form of community and relationship building. Contributors responded to the role of critique as a means of collaboration. A mixed panel comprising of students and instructors encouraged the participants to rethink pedagogy in light of hybrid practices and a learning landscape that emphasizes shared expertise and team effort. The conversation was transcribed and is included in this book.

Critique as pedagogy: This session was dedicated to the guiding principles of studio and classroom instruction. What are teaching philosophies that art educators utilize? How are they put into practice? How can critiques honor both process and outcome? And how do they connect to the curriculum at large? If critique is not only an instrument of the educational enterprise but also critical of its curriculum and pedagogical practice, how does this in turn affect those who participate in it?

All three sessions, as well as the overall structure of the event, were guided by the following questions: What makes critique a powerful instrument for students in the arts, architecture, and design? How can the critique format serve as a model for other areas of education and public discourse? What does critique look like in an environment that places student needs at its center? Is there an art to critique and, if so, what does it look like? What is the role of critique in an art curriculum today? How do hybrid practices, online learning and the increasing professionalization of education change "critique"? How can or must art itself be a critical practice? How do we evaluate student work in an environment that is built on projects and collaboration?

The open call for symposium speakers solicited significant interest and, by creating a variety of possibilities for participation, we were able to accommodate more than 60 presenters. This book reflects most of these voices, having been compiled after giving the initial presenters an opportunity to revisit and expand their papers.

Art School Critique 2.0 provided a far-ranging inventory of the many ways in which critique has been a hallmark of studio art teaching and learning. The symposium emphasized conversation over lecture, with opportunities for participants to engage directly with each other. A few studio instructors accepted our invitation to pair up, visit each other's studio classes, and produce reports from the field, thus providing valuable information about how critique plays out in the studio classroom. Student voices were equally important to the proceedings, and several are included in this book.

Critique "2.0" addresses the way in which a changed landscape of art making, teaching and learning has displaced critique as we have come to know it. Just as art has become an open concept, so critique, as it pertains to art, must be open to questioning its own assumptions. This applies to the critic as much as to the critiqued. Both, together, must be engaged in asking what art can be and what critique can be.

The authors in this book explore these questions from a number of perspectives. Keynote speaker Luis Camnitzer examines critique within the context of contemporary art education, in which both the art school and the admitted student often marginalize, if not betray, the true mission of education. For him, teaching is static and authoritarian, and curricula are a way to protect students from bad teaching. He lays out, in sixteen points, his provocative vision of what a good art school could be.

Cristina Cammarano draws from a notion of critique that goes beyond reinforcing the norms of culture, educational institutions, and the art world, coming instead from the perspective of critical theory. Cammarano writes, "To critique something means to see it as a given in relation to the structures that make it possible, and to envision other ways for it to be." Thus, critique is not just an invitation to place a teacher in a position of authority to make pronouncements; it is a way of creating a space that allows those who participate in it to raise questions of possibility and potentiality.

Maureen Connor's paper is a contribution to an understanding of art as a form of social practice, as opposed to individual practice, which allows an understanding of teaching as a form of social practice, too. Among other strategies for reforming critique, Connor advocates a method developed by artist Paul Ryan called "Threeing," which may break through both the assumption that the artwork being critiqued is the result of only individual achievement and the inherent dualism of the teacher-student critique process. Connor sees the concept of the individual artist as an obstacle to the impact that art can have on its community. By understanding both art and teaching as a social practice, Connor rearticulates the concept of a critical pedagogy.

That the intricacies of critique are cognitive exercises -- which, if performed seriously and with care, can train us on how we relate to each other -- is one of the takeaways of Susan Waters-Eller's paper. Works of art can become places of common ground, where people can learn to communicate with one another. For Dan Serig, too, critique is an opportunity to develop meta-cognitive abilities.

There is often a part of a work of art that defies discussion. Tara Geer's text is a "Defense of the Inarticulate." It reminds us that students vulnerable in the face of critique need protection more than judgment.

If art can be understood as a place for shared imagination that can be entered by all, as Dorothea Lasky points out, then those involved in a critique can do more than treat a particular work of art as an objective truth. Rather, a critique can be an invitation to enter that shared imaginative space, which is what art making is about in the first place.

The application of critique onto oneself is at the heart of Janet Miller's text, in which she advocates a Foucauldian understanding of critique as "voluntary inservitude" and "reflective indocility." It is not only the student who is at the receiving end of critical discourse; the taken-for-granted assumptions of the teacher, too, are subject to scrutiny. The implications of such an understanding on curriculum are obvious in an educational landscape that continues to refine curriculum based on a technocratic interpretation of pedagogy as science and with the purpose of transmitting content for the benefit of achievement scores.

In James F. Moyer's text about what philosophy can do for critique, he examines the relationship between art and articulation. Moyer's take underlines that the relationship is reciprocal. From this we can extrapolate: just as art may benefit from language, which opens it up to audiences, philosophy benefits from art, which has the ability to embody thought.

That students often take critique personally is no reason to shelter them from it, Saul Ostrow argues. Quite the opposite: successful critique requires engagement. Ostrow sees critique as an opportunity for self-reflectively questioning the premises on which the students' work is based – hacking the operating system – rather than as an opportunity for students to clarify or self-critically defend their intentions. This allows the work to become a catalyst for shared experiences in the outside world rather than a mere extension of the self.

In creating their report, Amanda Newman-Godfrey and Lynn Palewicz heeded our call for reports from the field. They demonstrate that critique can be a tool not only in studio teaching and learning but also, through peer review, for professional development.

Barbara Putz-Plecko seeks to define the role of an art school as providing a place where potentiality is activated. By encouraging their students to become provocative communities, schools can offer opportunities for self-criticality, self-reflexivity, and reexamination of the structures of teaching and learning as they continue to emerge.

To examine the structures of power and judgment that frame critique in the first place is the purpose of Sresha Rit Premnath's paper on critique as unlearning. In Premnath's view, to "unlearn one's learning and unlearn one's privilege" (Gayatri Spivak) is the aim of studio critique. While critical thinking has often been relegated to critical theory seminars, Premnath appoints the studio critique as the place for such thinking.

The question of what a new form of critique – "Critique 2.0" – may look like was inspired not only by the expansion of learning through digital means but also by the rise to prominence of art as a social practice. Gregory Sholette examines how art as social practice – which happens in the community and outside the studio – affects and displaces our traditional understanding of critique, particularly given the recent tectonic shifts in the political landscape. As Sholette points out, the "social turn" changes how we evaluate art and problematizes what we have learned to call aesthetic judgment.

The above touches on just a fraction of the authors and themes represented in this book.

Keynote

What Makes an Art School a Good Art School Today? | Luis Camnitzer

What makes an art school a good art school today? The question might be translated into 1. What school would you like to accept you as a student? And 2. How would the school like you to be in order to accept you? You probably would choose a school that has stars in the art market as faculty, so that the institution is prestigious, and that the school has many graduates who are successful in that market. The school, on the other hand, will be looking for somebody in whom they see a potential to become a star, so that they can feed into the artist elite. This is achieved by having selection filters that are constantly being perfected.

Both interests, yours and the schools, coincide. The student applies to become a member of the elite the school is trying to build with which a circle is built that makes an increasingly strict filter. Education in all of this is only an accessory. The system is based on bets that use the push and pull of admissions. With an increasing competition, those accepted are probably students who don't need schooling and who would be successful on their own. Meanwhile, those who are rejected are the ones who really need the education. Without caring about individual needs, the educational structure is built to satisfy institutional prestige, market demands, the building of a meritocracy, and often to also nourish the country's international standing. Therefore, it matters to select the best instead of having a policy of bettering individuals.

It doesn't matter the social impact one may or may not attribute to art schools. They exist and they are accepted as a breeding broth in which everybody has to simmer during four or five years before one may be accepted as an artist. Today most practicing artists are university products. And while you don't need an MFA to exhibit in a gallery, you need it in case you don't make it and have to teach other people who want to go through the process, even if you don't learn how to teach.

This doesn't mean that time in art school is a waste. With the right mentoring, students have the chance to think and imagine freely, to explore unconventionality, and to seek a balance between the personal and the collective. What makes this a remarkable opportunity is that, although they should be, these conditions are not available in other disciplines. Since they are not enough to claim academic credibility, art schools have to justify themselves with other trappings to look professional. They had craft training as the original organizing spine, and, more recently, have become undefined trade schools where one learns the lay of the land and how to move in it.

Within this mixture of making and justifying, we have critique as a tool of growing importance to the point of becoming institutionalized and, therefore, problematic. Critique is too complex and varied a tool for a simple discussion. The first thing we have to differentiate is public tutoring critique from the private tutoring critique.

The public critique is useful inasmuch as it forces students to articulate what they are doing rather than hide under words like intuition and other lightproof blankets. The input coming from a group may open perspectives not visited during the development of the work and, therefore, enrich subsequent work. On the negative side, there are things that might not be discussed in public, either

because comments might be humiliating or because they might infringe on privacy. Other comments might be unrelated to the work, patronizing, and made to show off the superior intelligence of the critics.

The individual tutoring critique can take two forms—vertical or horizontal. In the first case, it is distortive because of an authoritarian relation. Many countries offer art clinics, a term taken from sports and where the master artist "cures" the deficiencies of the work. But in the horizontal version, it becomes a critical dialogue, one in which empathy with the work and the student become the point of departure. Here, the interest and art of the teacher are totally absent from the conversation.

In either case, public or personal, a good critique is dialogical and is embedded in any good pedagogy. A good pedagogy is concerned with autodidacticism and the most rapid possible dispensability of the teacher. With this aim in mind, critique should not become a ritual, but a natural dialogue that satisfies the needs of a sane educational process. What becomes important then is what questions are being used as a reference or context to have this dialogue.

Some of the questions meaningful until mid-20th century were: Are references present in the work of art itself or do they have to be discovered somewhere else? Do the conditions for creation emerge from the work of art, or do they come about from organizing what one sees, feels, dreams, or from what one expects of something we call a "work of art?" The possibilities emerging from these questions took turns in producing the stylistic salad that we identify as isms.

These ingredients contributed to the history of art as we know it, and to our understanding of art: how art was taught or should have been taught. The lineal narrative imposed on art history tried to give the illusion that there is a certain rational process in its development. One ism seemed to be the consequence of a preceding one, and, for a short moment, we were supposed to believe that there was an intention of progress. And while there may be some truth in it since art often refers to art, the idea of progress was nothing more than a burden. It was baggage left over from the 18th-century Enlightenment and our thinking conditioned by science and capitalism. To define the slow progress in science, Max Planck once said: "Science advances one funeral at a time." But progress in art doesn't exist. Nothing is freed because of any artist dying. There are only attempts at rupture and changes of points of view, and, besides, both the concept of progress and the description of rupture are something very Western and culture biased. By now we have the originality entailed by them as a form of competitive branding rather than a contribution to knowledge.

What for us is probably the more important part of this is that, in this period, the art dialogue finished in the object. It defined the artist as the producer of acquirable objects. There is nothing wrong with this, but it has consequences that at least should be examined. If we define art within the conditions accepted at that time, we inevitably end up being sellers. This means that our work has to be recognizable as something different to the work of other artists. These other artists are automatically our competitors. We have to establish a brand for our products and for ourselves as authors. We not only have to be part of the meritocracy, but we have to excel in it. Emphasis on production, status, and sales leads us to want to prove that our intelligence, skills, and talent are above those of our competitors, and with that we may justify our prices and our egos. That will also make us into the stars that our school wanted, and that way we'll prove its merits as an institution. But it also will take us to the

culturally negative part of believing and making believe that, once we are recognized as artists, everything we do is art. Even further, it puts us in an authoritarian position that affects our ways of educating.

At present, in art, we are in the midst of an information boom that changed paradigms. Though the antecedents may be placed in Duchamp and Magritte, this really started in the 1960s and had already then started to change the relation of artist-work-public. One talks of art as "practice" and the public is a body more active than an audience. Today, social practice is considered a subcategory of art.

Thanks to this change, art started to be accepted as a cognitive process and the creative process became part of the formulation of problems. Works of art became solutions or answers to problems. Quality control shifted from evaluating the finish to determine the interest of the problem proposed and its possible contributions, to the evaluation of the elegance of the solution in terms of administration of information, and to the perfection of the relation between the solutions and the conditions that generated it.

Until then, knowledge had been divided as discursive and non-discursive. Artists were reduced to emit monologues that could be heard or seen. By evading any possibility of deep description, the generalized declaration that art couldn't be systematized to the point of being taught made some sense. However, once the borderline between discourse and no-discourse was blurred, the notions of systematization had to be revised. Maybe art now could be taught, and if it couldn't, neither could anything else. Terms like painting, sculpture, or drawing became restrictions. They were categories insufficient to describe what was becoming a transdisciplinary activity. "What" and "why" took priority over "how," and "for whom" demanded certain respect.

Art as manufacture is clearly also guided by context. Already in the expressive phase of 19th-century Romanticism, it was the subjective context that originated the work and served as a resonance box. There is, however, a resistance to accept this, and it comes from an inertia rooted in the idea that artists are basically "craftspeople-plus." The craft can be taught and the "plus" part is the responsibility of the individual. The acceptance of art being transdisciplinary and a cognitive/cultural intervention between problem and solution seems to be out of reach for most schools. That is why there still is an overproduction of painters and other media-dependent workers. With luck, some of them will produce art. Critique is there to increase the chances, acting during or after the fact, and without taking responsibility in helping the beginning.

It's here where I believe that going through media first may be a retardant. It would be better if art schools produced artists educated to only use specific media as a last resource, when they really need it and when there is no other option than despair. That is the moment in which one assumes the responsibility of producing a perfect piece by using the indispensable technique. It's here where the idea of perfection starts making sense. It's not decided before the fact, but when the complete integration of technique, problem, communication, and the context that justifies them are put together. Technical virtuosity in itself is meaningless.

If we consider communication as an important factor, it becomes clear that we have to be open to as many branches of knowledge as possible. Context cannot be a consequence of ego, but instead determine the work's resonance once it reaches the public

and may have a transformational effect on culture rather than on the market.

In order to place ourselves with some precision, we will have to discuss systems of knowledge in pedagogical terms. In traditional education, we tend to consider knowledge as a discrete and closed system that may be endlessly subdivided into units. Ignorance on a basic level is based on the absence of known units. Ignorance on a higher level is based on the absence of unknown, yet predictable, units. This is the rational construct based on scientific and rational thinking. Creativity within this construct is reduced to ingenuity. The results of any of these points may be exhausted through explanation.

When we try to make art, we go a step further. Though taking all this into account, we use creativity applied to the unpredictable parts of the unknown. It's a limitless, ungraspable, and intoxicating activity. It needs the platform of the known, not to dominate its territory, but to be able to jump over its borders. One may call this area "mystery," but it has nothing to do with obscurantism. It refers to the ignorance of the unpredictable. Since it's unknown, it obviously cannot be taught. It's similar to the process of discovery. You cannot teach what is to be discovered. This, however, does not mean that either art or discovery should remain untouched by education. On the contrary, education in art should enable the process of discovery and creation. Therefore, the question is not if art can be taught since it derails us from our task. The real question is if people can be taught to be an artist. And when it's put this way, the answer is yes and the same as it would be discussing teaching to become a chemist or a physicist. When asked if somebody may be taught to be a chemist, nobody considers the subtext of "can somebody be taught to earn a Nobel Prize in chemistry?" When asked if somebody may be taught to be an artist, the answer has the embedded expectation that the artist emerging from that education will enter the work in the collections of museums. Therefore, the whole process of selection of art practitioners, starting from primary school onward, is to identify candidates with promise and then give them the monopoly of the activity. It's like deciding that only those who dream well should be allowed to dream.

I studied art during the 1950s in a school patterned after the French Academy of the 19th century. I was accepted because I had some skill with clay, and, while there, during five years, I never was given any other reason. First I learned to copy Roman busts. The idea was well intentioned. With this work, I probably would understand how volumes worked, how in a face there are no ruled surfaces, and how intersections are non-Euclidian and complex. Unfortunately, nobody told me that. The only requirement was that I rendered faithfully. Then I copied real heads and, finally, I was allowed to make nude figures. Progress was measured by precision and increasing size. My reaction and that of my classmates was frustration. We started to be interested in alternative curricula, particularly those inspired by the foundation courses of the Bauhaus. We got involved in pedagogy, curricular design, and education in general. We reformed the school, although changes weren't too successful. We overlooked critiques. Today, six decades later, the school cannot claim success, but I wouldn't blame it on the lack of the use of systematic critiques. I am, by now, skeptical about curricular reforms and about teaching in general. Curricula try to protect students from bad teaching, and teaching is contingent on what the teacher knows, not on the student's ability to learn. Teaching is static and authoritarian.

So I will ask myself what would I like from an art school if I were to go today in terms of my learning. Given my age, my needs are probably outdated, but it's a good exercise anyway.

1. Rather than being trained to be erudite, I would like to learn how to access information and organize it in a fluid way so that it always adapts to my needs.

2. Since information is infinite, I would like to be able to manage configurations and dissimilar orders, coding and decoding, so that I may better communicate whatever I want to communicate.

3. I would like to face "disorienting dilemmas" rather than situations with one solution. I want to be able to make unpredictable decisions in a continual process of learning.

4. I want to formulate problems with rigor and precision rather than being presented with problems that already have been solved.

5. I would like to learn what forces and interests determine a canon and how to challenge them in order to create my own system of quality control.

6. I want to use art as a way of looking at the world and not as a way of looking at art. I will need sociological and anthropological perspectives to understand the context in which I move.

7. I want to be precise in the transition from discovery (or from work I do without knowing what I'm doing) to the utilization of that discovery for communication.

8. I should learn manipulation—how I'm being manipulated and how to manipulate others. I will need to know advertising techniques.

9. I will need psychology to know how to organize my information and stimuli in order to reach my public.

10. I will have to explore ambiguity and how to avoid misunderstandings.

11. I would like to study history of art, but starting from the present and going back. I want to be conscious of my projections onto the works of art. I want to understand the conditions that made the works unavoidable and indispensable, and I want to be able to decide which are, and which are not, still relevant for us today.

12. I want to learn techniques in relation to the problems I'm exploring. They may exist or I may have to invent them. I want to be able to do the work myself or to delegate and supervise it in an informed way. I don't want existing techniques to limit me or to act as my enemies.

13. I want to work in and with art as a form of higher thinking that allows me to formulate and solve problems.

14. I want to be a competentcraftsman only when it's needed.

15. I want to be ecologically sensitive,meaning not only in terms of physical and chemical pollution, but also in terms of the ethical consequences of my work. I will only keep those works that I consider indispensable and destroy the others.

16. And yes, I would want to do this learning within a true and congenial community that gives me honest feedback and hones my skills in learning, listening, and articulating. If somebody wants to call this part "critique," so be it.

Panel Discussion

Critique 2.0: What Makes a Successful Critique? | Ashley Mask and Panelists

What makes critique a powerful instrument for students in the arts, architecture, and design? This is one of the guiding questions addressed in the November 2016 Art School Critique 2.0 Symposium, a multi-faceted educational exchange which explored various aspects of critique.

The following is an edited transcript of the panel discussion held the first day of the symposium. The panelists were Erol Gündüz, Liselot van der Heijden, Eric Mason, Sean McCarthy, Eunji Lee, Zahra Nazari, Patricia Phillips, and Lucio Pozzi. The moderator was Ashley Mask.

Moderator: This panel will center around ideas and questions that have come up throughout the day and those posed by today's panelists, and are all based on the larger question of what makes a successful critique. Responses take the form of anecdotal stories from panelists as well as philosophical and practical considerations that panelists have come to rely on in the context of student critiques in the art studio classroom. All of our panelists have extensive experience on this topic, either as instructors, professors, or students, or, in many cases, all of the above. For the purpose of this conversation, half of the group will represent the instructor/professor perspective and the other half will represent that of a student. There, of course, will be some overlap in terms of perspective. First, a short introduction by each panelist, including individual experiences with critique.

Lucio Pozzi (L.P.): I've been teaching for many years in universities and art schools throughout the US and Europe. I believe we are in a period in which there's no consensus about the purpose of art. For millennia, different world cultures, wherever they were, shared a consensus about the purpose of art. With modernity, this consensus has frayed and disappeared. With no agreement about the purpose of art, a desperate and panicked search for surrogates came about in the 20th century, which resulted in an establishment of isms and contradictory theories. For example, in 1919, a surrealist believed in a certain aesthetic. At the same time, there were neoclassicists who followed Mondrian and believed in the opposite aesthetic. Both groups believed they had the final solution to the loss of consensus about the purpose of art and substituted it with a new set of standards. Seeing this repeated innumerable times, I began to think that I could not follow either dogma or any agenda anymore. I felt in my learning and teaching experience that I would come to the basics of observation, or, in other words, re-visualize visual arts and establish a kind of Socratic dialogue with student and teacher. As a teacher, I'm learning, and as a student also, I am teaching. This is a Fabian socialist idea of everyone exchanging ideas instead of establishing authority and hierarchy from which descends a truth that nowadays escapes us completely. My Socratic method is very simple: I come to a studio and begin to look at what I see. I then begin to verbally describe that which I see. This, of course, is inevitably subjective, but I try to describe as clearly as possible what I see literally. Instead of saying, "This is a painted canvas," I say, "This is a rectangle of stretched canvas." Even in the most simplistic ways, I

describe exactly what I see. I then proceed to observe everything else that I notice. When I do this, I also train myself to see much better than what my prejudice may have established in the beginning. When I do this, the person I'm talking with also sees things she or he might not have seen, and a dialogue starts. This is the purpose of my critique: dialogue. Critique, like crisis, comes from the Greek word "krinein," meaning not to judge, but to acknowledge the transition moment between two states. The critique, for me, is a dynamic, growing energy exchanged between two individuals without either of them having more authority than the other. One might have less experience, one, more experience, but it's very important for me that a dialogue (which comes from the Greek words "dia," meaning "through," and "logos," meaning "word") or conversation is established. Once that starts, it's an open process with no judgments and possibly an exchange of opinions. Normally students ask me, "But what do you think?" They want the authority of the older artist to say, "This is better," "This is worse," and I always avoid answering that. I tell them, "My opinion is..." After a long conversation, I might say, "My opinion is I don't like it or I like it." And then I warn them: "I am historically determined like you are. I come from the process art of the 70s, and, therefore, my opinion is going to be biased by my generation, my age, and my having lived in New York. So you experience your opinion and I experience mine, and we dialogue without trying to find a conclusion." I always remind them that the 20th century was very didactic and always believed in dogmas, and that we have found enough people looking for final solutions in the 20th century. So we are not looking for solution or conclusion. We're looking for a beginning of a dynamic dialogue that is endless.

Patricia Phillips (P.P.): My introduction to critique was not in any kind of school or institutional setting, but in talking with artists over the past 30 years as a writer and critic and engaging in one-to- one conversations. I'd like to talk about one case study I used when I was teaching graduate students. My graduate work is in landscape architecture—my colleague would say, "Well, you're interdisciplinary."—so I would do seminars with 15 graduate students from eight or nine different programs in often very siloed institutions. I would begin an exercise, which I would then pull back from in order to let the students make it what they wanted it to become. A colleague had talked about the idea of three-ing, in which we consider the structure of two against one as potentially contentious or unstable, and that the triad is a powerful dynamic. I asked the students in the seminar to divide into groups of three and go to each other's workspace as a group between seminar meetings and talk at length about their three bodies of work. During the following seminar, each student would bring one piece of the representation that we could have a critical conversation about. Everybody would then switch out of their roles, so the person's work being discussed actually had no role. One student would present the work and the other would get the conversation started about the work, so they were switching out and problematizing questions of power, authority, and respective roles often within a critique within schools or institutions. It ended up being a very interesting way for them to look at these questions of power,

judgment, who gets the last word, and how to challenge those—to critique the critique, if you will. That always opened up a lot of ideas within that kind of seminar in terms of understanding each other's work, but also bringing healthy, critical attitude and experience to the critique itself. What I have been struck with today, though, is perhaps a more finely grained way of thinking about the critique. I feel the critique is an undisciplined place where many different things can happen without necessarily calling out precisely what they are. It's somewhat a wild place that's not fully regulated or domesticated, if you will. It's a place that we have to protect and preserve because it is a free space. It's a critical space. It's a place for reflection. We are losing some of those spaces in our culture and in our lives and that's something we really need to embrace and take full advantage of, especially at this moment.

Sean McCarthy (S.M.): Like most art professors, I was trained as an artist and not a professor or a teacher, which has presented particular problems for me as I've developed a career in teaching. My first experiences with critique were, of course, as a student, and as an undergraduate at UT Austin, my memory of critique there was characterized by benign neglect. I feel like I was mostly told, "Keep it up." In 1999, I started graduate school at Yale, where the critique style was characterized by a sort of brutalization and humiliation, a self-conscious, affective elitism meant to suggest to the student that they were going to suffer terribly before they could perhaps claw their way into this elite. Most of my teaching experience has been at Lehman College in the Bronx, which is only a few miles north of Columbia University but really a world away in terms of resources, privilege, and access. It became very clear to me early on in my career there—I've been teaching there almost 10 years now—that neither benign neglect nor brutalization were remotely appropriate to this context. My challenge has been learning as I go to develop a critique strategy that is rigorous but that accounts for the fact that I am working with a student body disproportionately adversely affected by poverty and discrimination. They arrive in the classroom at a level of psychic distress, higher than average. I've been encouraged to hear reinforcement in terms of addressing a student's fear and creating an environment in which people feel safe and in which trust is engendered. From that place, then, we can start to have a critical dialogue.

Liselot van der Heijden (L.vd H.): If we do critique well, it is a wild space—it is a wild adventure with a lot of growth possibility. I think trust is most important for a good class critique space. We talk about the critique one-on- one, which is important and very intimate as a dialogue between student and professor or as equals. The critique as class dynamic is one of the most important things in my teaching, particularly in what I can do for the students and what they can do for each other. I think of the critique in the class as a collective activity—it's not me at all, but really the students who are there for each other. I believe in spending more time on critique than most people. Students can initially be upset spending that much time on it, but after a while—when we investigate why we do what we do, having all students critique each other's work (not having an imposed hierarchical point of view)—students are willing to go along with it,

especially when it becomes the wild place. But it must be cultivated. Students need to take each other's work seriously (and the students and I expect this). We all have high expectations, and the class will only be as good as the students and their work make it. That's an underlying principle that I stress from the beginning. That does not mean that students cannot fail. Failure is perfectly fine as long as they fail gloriously, as long as they don't fail because they just don't put in the effort. If something doesn't work but they've tried and put in everything they have, it's been an important process, and is something that is to be embraced. It's important to take risks and for students to get out of their comfort zone. Many of my students are at a state school. They're not the most advantaged students, and they are very performance-driven and focused on their grades. This can be a real handicap for growing as an artist. Students who are art education majors or graphic designers have to discover their own voice and their inner artist and everything it means to be a good art teacher, even at the elementary school level. We encourage work that's meaningful, personal, formal, well made, carefully considered, and compelling. We encourage work that pushes the boundariesof what art can be. We promote trust and collaboration where collaboration is essential. Students all help each other. They trust. But students also must learn to stand up for their needs to make the work really be what it is.

Zahra Nazari (Z.N.): I'm not a student or a teacher, but an artist who has studied in Iran. For me, the journey of the critique, the difference between how work was criticized in terms of evaluation and analysis, and how it actually lead to a different product, was a far more important issue in the U.S. and was new for me. I had to relearn everything I knew about criticism. There were many challenges for me. While I was a student, I also taught courses to undergrad students. This brought me a new vision with looking at student work, and how I could use those strategies with the work I'm doing today as an artist, as well as how to lead students in a way so their work would have both aesthetic and conceptual elements. When I had teachers who encouraged students to try things they weren't comfortable with and they resisted, it opened new avenues in terms of what they wanted to do, and brought out a body of work they normally wouldn't have done. In the end, they would get somewhere they couldn't believe and far from where they had started. The strengths of a student and the strengths of teacher and teaching philosophy can reflect one another, and no matter how the teacher tries to step back, his or her opinion can change the potential of the work. Having been both a teacher and a student, the most important thing for me was making the student comfortable that you are trying to lead them in a direction they're trying to understand rather than giving a judgmental suggestion that doesn't direct them in a constructive sense. Rather, it may just be exploiting the idea they were already working with.

Eric Mason (E.M.): I'm a student here at Columbia in the Art Education program. Critique has always inspired me to make work at the end, which is the most important aspect of a critique. If a student goes away in tears not understanding what the problem is with his or her work or what you didn't like, does that help? Critique has always been a sense of inspiration. If I see work and dislike it, I critique it to myself and make new work.

At the end of a critique, the artist should want to go and make work.

Eunji Lee (E.L.): I'm a doctoral student in Art Education here at Teachers College. It's been more than 10 years since I attended art school, and I eventually came to art education because art was very intimidating. I went to art school in Seoul, Korea. I didn't have horrible experiences, but the atmosphere was very much top-down and I was intimidated by that. It was an atmosphere of a professor dominating his or her preferences upon the student. I eventually found my way to public art creator because I wanted to promote more aesthetic experiences with a larger public audience, working with artists, going into public schools, and doing projects. I'm very interested in education, so I came to New York about four-and- a-half years ago, and have been teaching in small public libraries where they don't have art classes. I've just started teaching in prison at Riker's Island. I've only been there once, but I'm interested in exploring with that audience. Here in the program, I teach a materials-based studio course for future art teachers, and, having these dynamics and being in the art education realm, it's very different than being in an art school context. I very much like it because it's about respecting each other's voice and about nurturing growth.

Erol Gündüz (E.G.): I'm a doctoral student here at Teachers College in my sixth year. The narrative that makes sense for me is connecting why I became a teacher with what I experienced as a student. Tom Sherman, my undergrad video art teacher, taught me a good word that I didn't think I'd ever use in a sentence but now use a lot, which is "grievance." Grievance is what has driven some of the things I experienced in critique and that drives a lot of the teaching practice I engender now. In art school, a lot was about the culture shock of going to art school. I didn't consider myself an art student in high school, just creative. When I got to art school, I was expecting a big democracy of "You can do whatever you want," "We're going to be creative," and "You're just going to get in there and have a great time." And it wasn't that as much as I'd expected. There was a certain frequency of the type of work that was expected from students. Critiques had a certain language I wasn't familiar with and it was very uncomfortable. I was scrambling to figure out a way to make sense of that environment and also be a good student. As ateacher now—I teach 3D design for 3D printing, a very technical field—I think about how to get students comfortable with the culture shock and how to let them have their own voice so they're not just practitioners doing a good job and trying to please the teacher (which is something I feel we all grapple with a bit). That being said, I think what I've done, how I've tried to dealt with it, and what I'd hoped would have happened in undergrad is more of a nurturing environment. A term that was used at one of these recent panels was "torture vs. nurture," so in an aggressive way, I became the ultimate nurturing teacher because that's what I'd wanted as a student. I wanted somebody to ask me what I wanted to become as an artist and help me achieve that. Instead, I circumnavigated an entire landscape of terminology and materials and subcultures and critiques. I guess the path to being a teacher comes from your experiences as a student. I don't think you can divorce those things. Even in preparing for this event, I had to think about why I do what I'm doing now. Sometimes

you forget when you become a teacher and get caught up in your own situation. It's the notion of nurturing, because, even after students graduate, they have to be themselves. I think, a lot of times, when people go through critiques and that system, they can exit more confused than when they entered it. Mod.: Critique can be a reflective space, and we so rarely have those spaces anymore. Not withstanding this conference, why is critique often an unexamined part of art school and pedagogy? Why are we not talking about critique more?

E.M.: Critique is a free space that perhaps should remain free. Maybe it shouldn't become a part of pedagogy on paper, but it's still part of learning. Critique has been such an inspiration for me and still is—I watch television, I watch media, I see something's wrong there, so I'm going to remake it. We use the term "remix," which I don't like very much, but whenever artists make work, it's a remix of something, so it's a critique of and a reflection of something.

L.P.: It seems like there are two critiques we are talking about: one is the one-to- one critique and the other is a group critique, and they are very different. One-to- one involves the teacher becoming a learner and in dialogue with their student. The group critique is for whoever the moderator is of this group critique. It's much more complicated. There's a natural tendency, especially in our commodified world, to take for granted certain authorities and dogmas and to deduct from them judgments that are often not applicable. When I directed a group critique, I always tried to bring people down to their eyes and through their eyes to the thoughts that come from looking, and to let the authority or assumed authority (the assumed hierarchies) break down so people can be themselves and look without generalizations. So the group critique is much more difficult, indeed. The notion of something being successful or unsuccessful has been a problem for many of us. If there are no common criteria for the purpose of art, there are no criteria for what is successful and what is not successful, only arbitrary, individual opinions, each supported by many layers of thought and knowledge. I don't know anymore what is successful and what is not. I shift concepts and start a discussion thinking that something is, in my terms—very subjective terms and limited terms—successful, and then end up saying this person has not been completely true to herself or himself. We can learn further by looking more carefully at options, which can be a nice game to play, the game of options.

S.M.: As someone who's worked as an assessment coordinator and department chair in a liberal arts college in a public university—not an art school—I have significant anxiety around the issue of assessment as something that presumes success, as something that can be codified very simply, if not quantified. I think about my own art education and things that turned out to be very useful—I'm not sure they would have, in today's parlance, produced an artifact. It could be that something lodged itself in my mind and then came out later while working on something.

E. G.: Critique can also be the most dangerous part of a class. Logically, when I sit down and prepare for a class session, for example, I think, "Here's the lecture, here are the notes, the students are going to have questions here, they might run into a problem here." But critique is where everything of that class comes together,

and either it's amazing, wonderful, nurturing, and great catharsis can happen, or disaster can ensue. It's such a delicate space, especially when you're trying to be professional as a teacher. At the same token, it also bleeds into a bit of therapy when students put a lot of their personal energies into that work. This is one of the reasons I feel critique is such a danced-around subject and why everyone's got their own style and why people write about it. I was never instructed on critique. I tried to mimic something between what my teachers did, what I didn't like, what I would have appreciated, what I think my students will like, and tried to find a way to dance around it. It's the emotional energies that students bring to the table along with the expectations of the department—it's like swirling eddies of crazy.

E.M.: I think what we've been discussing in education very currently is the student taking responsibility for their education, so the student needs to take responsibility for their critique as well. If the critique is not benefiting the student, maybe they don't need to be in that critique. Even if it is disastrous, they're still learning. So, again, my underlying point of critique is that the student or artist needs to wants to make work at the end.

L.vd H.: When you receive a critique, you may not fully understand it at the time, and it may take even a year or two until you unpack that idea. You may come out of a critique and feel it was a disaster, but then years later think back that it was actually the best critique you had. I'm usually a very harsh critic when I teach. I like to praise the work and talk about the strengths, but I think we learn from not necessarily negatives, but the parts that are not working. When criticism is more direct and honest, even if, at the time, it doesn't come as useful, in the future, it really affects the work and can be beneficial.

Z.N.: Something I always discuss with my students is that an honest critique, a truthful critique, is the most generous act you can give. Even if it's not something you want to hear, if it is truthful, the students can do with it what they want. Another thing I usually recommend is that another student write down the critiques for the students. Students often don't fully hear the critique because they are emotionally distraught or biased and they only hear something negative. It's not about positive or negative, it's just about strategies, possibilities, how things are working, or the potential of something. If we can acknowledge that we are all there to help or look at strategies and see where someone can go, that's very different than a judgment. I also encourage students to disagree. I'm interested in being the devil's advocate. I think it opens a lot of doors and doesn't have to be one single consensus. It's about having multiple perspectives, and it's something where the students help each other grow.

P.P.: We know that critiques are manifold and dynamic and dimensional, and they have a remarkable plasticity. In thinking about critique, we have to embrace all of its pluralism and complexity. Years ago, when I was at Parsons, I worked with Herbert Muschamp who was, as many of you know, a wonderful critic and writer. I remember that's what critique is—that critical space. I remember Herbert talking about writing and critique and entering into the space of conviction and doubt, whether you're writing criticism or performing criticism or sharing in that critical dialogue. So there is

risk and also tremendous possibility. I think that's why we feel so passionately about it, because it's not easy and there are risks, but there are often very powerful outcomes as well.

Mod.: Thinking about the practical piece of a different student taking notes for the student being critiqued and how you set up the framework for this openness—for risk taking, for being able to be challenged but also supported. How is that stage set? What are steps that you take to set that space for students?

S.M.: Sometimes studio art professors, myself included, get anxious that we need to be doing something. Usually there's plenty to do, but I think the temptation to be avoided is one of prematurely providing criticism to something that's in process. I'll refer to a short story about a dancer who breaks his legs the first time he thinks about dancing while he's dancing. Creating and analyzing are two different things—don't try to do them at the same time. The students need a space to work it out, and while that's happening, I'm just there to help them do that. The criticism comes later in the critique.

Z.N.: Stepping back as leader of the discussion and letting students raise questions and have discussions between themselves is more dynamic than having someone as the main figure leading a conversation in a certain direction. I find more issues come up when students have freedom and are part of that community. Allowing for brainstorming and thinking about ideas is a good strategy and gives them time to digest the work and be able to describe it.

E.M.: I remember a professor that started every critic with simply, "What do you see?" As a student, it's hard to go in negatively on someone's work, even if it's very bad, so he would start with that question, and everyone would have to speak and break down what we saw. "Well, how do you feel about that?" And it would go on and on. Then we'd foster a discussion from there. So sometimes it can just be as simple as "What do you see?"

E.G.: A technique I use is externalizing critique until the end of the class online. I rely upon the community aspect. Students don't always have faith in my ability to give negative feedback. So I usually give my feedback, which ends up being a protean soup of things to avoid that could get them in trouble, positive things, and potential directions they can go. Then, being housed online, it never gets lost and always exists. As students commit to that dialogue, it becomes a floating repository that's very useful.

Mod.: What are the ways that critique happens more flexibly when working with a group of students?

L.P.: I once had a third-year student whose painting I liked very much and I encouraged him to persist. I found him again in class in his fourth year, and I went to his cubicle and he was doing work that was different from what I remembered from the third year. He saw me coming and welcomed me, and then he attacked me. He said, "You see? I'm not doing at all what you insisted I should do." I never insisted he should do anything. Because of the lack of consensus about the purpose of art, one of the tenets I cultivate is the creative misunderstanding of the spectator—the artist says one thing and the spectator says another. In this case, the student creatively misunderstood so much that he rebelled against the authority he thought I was establishing on him, which I was not. So in talking about critique, we are also talking

about very complex networks of sets of presumptuous, of precedents, of beliefs, and of languages. We are often talking in different languages and think we're talking the same language, which is, I think, very exciting. Some people say, "Oh yes, it has all become a Babel because there are no standards anymore." I favor this because it encourages both teacher and student to become more themselves, and not necessarily in agreement. The discussion and disagreement when there's good will and passion can bring great enhancement for every person.

L.vd H.: It's much better that a teacher has a firm opinion, or is truly honest and fairly solid. If you have a teacher where everything is "just fine," students learn a lot less. You learn so much from things you do not agree upon because you must step back and think about yourself as a student. I tell my students this. I may have a biased or different perception or perspective, but I acknowledge that it's important that they find their own voice in relation to the voices they are confronted with. There are teachers who, in an effort to be very supportive, go along with everything. It's more productive when everything is not always just fine. I think a lot of growth can come from disagreement.

P.P.: Critique takes on different dynamic qualities and characteristics because you're often talking about something that's not really in sight. It's ephemeral, maybe it's gone, or it's extremely durational and will go on for years and years. Perhaps it's dispersed and you're only encountering part of it or not any of it directly. Often it involves other people whose hearts and minds have been involved in the process who may be missing in action during that conversation. Much of it is phantom-like, but it's also very real. All critiques have a speculative quality to them, but, since everything isn't necessarily apparent, another kind of speculation is underway, and things come out through a robust dialogue, not only with the artist, but everybody in the room. This is making us rethink critique as a much more expansive and deeply engaged community.

Z.N.: We talk always about what we see first, but in terms of social practice and durational pieces, we're really looking at the strategies an artist used and how we can evaluate them and how they work. With a lot of art, or visual art, we speak about strategies and decisions an artist makes without necessarily judging, but seeing what kind of effect they have and how other strategies would have different effects, and then, depending on the intention of the maker, rethinking strategies.

Mod.: Given the climate of the last year or more in this country, the words coming from everybody about expansiveness, engagement, addressing fears, building trust for risk taking—this is a special thing, this space of critique, and it's worth at least acknowledging and recognizing and giving it attention and intention. Let us finish with what Eric started with, that, at the end of the critique, most importantly, the artist should want to make more work.

Papers

Notes from the Field |

Hanny Ahern

As an artist-turned-educator, I seek to provoke environments that help turn soft skills—such as inspiration, observation, and collaboration—into hard skills. Working outside of schools, I use my arts education and advanced degrees to create a fluid teaching method that relies on critique in environments where they are not a given. My formal studies in arts and media guided me to use my education in a less literal way than I experienced it. Being an artist-educator does not describe all its elements, including being an administrator, counselor, producer, critic, friend, role model, advisor, and the list goes on.

Figure 1: Critique has become for me a shoe, which separates the bare foot from the dirt.

If I said one thing on behalf of the unspoken parts of the artist-educator role, it would be that I have the right to remain a student as I share notes from the field begging the question: Can the practice of art and critique be used outside of the arts to form something from nothing?

My experiences in rural Kenya, New York City public schools, museums, and grass roots educational projects are complex and portraying them would require ethnographic skills. However, the experiences have made one thing very clear: Learning is in fact free, but it requires a community of accountability to make it tangible.

Critiquing Inspiration and Collaboration: When Criticism Becomes Critical. Isiolo Kenya, Pepo La Tumaini 2014

The accountability of community is implicit in Isiolo Kenya. As an artist-in-residence, an art curriculum was born out of a crisis and fell into my hands. Attempting to share this instance with you is to attempt to look at critique used in a place where "art critique" has no place.

A group of a dozen 15-year-old adults in rural Kenya are displaced due to the death of a teacher in their community. They are more than students—they are heads of households who have come to Tumaini to learn vocational skills. The mission is to prevent a relapse into street culture by teaching a long-term sustainable skill. 12 students stare in my direction for guidance. For this population, structure is as vital as progress and skill.

How can I validate and improve skills such as observation, inspiration, collaboration, and innovation as solid tools and metaphors to support the rest of the lives of these people? Something in my instinct tells me that the dead grass and litter in the streets can be seen as an artistic channel for people to cultivate positive skills. "Today we are going to use INSPIRATION in order to COLLABORATE. We will be tested on these concepts at the end of the day. Let's start by taking a walk in the garden."

Lesson: Pay special attention to the different details, shapes, and sizes of leaves, different features, and spaces that we see. Feel free to pick up loose matter, make notes, draw, or

take the time to observe. We will use all of this to create not a copy of what we see. This is to be "inspired by" the environment. Inspiration is something we can actively use, unlike standing around waiting around for something to happen.

After our walk, each student had a committed element to the garden. With little paper and a random assortment of materials, we set out on the next phase of collaboration to put these inspirations together in a giant piece bigger than us.

By the end of three hours, we had a massive paper tree with unique, large, and expressive leaves that loosely looked like the natural African flora, yet slightly unreal in scale, color and interpretation. We stood before our massive piece and, while nerves were high, each student knew that every other student was also on stage. After all, we had collaborated and affirmed that our inspiration was a solid space... not a doubtful miracle.

Critiquing Infinity: Dia Beacon 2016, "Inside the Museum, Infinity Goes Up on Trial," Bob Dylan

The infinity trials were an academic debate on the white paintings of Robert Ryman. The debate was open to the public and entirely run by students. As an artist, I have no exposure to the format of academic debate, so it became critical that I facilitate outside of my skill set. The students led the debate, and the critique of the work was inherent in the piece. While it's difficult to portray in writing when in an overly-structured mindset, critique has served to dismantle the giant ideas before us and make them workable with students. The same principle has worked in the reverse. In a place where art critique is not valid, it can serve to validate. My hope is that the soft skills are introduced before they get to the arts institution.

Critical Techniques: Theater Exercises for the Classroom | Beatriz Albuquerque

For this workshop, activities were based on the performative exercises of three main artists: Antonin Artaud, the ecstatic poet who created Theater of Cruelty, Augusto Boal from Theater of the Oppressed, and lastly, performance artist Marina Abramovic from her project entitled Cleaning the House. In participating, teachers brought their own classroom challenges, and together using theater exercises, we considered ways to facilitate an expansion of critique in the classroom. The techniques are based on applying metacognitive awareness through performance, speech, and movement. Participants discussed how these creative theatrical pedagogies might facilitate awareness and student-driven learning in their classroom in order to empower both the educator and their students.

Activity Logistics

This 10 minute workshop was composed of four exercises followed by feedback and dialogue at the end. The four theater exercises consisted of performance, spatial, verbal, body-centered and dialogue, all of which could be adapted for the classroom and different populations. The objective of these exercises was to activate the students in body and mind, assist in loosening their inhibitions, and create both a sense of community and a comfortable environment.

Engaging with the Body

Exercise 1: Greeting

The first warm-up was called greeting exercise without words. Participants were asked to fill the space around them by simply looking into each other's eyes.

Exercise 2: Sharing

The second warm-up activity began by forming a circle. The teacher asked them to pass the orange and share their name. In the second round, the participants must pass the orange while saying the next person's name.

Exercise 3: Engaging with the Art Object and Critique

The third activity began by placing an art object in the center of the circle. The teacher offered a critique of that art object. Then, each participant that had the orange was asked to share a critique and pass the orange to a random person.

Exercise 4: Theater as Tool for Dialogue and Critique

One activity from Theatre of the Oppressed is called the Game of Dialogue; for this we activate a sense of play and we learn to reflect together afterwards. This game is governed by clear rules that we must follow. At the same time, this game requires creativity and freedom. The primary rule of the game is a belief that we that we must re-establish the right of everyone to exist in dignity. Participants were asked to form groups of two or more. Next, the teacher asked the participants to think about a critique that they once personally received which was not constructive. Then, they were to create a frozen scene using their bodies, to portray and hold the physical position of that negative critique without moving. The teacher then asked the rest of the group to approach the frozen students and alter their body position. The frozen students would allow themselves to be moved and repositioned for the purpose of changing a bad memory into a good one. After the exercise there was dialogue.

Feedback

In the last part of the workshop participants were asked to wrap up the exercises that they experienced with feedback, critique, dialogue and how they could implement these in the classroom or adapt them to other topics. One teacher asked how the exercises might be adapted for her classroom of autistic students, who do not like to touch or be touched. It was suggested to use a balloon instead of an orange, so that the concept was the same yet adjusted to a comfort level for those particular students

Conclusion

The basis of all this is that constructive criticism can only arise in a setting which is a safe environment, and that the more supportive that environment the more effective the critique will be. To that end, these exercises work towards fomenting a sense of community and a greater bonding between students and teachers in the classroom. It is from this foundation of acceptance that students can grow and best realize their goals. It should also be kept in mind that these warm-up activities can be adapted for various populations and needs, as for example with the aforementioned autistic classroom.

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The Critique as Research Strategy[1] | Joseph J. Basile

My topic today involves taking a new look at the critique in higher education. The notion of critical discourse between artists and critics as a means of understanding and improving art and design practice is a powerful one, and such discourse is often seen as essential in the development of the creative mind. My specific goal is not to challenge this central place but suggest a new way of thinking about critique: as a method of inquiry–a method of research, even–undertaken by artists and designers who seek to demonstrate through their art and design practice ways of seeing the world. This view is informed by recent work in social science, visual culture history and critical theory, where practitioners are becoming more and more conscious of the intersection between "art" and "research" in human societies.

Clearly, there is not one form of critique, nor is there one preferred methodological or theoretical framework. From "intuitive" critiques, to those that develop from traditional aesthetic theory, to those grounded in postmodern theory, to those informed by recent work in neurobiology, critics operate not with rigid methodologies but rather take a variety of pathways. At its most basic level the critique finds its point of origin, in the educational setting, in the classroom-studio where artist-students display work with which they are currently engaged. Other artist-students, with an instructor or critic acting as counterpoint, contribute critical responses to the work they see–with the maker of that work listening, responding, listening again. When I say "work" of course I mean all sorts of things: 2D and 3D objects, graphic design, photography and film, performance. And of course labels like "artist," "student," "instructor" and "critic" can take a variety of meanings as well. Relative to my thesis, however, it is less important to arrive at accepted definitions of these terms, than it is to be mindful of their multiplicity within a set of critical practices.

Though techniques of criticism, and outcomes of the critique process, differ, there is a common thread woven through many of them: the importance of personal experience, personal response, and the use of personal narrative forms to communicate within the unique setting of each individual critique. Every one has his or her own stories of important critique experiences. I remember as a new faculty member in art history at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) being asked to attend a foundation critique by painter Jan Stinchcomb. I had no practical knowledge of the process; I knew it was important at art and design colleges and in artists' studios, but I had never participated in one. Like many art historians, my knowledge of art was principally theoretical–I had no studio classes in college. As a guest in this new environment I was nervous, in that I was unsure how I was meant to participate. I also remember having some skepticism about the critique. It all seemed a bit "airy-fairy" to me; I suppose I had bought into the stereotype of art students speaking about their work as matter of opinion and taste only. As such, it seemed to me less a pedagogical process and more a way to vent or to stroke egos. So it was that I was surprised at what I discovered in that first crit. As we progressed I noticed two things: first, that many students were using their work as a way of "thinking through" a problem or experience; and second, that the discussion fostered in critique constituted, for most, feedback that they intended to incorporate in revised or future work. Sometimes, artists reject suggestions made in critiques and

when they argue in favor of the choices they have originally made it sounds like an academic defending his or her thesis. All this struck me as significant, though I would have been hard pressed at the time to articulate just why.

Later, as I became more familiar with arts education, I began to make connections between art and object making, discourse, and notions of "research." This was aided by reading I was doing in the social sciences—especially those dealing with materiality—but also with my experiences working alongside studio faculty and students at MICA. Like most academics, I was trained in a system that separated "creative" and "research" approaches. This is reflected most clearly in the dichotomies that are typically set up in institutions of higher learning, where art history and studio art programs are seen as distinct entities—related, certainly, but different and divided. While most studio artists have taken plenty of art history courses, relatively few art historians are trained in art making or design. At MICA, this dichotomy exists as well; but there are always people attacking these walls and seeking to break them down. So I came to understand not only that many of the artists with whom I was working were some of the smartest people I knew, but also that they approached the world through their art and design practice in ways similar to how scholars in art history, archaeology, and other materially based disciplines approach historical problems; that is: they *think* problems through with *things*.

"Thinking with things" is a phrase that is well-known to art historians, even before the seminal works of George Kubler and Esther Pasztory in the mid-20th century.[2] The notion that one can use physical objects to find out about aspects of human experience is in fact a relatively recent idea, most thoroughly formulated only in the 18th century. Then, thinkers like Winckelmann and Hegel posited the radical notion that symbolic meaning was "locked up" in the physical objects created by human beings—what social scientists now call *material culture*. Before this period, only historical documents were seen as useful in illuminating the past. But Enlightenment scholars advanced the notion that an artifact or art object is like a *text*; that is, it can be "read" and contains information about the people who made it. This, of course, is the very bedrock on which art history, archaeology and related disciplines are founded. But it also suggests something else: the role of makers—artists and designers—as encoders of knowledge in objects.

The importance—indeed, the *centrality*—of art has become obvious to many writers recently. No longer conceived of as an "optional extra" of the human experience, art and design as an intellectual practice, as a system of communication, indeed as a way of seeing the world, have come to the forefront. Prehistorians link the making of objects, images and symbols to the evolving human mind. So-called "new materialists" like Ian Hodder (basing their work on the critical theory of Bourdieu and others) stress the centrality of human relationships with made objects, focusing on the processes by which individuals, groups and societies become "entangled" in systems of producing and maintaining material things; that is, the making of meaningful objects is an imperative of human behavior—indeed, one could even say that humans are *made* by the making of objects.[3] And artists like Patricia Leavy have developed the notion of "arts-based research": a methodology that adapts the tenets of art and design disciplines in order to address social research questions in truly engaged, and engaging, ways. Leavy points out

that arts-based research is holistic, builds coalitions and fosters community, is politically and socially aware, promotes dialogue, and is rigorous when practiced systematically. By contrast, the average peer-reviewed academic research article is read by a handful of people in its "useful" life, with educational backgrounds and credentials similar to the author, and then sits on a shelf for most of the rest of its existence.[4]

All this came to a head for me, however, when I read Colin Renfrew's thought-provoking book *Figuring It Out: The Parallel Visions of Artists and Archaeologists.* Renfrew is a social scientist, anthropologist and archaeologist, and an academic administrator. One of his duties, as Master of Jesus College at Cambridge, was the organization of exhibits, showcasing the works of contemporary artists. Renfrew was not especially a connoisseur of contemporary art, though not completely unversed. He did notice, however, and was indeed struck by the seeming relationships between the aesthetic of sculptors and installation artists like Richard Long, Andy Goldsworthy and Mark Dion, on the one hand, and that of the archaeological remains with which Renfrew had great expertise, including and especially the so-called "megalithic" monuments of Western Europe. Renfrew began to explore the relationship between artists and social scientists, the "parallel visions" as he came to call them, and concluded that many artists are asking the same fundamental questions as archaeologists–questions about human experience and behavior. "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?", Gaugin famously queried. Renfrew posits that the contemporary artist/designer "*seeks to understand the world by acting upon it,*" a kind of "research strategy" based on materiality that parallels those of many scholarly disciplines.[5] And it has occurred to me–and perhaps to others–that the critique plays a role in this strategy, as a kind of dialectic process that the artist/designer uses to change, improve, and advance his or her research. This may not describe the work or the goals of *every* artist, but I have become more and more aware of it, and have been struck by this notion of the "parallel vision," playing itself out not in the pages of scholarly journals, but in classrooms and studios.

This view, to my way of thinking, enables us to move beyond the false dichotomy of "creative" versus "scientific" inquiry, and the notion that artists and designers are foreign or "other" to scholars and academics, and vice versa. In fact, these methods seem in a fundamental way *the same*, those of questioners in search of possible answers, using material things as a way of working through problems. We proceed towards similar goals, and this unique practice we call "the crit" is in fact a type of research method: to me, a way of creating insight into the human condition.

Endnotes: [1] A version of this paper was delivered at the Tenth International Conference on the Arts in Society at Imperial College, London, 22-24 July 2015, and appears as the concluding essay in Susan Waters-Eller and Joseph J. Basile (eds.), Beyond Critique: Different Ways of Talking about Art, Baltimore: MICA Press, 2013, pp. 169-177.

[2] George Kubler, The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things, New Haven: Yale, 1962; Esther Pasztory, Thinking with Things: Toward a New Vision of Art, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005.

[3] Ian Hodder, Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationship between Humans and Things, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

[4] Patricia Leavy, Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice, London and New York: Guilford Press, 2009.

[5] Colin Renfrew, Figuring It Out: The Parallel Visions of Artists and Archaeologists, London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 2003.

Critique in Art and Design Education | Ruth Mateus-Berr

Ruth Mateus-Berr reviews the current discussions on critique and evaluation at Art Universities in Austria. Then she concentrates on some main items of critique in her seminars about Design Research, where she applies Applied Design Thinking. She engages with two feedback strategies: one, applied as "critique" phase within the design process, where all participants are just allowed to ask question to the presenter, the second on which she is conscious about the findings of John Hattie (1992; 2013, 206-236) who believes that feedback has the most influence on performance, and that it is set in social and behavioral context. Hattie & Timperley (2007) distinguish four forms of critique (feedback), which have been discussed in the book "art-lives" by Ruth Mateus-Berr & Julia Poscharnig in 2014. Further she involves the findings of Fishbach & Finkelstein (2012) on positive and negative feedback.

Introduction

Regarding the power of feedback at university, it considers the objectives to take advantage of feedback to improve teaching and learning and re-think the role model of University teachers: As a teacher will give feedback, it will be given in classroom later. Further on teaching at art universities demands special forms of feedbacks as they often give individual instruction.

The student union of the University of Music and Dramatic Arts Mozarteum Salzburg and the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz reclaimed more training for professors at art universities. Artistic and scientific profile of teachers as well as their international network is of high interest but one must not neglect their knowledge of teaching and didactics, which is in many German speaking countries merely neglected at application procedures (Höft & Großkopf, 2016). The University of Applied Arts Vienna co-developed with all willing participants of the institution a paper and form of evaluation for teachers: Teaching. Quality. Evaluation. An Applied Concept (Blimlinger et al 2010). This stands for the whole academic teaching staff which is obliged to evaluate their seminars at least every three semesters, except full professors. They are requested to use this as feedback to their own and student's expectations and suggested to share the outputs with students. But these evaluations of seminars are not used as internal evaluation and commissioning of apprenticeships. The full professors are suggested to evaluate via peer reviews from experts of other art universities.

1. Applied Design Thinking and Critique

The *Applied Design Thinking Lab* (ADTL), Vienna, is situated at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and was founded by the author in 2009 (Mateus-Berr 2013, 73-116). "The notion that artistic studios are comparable to laboratories emerged in modernistic avant-garde thinking in the Soviet Union, the United States and England in the 1920s. Since then the scientific laboratory has become a model or framework for the architectural and design studio" (Hasenhütl 2017, 149; McGuire 2011, 22) and represents a paradigm shift of collaboration and teaching: "Design ethics dealing with habitualisations and subjective aspects (Findeli 2001, 13) were replaced by "design thinking" (Hasenhütl 2017, 149; Koh 2015, 44;)"

2.1 Design Process as Design Rhizome: Stuttering as Art/Design Process

The figure of Designrhizom represents the author´s view of a design process. Design processes are interpreted as an open, associative, connective, nonlinear process with divers (geophilosophical) plateaus with variable dimensions (Deleuze & Guattari 1977, 37), place for failure and interim results.

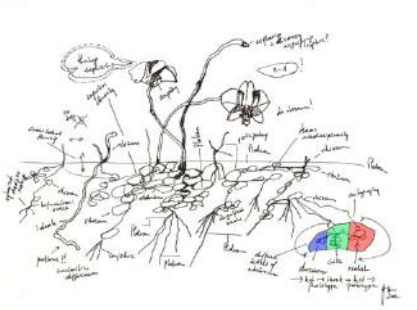

Figure 1: The figure of the Design Rhizom.© Ruth Mateus-Berr

Critique can be considered simply as perspective taking. Listening to the different perspectives opens up more relevant perceptions of the audience. The audience is asked just to ask questions, which should take the project further. They are asked not to give answers or statements. The receiver does not have to vindicate her or his project; she/he just listens and writes down new upcoming ideas, afterwards filters the inputs and reframes the project. Many people get upset and frustrated by others saying "This won´t work". So first we do not allow such interventions at the all phases and second students are encouraged to believe in themselves and their ideas. Studies demonstrate (Dilts et al. 1991, 222ff) that creative persons have the ability to deal with a fair amount of frustration, but "Some of the biggest barriers to creativity come from the various forms of the critic" (257). These limitations are related to expectations, limiting beliefs and incongruence. People have fear of failure, fear of criticism, fear of success or even fear of "unknown". Often these blocks are created by a lack of understanding or respect of different worldviews. Probably the majority of the creative activity goes into problem solving. These problems can be defined as the "difference between the present state and your desired state", which incorporates you as a whole within the process. Students are encouraged to define their goal(s) of the process and not their outcomes as products. The supervisor (author) of the seminar tries to find out by iterative questioning WHAT the student aims for and why.

Stammering is considered as failure in our society but Demosthenes (384-322 BC) for example, the Greek orator, lawyer and politician, was known as a good orator, though stammering (Stalpaert wyn, 1). Stuttering is a creative work, a poiesis, because a creative mind might get easily distracted. "Stuttering", which might appear in a design process, might be regarded as planned strategy within the art and design process.

2.2. Case Studies

Case-Study 1

Definition of Objectives: In the ADTL LAB about Design the Counter-performance (2016) students were meant to design violence free and humorous interventions against right parties arising since 2010s. Surprisingly some of the students arrived with personal problems, such as bad critique of other teachers at University. These critiques blocked them to continue their design work in general. The following they should define the problem: "Teacher XY asked me why I

am studying here. I feel totally insecure and do not find my way of designing. I am looking for a design topic witch catches my interest" (student xy). The next seminar they should do a little performance (following the rules of "Show, don´t tell" of Design Thinking). This student started to talk in a sitting position. She would speak confident and talk a lot about her successes in her past and present time. The exaggeration was obvious. The following seminar she brought a little glass container with diverse ingredients. The audience opened it and smelled. She explained that those are ingredients of her home where she has learned not to behave self-confident, what she wants to overcome. The audience associated artists and designers who have been working with smell and fear and asked questions to bring her further, like another brainstorming phase. The difference to classical design seminars is that usually the students are asked to define a briefing with clear objectives of a product. In this case, they just define a briefing about their interest, problem and develop the projects step by step further.

Case Study 2

In 2015 the author invented a seminar on Politics of Fear. In the realm of public space, both the rational and emotional are closely intertwined. The so-called refugee crisis in Europe has been instrumentalized by "fear entrepreneurs" (Furedi, 2005) (politicians, media, etc.) who benefit from the creation of irrational fears amongst people. The project "Re-Negotiating Politics of Fear in Public Spaces" aims at inviting people of the city to discuss their personal notions of fear and hope for the future in general, with an additional focus on how fears are constructed in the context of the rise of right-wing parties in Europe. Every week students from the Master program Social Design. Arts as Urban Innovation and some refugees met for one hour and developed ideas, which were set into realm at various spaces since then. The actions began with an intervention at TBA21 (Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary) in Vienna, which attempted to probe the public space with a physical installation, as well as provoke a public reaction. This intervention occurred on the Sunday of the Austrian Federal President elections (May 22nd 2016), which became a tight race between a right wing and a moderately left-wing candidate. Results fluctuated around the 50/50 percentage mark throughout the course of the day. This created a tense atmosphere which is exactly the climate that POF is interested to work in.

The Politics of Fear project continues to take action in other public sites and cities in Austria and beyond. POF Collective has been invited to make an action in collaboration with the afo (Architecture Forum of Upper Austria) in Linz, the capital city of the Upper Austria region. The organization offered POF the chance to make use of the public square in front of their headquarters at Herbert Bayer Platz at the end of September 2016 (See Figure 3). The objective of the author and seminar leader is to present always in different manners and encourage students on various levels. POF was also invited to present their work at Aarhus, the 14th participatory Design Conference, at the Cumulus Design Conference Open Design for E-very-thing in Hongkong, at the Royal College of Art at the conference of Traders: Mediations. Arts & Design Agency and Participation in Public Space in 2016 and the Kunsthaus Wien in 2017: https://pofcollective.wordpress.com/

Figure 2: TBA POF 2016 © Ruth Mateus-Berr

Figure 3: POF Linz 2016 © Sebastian Kraner, Milly Reid

Why did these projects go so well though little time and many participants? Every meeting was considered in (ADTL) LAB atmosphere. Everybody could dream and speak out loud his or her ideas. The feedback or critique was just given in form of a new associative brainstorming phase, not as a "This will not work". Everybody had equally the chance to contribute with ideas and workload and the objectives of writing about the projects in the form of conference papers and present the projects internationally enforced the group. The critique phase was used as a new brainstorming phase.

2.3. Purposes, Effects, and Types of Feedback

What are the purposes, effects, and types of feedback?

- "Correctional review, the feedback and instruction become intertwined until the process itself takes on the forms of new instruction, rather than informing the student solely about correctness" (Kulhavy 1977, 212).
- "To take on this instructional purpose, feedback needs to provide information specifically relating to the task or process of learning that fills a gap between what is understood and what is aimed to be understood" (Sadler, 1989, 119-144).

Winne and Butler (1994, 5740) provided an excellent summary in their claim that "feedback is information with which a learner can confirm, add to, overwrite, tune, or restructure information in memory, whether that information is domain knowledge, meta-cognitive knowledge, beliefs about self and tasks, or cognitive tactics and strategies".

Feedback is most powerful when it addresses faulty interpretations, not a total lack of understanding. Contrary to the behaviorists' argument, Kulhavy (1977) demonstrated that feedback is not necessarily a reinforcer, because feedback can be accepted, modified, or rejected.

In the paper *The Power of Feedback* (Hattie & Timperly 2007, 86) it is documented that effective feedback must answer three major questions asked by a teacher and/or by a student:

- Where am I going? (What are the goals?)
- How am I going? (What progress is being made toward the goal?)
- Where to next? (What activities need to be undertaken to make better progress?)

Fishbach & Finkelstein (2012) examined, when and how positive and negative feedback influence goal persistence and when they promote goal disengagement and change. In general it is assumed that greater motivation is done if a feedback is received, either positive or negative. Therefor self-regulatory processes have to be identified in which feedback influences performance motivation. Goal research suggests that "positive feedback promoted goal persistence by increasing outcome expectancies and thus commitment to a goal" and that "positive feedback increases individuals' sense of self -efficacy (Bandura 1991, 248-287) that pupils are competent in pursuing a goal—therefore, their efforts will pay off" (Fishbach & Finkelstein 2012, 4-5).

Ryan & Deci (2000, 68-78) correspond to this assumption that people who have received positive feedback are more committed in pursuing a goal on subsequent occasions. Negative feedback decreases the motivational goal (comp. Custers & Aarts 2005, 129-142; Aarts, Custers, & Holland 2007, 165-178). But there exists a discrepancy model as well, which derives from cybernetic model, which believes that negative feedback prevails goal-directed behavior (comp. Carver & Scheier, 1998; Miller, Galanter, & Pribram, 1960; Powers, 1973). This motivational approach calculates the discrepancy of present and desired state and guides action towards closing the gap between these two and works with several feedback loops (Carver & Scheier 1990, 19-35), so called T.O.T.E (Test, Operate, Test, Exit). A main prediction of this model believes that people, receiving negative feedback on their achievement increase their engagement. Behind it lies successful experience, which induces positive mood. This model engages with the assumption that negative feedback increases persistence. In self-discrepancy theory (Higgins 1987, 319-340) it is believed too, that negative feedback motivates goal adherence. But there a distinction has to be made between prevention and promotional goals as well as individual attitude. These models require well and detailed information about present and desired state by feedback and self-observation. Also inhibition counts, which are a functional self-regulatory strategy: pupils proceed to reduce a discrepancy (comp. Fishbach & Finkelstein 2012, 12-13).

Fishbach & Finkelstein (2012, 13, 22) assume that no universal answer exists regarding the question of positive and negative feedback concerning motivation and achievement: "Specifically, feedback that provides information on the value of a goal and expectancy of attainment (i.e., commitment) has a different impact than feedback that provides information on the level of progress toward a goal:" Individuals increase goal pursuit in response to positive feedback in a commitment frame and negative feedback in a progress frame according to their attention to a specific action or sub goal to a superordinate goal. Further on studies demonstrate that temporal distance increases the focus on abstract goals (comp. Fishbach & Finkelstein 2012, 24). The authors found that when commitment was low, positive feedback as e.g. emphasizing completed actions increase goal persistence more then negative feedback as e.g. emphasizing remaining actions (26). Koo & Fishbach (2010, 1-13) researched forms of feedback regarding a) task completed b) task remained c) present task position. Group b) chose to advance in a higher level. In another study they documented that negative feedback on missing actions increased engagement whereas positive feedback on completed actions increased job satisfaction.

Overall according to scientific evidence, "positive feedback that is taken as a signal of commitment promotes staying on the present level of goal engagement, whereas negative feedback that is taken as a lack of progress promotes moving to a more advanced goal" (Fishbach & Finkelstein 2012, 29). In general one can assume that positive feedback is effective when it signals commitment and negative feedback is effective when it signals discrepancy (30). According to Nigel Cross´s (2006, 26-27) distinction in *Novices* and *Experts*, Fishbach & Finkelstein report that novices need more positive feedback then experts. There is a shift towards negative feedback as people gain expertise. Especially interesting is the fact that feedback results in positive or negative feelings and these motivate behavioral change (36).

Villuendas-González & González-Garrido (2016) studied brain structures by questionnaires and EEG recording, related to feedback processing: They assume that a positive feedback elicits smaller responses as e.g. "the current goal is met" then negative or neutral responses as "goal not met" and generalize: "worse then expected". Villuendas-González & González-Garrido (2016) suggest "further developments which would have to consider using only complex trials, in order to address the possibility of feedback reflecting not only information about performance but about *expected* performance", which would refer to the present and desired state concerning feedback.

3. Conclusion

Critique is considered as form of feedback. As there are many forms of feedback and reception of feedbacks by students, feedback has to be considered carefully, especially within art schools because teaching at art universities demands special forms of feedbacks as they often give individual instruction. Many art schools around the world demand teaching courses by applications or tenure track positions. The German speaking countries seem to be one step behind. Teaching ability is accepted just by having taught at another institution, not by "learning how to teach", by didactics. It seems to be proven by studies until now that both positive feedback and negative feedback prove success for the students. Whereas novices need more positive feedback, experts even claim negative feedback to improve. It is important to give evaluative feedback on specific actions and avoid general exaggerated praise or vague feedback because this produces "self-worth protecting students" which fail to accept personal agency for their successes. They need to identify themselves elements of performances. Stories of different forms of feedback can be studied as case studies. Therefor the form of e.g. the Applied Design Thinking LAB Vienna demonstrates equal forms of learning, from professors and peers and substitutes critique with brainstorming, "thinking out loud", which is taken as thoughts whereas the student has to decide what is right or wrong for him/her. Main task of this approach is the definition of objectives of a process rather then outputs.

Teachers at Art Schools might have to take position of dramatic advisors and resonance bodies. Studies on how feedback is given at Art Schools and what kind of feedback has led to individual success definitively needs research and the conference *Art School Critique 2.0* definitively sets a beginning.

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Exteriority, Possibility, and Utopia as Steps against the Trivialization of Critique | Cristina Cammarano

The "trivialization of critique" (Masschelein, 2004) consists in the fact that critique has become pervasive in the world of educational institutions, to the point that it seems connatural with educational institutions themselves. As Masschelein points out, it is unclear whether an emphasis on critical thinking and autonomy can be anything else than the expression of an already existing order and power. Emphasis on critique seems to have transformed it in favor of maintaining the status quo.

In this short paper, I analyze the concept of critique to outline a pedagogy which fosters, rather than hinders, it. My working definition of critique is influenced loosely by the tradition of the Frankfurt school. It sounds something like this: To critique something means to see it as a given in relation to the structures that make it possible, and to envision other ways for it to be. When I critique an object, I consider it as something that is a datum, a thing given to me about which I will have to ask a Kantian question, what are its conditions of possibility? Once seen those, I will have to imagine how else the thing could be,

in relation to its conditions or in opposition to them. This second movement of critique requires that I care enough about the object or about the things that the object affects, and that I have an imagination attuned to utopia. According to my working definition, critique cannot be practiced constantly, because it is slow and dispendious, but it is something that persons can engage in quite regularly as they go about their daily life, if they wish so.

Social theorist Luc Boltanski (2011) conveys that there are, indeed, two modes of critique: critique practiced in everyday life and metacritique. As ordinary practice, critique is an empirical activity rooted in a specific community and it consists in describing the fabric of the ordinary. Critique practiced in everyday life is in relation to the type of critique expressed by theory,that is metacritique. This type of critique instead considers the social order, through an "approach to society as a totality construed critically" (p.3) with the aim of unveiling the modes at play in it (and specifically, for Boltanski, these are modes of domination). In the tradition on the Frankfurt school (from where Boltanski writes) there is an expectation that things seen by the critical gaze will prove to be morally problematic, because the structure of reality is deeply flawed by unequal distribution of resources and power.

Here is where a consideration of pedagogy will have to insert a caveat. Any expectation of critique ending in a precise interpretation would erase the element of utopia that for Masschelein (1998) has to shine through the act of critique. When we teach with the expectation or hope that our students develop a critical capacity, we should not expect a determined (however correct) set interpretation to guide them. Thus I would like to expand on Boltaski's beautiful expression: in my view critique does not necessarily "render reality inacceptable". Critique makes it possible to see that there is a normally unexamined moment of implicit acceptance of reality. Critique awakens one to see that this "yes" could – but does not have to – be also a "no", if what one sees cannot be accepted. Critique will open up rather than close down interpretations and will elicit the thinker's sense of affective connection and care for the thing object of critique.

Critique consists in two moments: reaching exteriority by "stripping reality of its character of implicit necessity and proceeding as if it were arbitrary", and secondly "restoring it to its necessity [...] related to a universe of possibilities".

The position of critique is a position of exteriority. For Boltanski (2011), the move to exteriority can be seen as a thought experiment that consists in "positioning oneself outside this framework in order to consider it as a whole" (p. 7). He believes, and I agree with him, that frameworks cannot be grasped from within. He writes that "this imaginary exit from the viscosity of the real initially assumes stripping reality of its character of implicit necessity and proceeding as if it were arbitrary (as if it could be other than what it is or even not be)."

A second, and equally important moment of critique, is what I indicate as "possibility". After having reached exteriority, "in a second phase restoring it to its necessity it had initially been divested of, but on which this operation of displacement has conferred a reflexive, general character in the sense that the forms of necessity identified locally are related to a universe of possibilities" (Boltanski, p.8). The thing that the thinker had detached herself from, the thing that had been made non necessary, is now to be returned to its state of reality in view of the possibilities discovered by the thinker. Necessity of the thing will

be seen in its relation to possible other ways for it. The object is not, in this second step, accepted as unavoidable (as it was before critique started), but it is not either considered completely accidental, as no critique will do away with the prime fact that the thing exists and has in its own way a factual, and not ideal, necessity.

How come, I have asked, that my students seem immunized from critique rather than positively educated in it? I have recognized a problem in a certain automated expectation that by simply being exposed to ideas and being given an object to critique in light of those ideas, one should be able and desiring to do so. A closer look at critique has allowed me to see that there are two moments in it, connected and equally focal: exteriority and possibility. A careful pedagogy will have to highlight both moments and structure them in ways that make it possible for students to practice them and see their meaning. Access to possibility will have to uphold the utopian element of critique. No previously scripted forms of possibility shall be expected of the person doing the critique, because this would countermine the purpose of critique itself. This remark is especially meaningful in a context of classroom practice in which the expression of critique will most likely be evaluated and graded by the instructor. It will have to be made repeatedly explicit that there is not an expected vision the critique has to match. It will need to be made abundantly obvious that agreeing with the instructor – or with her perceived ideas – is no guarantee of a good critique or grade, and vice versa.

References: Boltaski, Luc, On Critique: a Sociology of Emancipation. Polity, 2011.

Masschelein, Jan, "How to Conceive of Critical Educational Theory Today?" in Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol.38, No.3, 2004, pp.351-367

Masschelein, Jan, "How to Imagine Something Exterior to the System: Critical Education as Problematization" in Educational Theory, Vol. 48, No. 4, 1998, pp. 521–530.

Tough Love: Uses/Misuses | Maureen Connor

This collaboratively written text, presented at Critique 2.0 by Maureen Connor, 11/18/16, is based on and includes excerpts from Toward a Social Practice Pedagogy that was composed in response to the forthcoming textbook Art and Social Action (New York: Allworth Press, 2018). Edited by artists Chloë Bass and Gregory Sholette for instructors at college and high school levels, contributions will be arranged thematically around the following themes: Race, Labor Justice, Alternative Economies, Archival Activism, Prisoner's Rights, Income Inequality, City Drift, Environmental Justice, Community Activism, and Service Art & Citizenship. The textbook will also include a set of practices/tools and related lesson plans/curriculum maps that are not published here.

Most of us were taught to see self-expression as the ultimate value and to nurture what we were told was our unique individuality. While the conventional studio art critique builds on this model of self-expression, encouraging competition and idealizing the value of individual achievement or "genius," this approach also prepares students to enter the art economy, their individualized autonomous products ready for circulation and consumption in the capitalist system. How can we develop a form of critique that de-centers individuality and promotes a different set of values and goals. Since 2012, The pedagogy group, collective of artists/educators/activists has been discussing these questions and experimenting with alternatives. I will outline some of our discoveries.

Writing about anything post-2016 election has been a challenge. It's 2:00 AM No-

vember 18th 2016. I've spent several days reading and writing, writing and reading–so many hours for a 10 minute presentation.

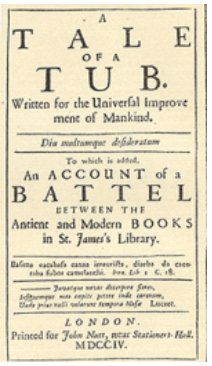
It's 2:10 AM November 18th 2016 and I haven't sent my power point to Robert Hansen even though it was due midday yesterday.

Imagining a 3:00 AM text to Richard and Robert–calling in sick is still a possibility–soothing my anxiety.

This presentation was proposed as a critique of self-expression, yet it is a moment when I'd like nothing more than to summon my intuition to channel my despair through a private act of open-ended-making. But while that may be therapeutic it risks self- indulgence. The best way to repurpose despair is to act in a more direct way to produce change.

To find a way forward we can consult the long philosophical tradition of critique although this field has its own internal contestations regarding its terms, methods, and aims. For example in France at the end of the seventeenth century, there was a question about whether contemporary learning, with regard to the relationships between aesthetic operations and fundamental concerns regarding truth, being, and society had surpassed what was known by those in Classical Greece and Rome. The "moderns" took the position that the modern age of science and reason was superior to the superstitious and limited world of Greece and Rome. From this position, modern man saw farther than the ancients ever could. The "ancients," for their part, argued that all that is necessary to be known was still to be found in Virgil, Cicero, Homer and especially Aristotle.

The Battle of the Books is the name of a short satire about this argument written by Jonathan Swift that depicts a literal battle between books in the King's Library, as


A
TALE
OF A
TUB.
Written for the Universal Improvement of Mankind.
To which is added,
An ACCOUNT of a
BATTEL
BETWEEN THE
Antient and Modern BOOKS
in St. James's Library.
LONDON.
Printed for John Nutt, near Stationers-Hall.
MDCCIV.

ideas and authors struggle for supremacy. Many books are destroyed in the process but Swift is careful not to announce a winner. Because of Swift's satire, "The Battle of the Books" has become another term for the *Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns.*

A contemporary corollary to this satire is Monty Python Philosopher's football match in which German philosophers are pitted against the Greeks.

The only "real" soccer player on this imaginary team is Franz Beckenbauer who was twice named European Footballer of the Year. Yet the issue at the heart of these debates is not about Ancients vs. Moderns or a particular school of aesthetics. Rather, the question is "Why make art at all? The conviction that art in itself is a good that should be valued more often than not conceals contradictions that those of us who teach art frequently confront. Conventional studio art critique claims to build aesthetic excellence

rooted in the ideology that self-expression is a truth seeking activity. In reality, studio critique encourages competition and idealizes the value of individual achievement or "genius," that prepares students to enter the art economy, where their individualized autonomous products are readied by the evaluations of critics, curators, and other artists for circulation and consumption in the capitalist system.

Ben Davis in his book *9.5 Theses on Art and Class* puts it in this way:

> *(T)wo permanent contradictions therefore dominate the sphere of the visual arts. The first contradiction is between the fact that the visual arts are dominated by ruling-class values but defined by their middle-class character. The second contradiction is internal to the middle-class definition of "art" itself, which is split between notions of art as profession and as vocation and therefore comes into contradiction with itself at every moment when what an artist wants to express runs into opposition with the demands of making a living (which is often, in a situation where the minority dominates most of society's resources).*[1]

Most of us were taught to see self-expression as the ultimate value and to nurture what we were told was our artistic vision. While the conventional studio art critique builds on this model of self-expression, encouraging competition and idealizing the value of individual achievement or "genius," this approach also prepares students to enter the art economy, their individualized autonomous products ready for circulation and consumption in the capitalist system. This individuality was placed in the context of art historical traditions, narratives that are rife with the sort of contradictions Ben Davis identifies, rather than a more expansive political-economic context. The crises of modernity have greatly tested and challenged this artistic tradition as they have many other social institutions. When we ask, "How can we develop a form of critique that decenters individuality and promotes a different set of values and goals?" we again take up the challenges of modernity, for example, in struggles for human rights or contestations defined by global capitalism in its neoliberal form.

In 2012, the pedagogy group, a collective of artists/educators/activists came together through Occupy Wall Street and began discussing ways to bring the work of the movement into the art institutions and schools in which we work. This was also the moment in which Socially Engaged Art or Social Practice (SP) programs were first being established in a number of art schools –primarily on the east and west coasts–and we questioned whether these programs would advance a shared commitment to social change within the context of art-focused educational settings. Initially we hoped to collectively develop a syllabus that we could all use in the various situations–art schools, liberal arts colleges, museum education programs, social movements in which we worked. However, as we learned more about one another's specific teaching contexts, which vary significantly in terms of curriculum and student populations, we decided that developing a uniform curriculum would not be the most productive way forward. That is, we realized that the social practice turn was not only about content and classroom-based activities. If we wished to honor the claims and principles at the heart of this approach to art education, we needed to investigate the relationship between our teaching practices and the structural conditions of the education establishment. Thus, we shifted to broader discussions of pedagogy beginning with the realization that teaching too is a social

practice and its conventions and conditions need to be open to critique. For example, we asked how we as educators can encourage collective, collaborative relationships in the classrooms and studios we work in while also orienting those spaces towards the larger collective struggle for social justice.

If our aim is to reorganize social relations and model a new distribution of resources, we must always start with ourselves. We can then stress to our students and publics the importance of artistic practices that emphasize making *with* rather than about community initiatives. In other words, being interested in a struggle and making work about it is not necessarily the same as being imbricated in crisis and struggle due to one's social identity and class position.

The former practice can reinforce structures of privilege and exclusion by, for example, always foregrounding a liberal, "middle class," perspective on the world and its problems. Our practices of critical pedagogy, care, and mutual aid for each other have combined to form a community of support that counters some of the structural problems prevalent in neo-liberal institutions of art and higher education.

Over the years we have shared and workshopped syllabi, readings, and lessons that we have each developed through our lived experiences of these efforts. What unifies our energies is that they are guided by a clear accountability to specific struggles and to learning through a reflexive process in which we recognize our own subjectivities, biases, and positions. We hope to help our students find ways to come from a place of direct experience to model socially equitable ways of being in world.

Those of who teach within BFA/MFA programs that house social practice courses and concentrations are witnessing how the contradictions between liberal values and institutional contexts are playing out in the field of social practice. That is, the field seems to be struggling both to maintain the modernist commitment to the autonomy of the artist who provides well-meaning but carefully calibrated encounters with social crisis and fulfill their traditional role of supplying new talent to the art market and museum and gallery complex. Radical, transformative justice initiatives, to the extent that they appear in the field at all, are marginal at best.

From our perspective it seems nearly impossible to positively influence or reconfigure social relations from within art educational settings and those of other art institutions. This is due to institutionalized imperatives that contradict the core values socially engaged artists claim to espouse. At the institutional level, social practice programs attempt to position themselves to aid specific communities in need, yet their host colleges, even if they are public entities, are not accessible to (or created for) members of those communities.[2]

For faculty, built-in structural problems include departmental hierarchies, competitive requirements for promotion, the rise of adjunct precarity, and lack of transparency in hiring and spending priorities. For students, the competitive selection process counteracts the driving ethos of social practice from the start, even when coursework breaks down traditional teacher/student power dynamics and eschews antagonistic critiques, both necessary but not sufficient pedagogical steps.

At the same time the possibilities for employment once an MFA or other degree in social practice is acquired are limited, perhaps even more than for other art programs. Embraced by "diversity seeking" administrations, the field of social practice builds its institutional reputation culturally, not financially. These programs are less likely to be targeted for project funding, scholarships, advancing or hiring new faculty, or for providing designated meeting spaces.

As mechanisms of social reproduction, art and educational institutions have enormous power. We aim to use this power in our classrooms and other contexts in which we work to engage in conversations and actions about the kinds of skills art educators are providing and modeling for students to navigate art world(s) and other cultural institutions. To this end we have introduced models for commoning such as skill shares, free schools, worker cooperatives, and care collectives. We also involve students in discussions of economic relations inside the university that systematically give rise to precarity such as student debt and increased adjunct labor, preparing them to navigate the arts sphere, its institutions and values outside of school.

We make room for learning how to operate independently and collaboratively, beginning with how we are together in the classroom and other spaces or conditions of learning. By valuing diverse collective, working class and cultural histories that exist within students' own backgrounds and communities, we can create ethical community economies and elevate undervalued epistemologies. We must center working-class struggles and anti-oppressive or anti-colonial movements in practices that foster the reframing of problems, dialogue and experimentation.

To help foster the creation of more ethical economies of production we shared two activities that members often employ in their classroom. The first is an asset mapping exercise, where students share skills and resources amongst each other, initiating a group culture of support in the initial weeks of the semester.[3] The second, "Threeing," a method artist Paul Ryan developed for better understanding human patterns of behavior, has been used in place of critique to self-reflexively reorganize the differences among individuals, promoting collaboration and the replacement of hierarchical relationships with heterarchic ones.[4]

Endnotes: [1] Ben Davis, 9-5 Theses on Art and Class, Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2013, p. 29.

[2] Jodi Rios, "Reconsidering the Margin: Relationships of Difference and Transformative Education," in Service-Learning in Design and Planning: Educating at the Boundaries, ed. Tom Agnotti, Cheryl Doble, and Paula Horrigan (New York: New Village Press, 2011).

[3] The Pedagogy Group, Rethinking Marxism, 415.

[4] Paul Ryan, The Three Person Solution: Creating Sustainable Collaborative Relationships (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2009).

On Covering Architecture: Critique as Form of Interpretation and Appropriation | Eduardo Benamor Duarte

To *cover*[1] an original creative work in the context of Art + Design college education offers a pedagogical challenge that merits further study on the relationship between creativity and authorship. The presentation searched to illustrate a methodology to associate memory-based, cognitive or experiential learning in closer synergy than usual in the context of interior architecture design education.

What is the meaning of design critique when a design studio's pedagogical focus consists on the interpretation of an original building?

During a semester-long period undergraduate and graduate students at the Rhode Island School of Design used critique as a form of interpretation and appropriation of an original museum building as a studio project. After being presented with a program for a museum exhibit all nine students explored how far the subject matter of an architectural exhibit maybe influenced by the actual building context itself. Through a sequence of iterative assignments students engaged on the notion of *covering*. Every form of approach consisted on open speculation to critique modern museum buildings[2]. The goal would be to explore a learning model capable to simultaneously uncovering and generating new disciplinary knowledge; while serving the purpose of designing architecture exhibit in context. Rather than creating ideas from scratch, the class intentionally used an existing building as the primary site. Instead of envisioning foreign insertions students analyzed the morphology of existing building elements as the subject matter and tools for design an exhibit.

The following paragraphs and illustrations search to expose the pedagogy in which authorship and translation is an intertwined form of critique based upon subjective interpretation of a work of architecture[3]. The studio presented students with the challenge to design an exhibit for one of five different museums largely recognized in the field and built in the 1960-1975 Brutalist period. Critique was approached from various angles: 1) how is *architecture* generally exhibited in museum shows; 2) how can visitors experience alternative ways to engage with the spatial and historical significance of works of *architecture* recognized in the field; and 3) to what extent an existing environment is altered to become an exhibit of its own *architecture*. While each of the three questions presented various degrees of specificity, the studio's ethos was based on the assumption that architecture disciplines[4] are often considered by curators, practitioners and museumgoers as perhaps some of the arts offering the more difficulties to be displayed in museums. Such assumption may be in part due to the need to represent architecture in photographs, films, drawings or models. Architectural exhibits showcase building's documentation more than an actual constructed experience referencing the exhibit space with the physical context being exhibited.

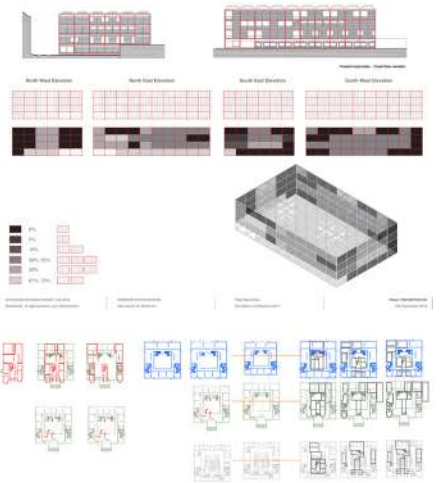
When exhibit design is engaged in the context of interior architecture education then displaying a museum building type could potentially become a study on the relationship between exhibit and site. The pedagogy of covering an original work of architecture permitted students to articulate content and context in a study beyond the containment of artifacts, but in the actual content itself. The

purpose of the studio would then be to engage students in identifying, to which degree a building could become responsive, altered or replicated to further showcase its own architectural attributes. What could become a straight-forward investigation on exhibit design of architecture building museums soon became a pedagogical device to reflexively respond to the site that was on display.

For the period of a week students were ask to participate in a series of class discussions and individual critiques to share and generate various cultural references beyond building survey analysis. The expectation was that the studio culture would define what the idea of interpretation or appropriation meant as a design method. From literary references to music or general assumptions in popular culture a common sense arose as of the need to explicitly survey the architectural components of an original building prior to perform any alteration or representation. As in the character of Jorge Luis Borges short story *Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote*[5], the studio engaged on the description of what an existing structure is in terms of size and proportion through a literal drawing reconstitution. The premise would not be an end form in itself but only a phase to further select, interpolate and extrapolate generative principles for displaying an original building structure beyond its physical presence[6].

Remastering Architecture

Rather than applying a literal reconstitution of an architectural artifact the studio's pedagogy engaged students in the principle of *Remastering*[7] as a design methodology. The appropriation of a building's aesthetic, programmatic, or formal characteristics would constitute the students' own critique. A method used to explicitly combine a process to decontextualize, reinterpret and communicate the cultural significance of an original architecture project as a studio and seminar based learning experience. Every one the nine students enrolled in the class was asked to visit one of the five building sites after selecting through various sources which museum to work with. After the site visits various forms of visual and written representation familiar to the education of architecture students were introduced. Such creative tools permitted to understand how each museum space could become *remastered*, translated and appropriated towards new forms of alteration of an existing space to integrate an exhibit display of the original building.



Figures 1-2: The initial phase or formal analysis as dedicated to survey as form of appropriation. Here students used drawing and written information about a Museum Building case-study to develop formal analysis diagrams. This process lead to extract principles of proportion, scale, mass, rhythm, texture and light inherent to the geometry configuration of each case-study. During this phase students catalogued specific building components of each case-study according to the principles of Function (F), Structure (S), Behavior (B. Remastered version of the Yale British Art Center by Louis Kahn, 1976. Image Credits: (figure 1.) Project by Plub Warnitchai, MA Adaptive Reuse. Studio Critic: Eduardo Benamor Duarte. (figure 2) Remastered version of the Muson William Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, NY. Design by Philip Johnson, 1960. Image Credits: Maria Flavia-Cano, BFA Interior Studies. Studio Critic: Eduardo Benamor Duarte

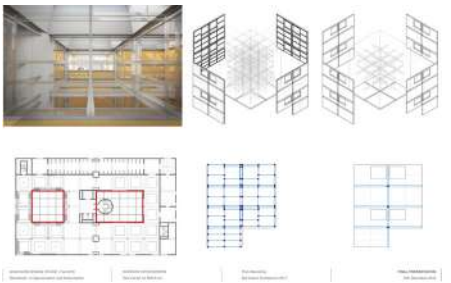


Figure 3: The second phase or the definition of principles of interpretation permitted students to continue to apply their own subjective interpretation on how the geometry of each component may be intrinsically connected to its performance. In various cases students explored series of new aggregations, interpolations and extrapolations and principles based on the catalogue developed in phase 1. Remastered version of the Yale British Art Center by Louis Kahn, 1976. Image Credits: Project by Plub Warnitchai, MA Adaptive Reuse. Studio Critic: Eduardo Benamor Duarte

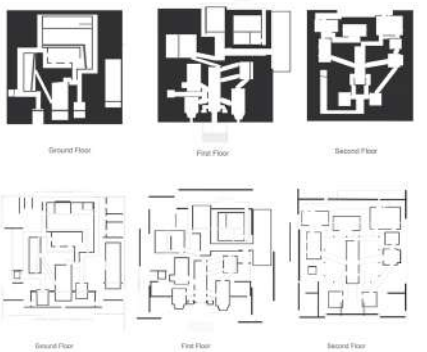
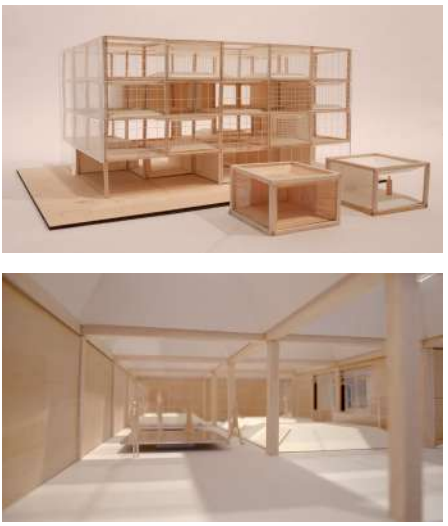


Figure 4: The third phase suggested potential forms of development towards an idea of a remastered version. During this phase the original building could become rebuilt according to the associative principles defined in the previous phases. In various situations students generated various schemes to incorporate flexibility and variability in response to the initial program requirements of the first Museum building case-study, while updating its performance according to the mapping of individual classification system developed in phase 2. Remastered version of the Muson William Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, NY. Design by Philip Johnson, 1960. Image Credits: Maria Flavia-Cano, BFA Interior Studies. Studio Critic: Eduardo Benamor Duarte



Figures 5-6: The last or fourth phase of the studio consisted on the design of a display system specific to a site. This phase became the remastered version in response to the analysis and performance conditions identified during phase 1 and 2. Remastered version of the Yale British Art Center by Louis Kahn, 1976. Image Credits: Project by Plub Warnitchai, MA Adaptive Reuse. Studio Critic: Eduardo Benamor Duarte

The idea beyond *remastering* through the de-structuring of architectural components is a creative process that can be analyzed in parallel to the methodological principles developed in artificial science by John Gero where design process is decomposed in three stages[8]: During the studio each student analyzed a single museum building through specific ontological classification of building components according to principles of form, structure and performance. Students used various analytical methods including the literal drafting over existing drawings or the reading of essays and texts by the architects and historians on the museum buildings. After the initial classification survey students were engaged in selecting their own methods for appropriation engaging on individual de-contextualization of essential

building features that could become further re-displayed in the new exhibit environment.

The studio phased based pedagogy permitted to engage teaching and learning exhibit design as a process of interpretation or appropriation rather than an a priori defined model. While students' projects explorations may have ranged in scale and format most of the nine design proposals shared similar principles of interpolation and extrapolation. Every single one demonstrated students' interest in performing significant alterations in the building's physical presence. Most projects expanded the notion of building cannon by speculating on typological variations dependent on the flexibility and reciprocity between the building's variable components in size and scale. The new remastered projects' engaged architectural experience as a form of design interpretation informed by an explicit synthesis between existing geometry, materials and space-use protocols. Rather than introducing foreign forms in to a new context every proposal searched to enhance or disguised particular characteristics of the museum buildings associating newly revealed features in the design of a an architectural display. A premise that may be partially derived from the extensive period, in which students literally decomposed an architectural artifact into a list of parts subject to interpretation or multiplication according to specific geometrical or subjective perceptual criteria. If not to only explore cultural connotations of studying or *remastering* an original work; the studio experience may have contributed to engage future designers with the complexities in adapting an existing structure. The acknowledgement of the original spatial principles that constitute an existing structure may become the starting point to envision change non-dependent of the uncertain programmatic demands of new uses and contexts.

Acknowledgements: To all students of the Design studio in the Department of Interior Architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design INTAR-23ST-01 (16430): Remastered studio: on appropriation and interpretation: Maria Flavia-Cano, Mengran Jiang, Sneha Mathreja, Daniela Llongoria Quintanilla, Gloria Ramirez, Eder Romero, Plub Warnitchai, Rohit Vantaram

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Endnotes: [1]In 2002 Stan Allen taught a studio at the GSAPP Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation a studio where I was a graduate student where he introduced the class to the notion of "Covering Architecture".

[2]All five Museum buildings studied during the course were designed within the so-called period of Brutalist concrete architecture between 1960-1974.

[3]Peter Eisenman's graduate seminars are an example of how architectural design and analysis may become an intertwined learning experience if experienced simultaneously. In the courses at the School of Architecture at Yale University Eisenman's continues to explore the notion of Formal Analysis as a method for students to learn the underlying generative principles of a work of architecture not only immediately perceived through sensorial experience but through disciplinary rule based models. http://architecture.yale.edu/courses/formal-analysis-1 -Theories of Authority: Seeing as an Architect Close Reading and Formal Analysis, Formal Analysis, Course, 1018a, Design and Visualization, Fall 2016, Faculty Peter Eisenman, Elisa Iturbe.

[4]The Division of Architecture + Design at the Rhode Island School of Design includes three disciplines (Architecture, Interior Architecture and Landscape Architecture) with different Undergraduate and Graduate degrees and studentv cohorts that often share design studio courses where students approach common and distinct methodologies for design interventions in context. The various pedagogical experiences may permit to engage on a disciplinary debate beyond various scales of architectural design practices.

[5]The novel "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote" by Jorge Luis Borges was first introduced to me by Stan Allen during the development of the first class assignment on Covering Architecture studio at the GSAPP Columbia University back in 2002. Like in the Borges' text the

character's efforts to translate Cervantes work becomes a literal copy word by word. The work has been often mentioned in various disciplines in reference to forms of interpretation and authorship.

[6]The interpolation and extrapolation of generative principles from a building survey towards the idea of de-contextualization to give place to new spatial principles reference the work of Psychologist researchers in measuring how the flow generated from the free association of often disparate and real images leads towards an abstract representation of reality. Martindale, C & Dailey, A. "Creativity: Primary Process Cognition, Personality and Individual differences", The Handbook of Creativity, Sternberg, R. (Editor) Cambridge University Press, 1996

[7]Remastering process is often a term referred in the film or music industries to as the performance of making a digital version out of the analog version. This concept is freely taken in the studio as a design methodology for interior architecture education evoking the physical process of literally decomposing a building into parts isolating parts of to further associate and represent in context.

[8]In John Gero's ontological theory between Function (F); Structure (S); and Behavior (B). Function (F) refers to the programmatic use of a given component, while Structure (S) may evoke the shape of its parts (independent of its function.). Lastly Behavior (B) references the form in which the building parts enable the space to perform. Such relations (FSB) may not always be direct in the design of architectural spaces and offer a pedagogical opportunity for a further inquiry when studying the formal characteristics of a existing structure. Therefore the reference in the studio during research of new forms of display in context of museum spaces.

Beauty and the Beast | Severino Alfonso Dunn

Beauty weeps over the Beast, saying that she loves him. When her tears strike him, the Beast is transformed into the handsome prince from Beauty's dreams[1]. *Beauty and the Beast* is a traditional fairy tale written by French novelist Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve and published in 1740 in *The young American and Marine Tales*.

For some authors, the history of Pedro Gonzalez, "the man of the woods" who the had a hypertrichosis condition (known as werewolf syndrome) inspired the story. Writers and artists often search for inspiration in uncommon sources that intentionally deviate from accepted social grading. In the end, these works tend to recognize difference and uniqueness as exceptional origins for creative production. They celebrate divergence.

As educators, acknowledging the basis of our arguments shapes the core of the course critique. Without a conceptual background, productive criticism cannot exist in the classroom.

According to André Breton in *The Surrealist Manifesto* in 1924, "Surrealism was a means of reuniting conscious and unconscious realms of experience so completely that the world of dream and fantasy would be joined to the everyday rational world in an absolute reality, a surreality". Drawing heavily on theories adapted from Sigmund Freud[2], Breton saw the unconscious as the wellspring of the imagination. Some of the techniques implemented by the surrealist include *Automatic Drawings and Exquisite Corpse* as means of expressing the artist's subconscious. In Automatic Drawing for example, the hand can move randomly across the paper and in the Exquisite Corpse four or more persons would complete each other's drawing blindly. It is by blind searching that the creator finds himself in a primitive state of thought; A state where the mind is not mold by dubious layers of personal evolution. You wouldn't let preconceptions inform your thinking if you eliminate the "you" from the searching equation. To critique under this umbrella, presupposes similar efforts entailed by the person critiquing as those made by the artist. It requires a follow-up of the entire creation process in all its phases and in every single attempt.

From left to right: Figure 1. Automatic Drawing by Andre Masson. Figure 2. Nude by Cadavre Exquis with Yves Tanguy, Joan Miró, Max Morise, Man Ray. Figure 3. Pedro González.

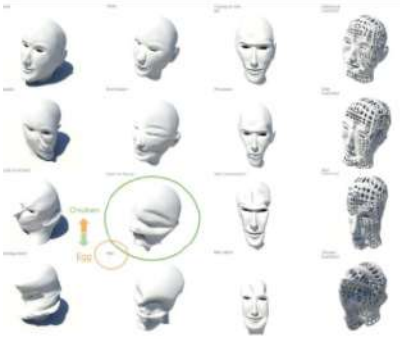
These are the arguments that define the conceptual grounds of a course syllabus I have coordinated for the last four years at the Architectural Technology Department at the New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn. It is titled *Beauty and the Beast* and in tandem with the academic's fundamental mission, I have developed a stimulating critique thesis and methodology. The course is designed as an interdisciplinary educational module that combines the liberal arts, design and technology fields, thus delivering creative collaboration opportunities for both the students and the faculty body. The course asks students to question an object's morphological existence by following the surrealist principles and guides them into a series of explorations that search for new artistic expressions. It is divided into two components: a lab component, including hands on workshops and a seminar component with lectures and individual one-on-one critique sessions. During the seminar, students initiate a relationship with an object's formal existence and are encouraged to obsessively detach from its origin by deforming it. They do this by using the artistic potentials emerging from the digital tools and software at hand. Consequently, they are asked to initiate a conversation on the ways in which computational theory influences the arts and vice versa.

How to critique our way around individual explorations which are fitted under such a conceptually open and diverse umbrella? Is everything valid?

For its syllabus, I have put in practice a three-step critique process along the course's development: First, by implementing *lectures and discussions* as a critique method. Second, by evaluating through *iteration* and third by promoting students' *intuition* and self-criticism. Lecturing and discussing is the main source of criticism in any artistic discipline. As you lecture you operate within criticism and having a group discussion with the students means to engage in a critical conversation with them. Lectures occur every meeting day during the semester and they embrace general questions regarding the course's main topic. An integral part of this course is organized around regular reviews and talks with invited artists, designers and computer scientists that offer a broader perspective to the students on the selected themes and establish the multi-disciplinary backbone to the students' projects. The course also undertakes group discussions, which support students' progress and focus on answering questions about technical resolution, students' sharing of references or managerial skills, to mention some examples. They can take the form of highly pragmatic peer workshops or theory based class conversations. In contrast, individual critique interrogates students' results in a more direct and specific way. In class, students need to defend their actions as they are regularly inquired about their visionary appropriations in anticipation to any artistic result.

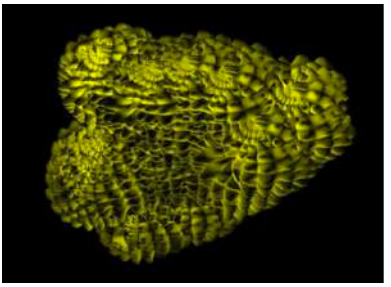
But what result? How to initiate criticism when confronted with a white canvas? The course explores critical engagements through *iteration* to ignite new discovery channels that aim to the awaking of the students' interest.

During class, students produce a grid of studies that allow for an initial base for discussion. They generate a cartography of deformation protocols, each including a title and a description which are based on their own assimilation and understanding of the deformed piece (for example, deformations of a caterpillar, a flower, a wheel, a gear or a head). The very first critical approach happens during this phase; students defend the assigned titles and descriptions and initiate their first statement. Critique is here directed towards the understanding of the symbiotic relationship between textual narrative and form in the arts; a search for dormant potentials hidden within a morphological analysis. As per this symbiotic couple, a question is brought to the students: What is first, the egg or the chicken? Object or representation? Kant's most original contribution to philosophy is his "Copernican Revolution", that, as he puts it, it is the representation that makes the object possible rather than, it is the object that makes the representation possible. This introduced the human mind as an active originator of experience rather than just a passive recipient of perception[3].



Student result 1 from Beauty and the Beast course at NYCCT.

At this point, students should have an orientation to follow. They are then asked to evaluate, select and iterate from their own catalog of multiple outcomes. To do this, I teach and promote the usage of their intuition capacities. Intuition as the ability to get a sense, vision or feeling about something. Intuition as a path to communicate with other people through symbols, feelings and emotions. Like an out-of-shape muscle, intuition can be strengthened and exercised back in shape. If you take a trip following a subject of your interests and study its numerous possibilities, you are indeed exercising intelligence as you let your gut instinct tell you what is - and isn't - important.



Student result 2 from Beauty and the Beast course at NYCCT.

The course tackles this point by letting the students engage with multiple narrative trajectories and by asking them after to rewrite their thoughts and to remake their forms; and the other way around and again. Critiquing through Intuition means to free the brain in the making of art and to establish failure as a new potential to understand ourselves.

Endnotes: Lang, Andrew. "Beauty and the Beast." Blue Fairy Book, Fairy Book, 1889.

2 Willette, Jeanne. "Surrealism and Freudian Theory." Art History Unstuffed, http://arthistoryunstuffed.com/surrealism-freudian- theory/.

3 "Kant - Copernican Revolution." age-of- the-sage, http://www.age-of- the-sage.org/philosophy/kant_copernican_revolution.asp.

Critique and the Brain: Giving Students the Tools for Self-Assessment |

Susan Waters-Eller

Forty years ago, I did a thesis on the science of perception and how it could be useful to visual artists. Following a field that expanded into neuroscience developed a body of knowledge that underscored the perceptual nature of thought. This emphasized how important what we do as artists and art educators is at a time in history when images are more prevalent than ever. What the science shows is that the sensitization to implications of visual structure is essential to insight, particularly as the complexity of information grows. It shows that the feeling we get from what we see around us is the first signal of its meaning and though non-verbal it's very concrete. Rational thought is directed by the compass of feeling.

The critique is an excellent format for breaking down the elements that create the expression carried by visual structure, information students can use to strengthen their expressive power. What happens in a composition is processed by the same brain mechanisms that process our surroundings, so the implied space of a composition, even if completely abstract, triggers feelings and associations related to the expectations that are developed in relation to it. The universality of response to space and thus art is based on the fact that as humans we all develop pretty much the same way. Learning to stand and balance is the later basis for a range of metaphors. Expectations of gravity and stability and the orientation of the plane we stand on are the underpinnings of concepts. Getting from one place to another, navigating crowds, evading obstacles is part of every person's life experience. Even though the details can be vastly different, the sense of where we are and where we want to go is a day to day action and provides a metaphor for a what's necessary to achieve a goal. Visual art expresses feeling through this foundation understanding of space.

The feel of the space and how things move within it is the first meaning of what we see. Scientists call this tacit knowledge. Wide open feels different than closed up but each have variations that depend on the context. And we can describe a subject as wide-open and understand that we can move in any direction. Our thinking is structured by our spatial understanding. There are two different circuits involved in perception that scientists call the "Where System" and the "What System". The Where System is much faster so the response to the whole comes first. We've adjusted to the space of the image before we know what we're seeing. The What System has more steps for breaking down the identity of the objects, so we've responded to the feel before we've identified the subject. When we have our first discussion of work I have students squint until they can't see detail and try to establish the feeling of the piece before they know what it is. No matter what the identifiable content, the feeling has already been influenced by the overall structure. In the discussion, the whole range of associations is drawn out showing the artist how their decisions are affecting the viewer. Pointing out how the structure initiates the impression keeps attention on the work. How the assumption of gravity affects the energy in the position of elements and the way the eye is drawn through the image is brought to conscious attention creating a better understanding of the mechanism of intuitive feeling.

No matter what the culture, spatial concepts are universally understood, because as the same species we use the same strategies to physically navigate the world. This is why visual art is so easily understood across cultures. Visual art creates virtual spatial relationships that are understood without verbalization. Art is the sophisticated expression of these visual relationships and speaks to the core understanding of meaning. When students are asked to express their sense of the feeling in a work we see how the differences in background overlay a triggering structure.

Talking about the implications of every choice in a work reveals the mechanics of tacit knowledge and the range of associations that can be made to how forms are situated in relationship. This is what psychologists call "mood congruity". The brain calls to mind memories that have the same mood as the piece, thus developing its meaning for the viewer through their personal experience of that mood. Response to work is triggered by the feelings evoked in the work, that represent how the body is adapting to the spatial qualities represented by a composition. Even when there is no actual space the energy of something high in a composition is different than low because the assumption of gravity says the object is not at rest. The body is always preparing for what it expects to happen. These structural factors are noted in relation to the feelings evoked. Students become more mindful of their choices, and see how to intensify effects by making sure everything is working together.

Before there was neuroscience there was Susanne Langer and her analysis of how form expressed feeling. She studied the relationship between structure and form in the arts and the expression of feeling. Her succinct statement "Art looks like feelings feel," describes the relationship between image and expression. In this type of critique, the discussion of work aims to explore the feeling of the work through the range of connections viewers make. Without the need to go into individual biography, the kinds of moods, attitudes and emotions expressed by the work can be discussed without invading anyone's privacy. By sticking to the feelings and what they trigger in the viewer the artist has information to compare to the outlook that created the piece. It helps them see what is communicated to assess for themselves how well it reflects the feelings that went into it. Instead of telling the artist what to do or what's wrong with the work, the viewer responds to the piece as it is, giving the artist an opportunity to see how they are affecting the audience and so learning the expressive implications of their choices.

Picasso said that when a painting is done it's dead for the artist, but lives on in the mind of the viewer. Talking about the various ideas, thoughts and feelings offers a window into that life. It's a demonstration of the commonality of structure as certain themes emerge. This is concrete information about what the piece expresses to a range of people. The participation of the group is important to showing how different backgrounds respond to the structure and the felt themes that emerge because it's the feeling that stays in the same general quality and the different associations bring out its nuance.

Neurobiologist Semir Zeki sees art as illuminating essential abstractions in the brain, abstractions that underlie thinking. Looking at art triggers a pattern of inner structures that represent the personal ex-

perience of that pattern. Researchers used to term "isomorphism" (same shape) for that similarity of structure between brain states and what stimulated them, that the form made in the brain is the same as the form that triggered it. If you look up the word in Wikipedia, the first five of the ten definitions have to do with math, then come the biological, sociological and cybernetic uses of the word. What artists see as proportions, mathematicians see as ratios. As far as the brain's concerned, it's all about the relationship between shapes and how multiple shapes map against each other. Our understanding of what's new to us comes from recognizing the pattern and what that pattern meant before. This is the essence of perceptual cognition. Structure creates response. This is why science is discovering the importance of art. Numerous studies are emerging that examine these correlations of form and response.

This spatial quality pervades thinking and is key to memory. If you want to remember an event, you go back to the place in your mind. If I ask you how many windows were in the house you lived in when you were ten, you would return and count them as you walked around. We have vast rooms of information available through our spatial organization. We can visualize places we've been or visualize information as places like the mnemonic device, the memory palace.

Neurologist Antonio Damasio referred to the awareness of space around us as core consciousness, also referring to it as deer consciousness to underscore that alert awareness of the surroundings. Those are the processes and circuits that trigger first impressions of visual art. Damasio's work also found that feeling is essential to decision making, directing attention to where other processes of thought are necessary. Without the feeling that came from overall perception, people couldn't make a choice. Feeling is an expression of the individual's values. This relationship between art, values and the essence of thinking is why art should be more interwoven with education from the beginning of life. The psychiatrist Alfred Adler felt that having art around was the best education of values, and Langer thought art should provide the basis for the study of psychology, providing more insight into the complexity of human emotion.

The creative act isn't thinking about this in advance. It's propelled by its own visual sense of what fits and when it looks right. The feelings communicated may not be recognized until someone says "it reminded me of when I was in the hospital", and someone else says it shows loss. We see the meaning in what we connect to the forms that sink into gravity.

How does the piece affect you? This is a concentrated piece of factual information. We're interested in what kinds of thoughts and feelings are triggered by the image and what in the structure is responsible, how each choice affects the expression of the piece. It's not opinion, it's what happens. The range of ways people see an image gives the artist a sense of the scope of their expression and implications of their choices.

One of the reasons I subtitled this paper as giving the student the tools for self-assessment is because the one doing the assessment has the power. I want this power to go to students, offering a view of what the work is doing to others to compare with the feelings that made the piece. They can filter the information and emphasize what will further their own goals.

Different views show the capacity of a structure to hold contradictory ideas that are linked by a feeling. There were people on both sides in the election that spoke of the other's winning in apocalyptic terms. Even with views so radically different, what it meant to each was clear in the image.

If you want to communicate with someone you have to find common ground. A work of art is a wonderful place to find it. Spatial instinct works the same for everyone. It's a fluid dance of adaptation to the needs of the surroundings. The divergences come with what is associated with those dynamics. Seeing how different ways of thinking use the same scaffolding builds understanding within the group. To cultivate a world that appreciates everyone's differences and unique abilities it's necessary to build on what is already shared so that the deeper universal patterns are acknowledged. It's a way of talking about art that has value beyond the art school as a way to start conversations that develop understanding of how we process the whole. Understanding that feeling precedes thinking means that looking at art grows in importance as the very best way to contemplate the commonality in our psychology and become more responsive to that level. Increasing visual intelligence means attunement to the whole and may be the best antidote to the fragmented thought so prevalent today.

Five Mistakes | Michelle Fornabai

Introduction ("Making Five Critical Mistakes in Critiquing My (Own) Work")
I propose to make five mistakes in critiquing my work by considering a single work on the following critical points: the artist (*on identity*), the artwork (*on labor*), the art world (*on value*), the art practice (*on use*) and with respect to art movements (*on time*).

An introductory note on the following piece by me, myself and I:

More than a fashion faux pas, for me (the third person, objective) the Necomimi EEG controlled cat ears will communicate material cues to you, which will be unintentional and will likely remain indecipherable to either of us.

My, a possessive and limiting adjective will be used to qualify objects and material, with mine, which does not require a specific object and can be a subject or object.

For myself, no possessive forms are possible, but reflexive renaming of the subject as an object counteracts the subject's intensive substitution.

I, the nominative, first person is the proper subject.

By misplacing the work and misusing themes borrowed from the current context, I will misunderstand, I will miss the mark, and I will suggest something is amiss to indicate what may be missing from contemporary critiques.

1. The Artist (On Identity)

I am a conceptual artist. Yet I am a maker, artisan, craftsman and skilled laborer. I have a practiced eye. I trained as a professional and a scholar, I have some expertise. Yet I'm not a creative worker, designer, inventor or producer. Am I an impersonator, a performer an entertainer? Am I an originator, discoverer, motivator?

I was born in1967 in Ridgewood, New Jersey. I grew up in the suburbs of neither the crumbling industrial cities nor the ivory intellectual towers. I had a Polish grandmother who worked in a factory and was a single mom. I never knew my grandfather, who was a master builder or simply a bricklayer, depending on who you ask. They were not married to each other. My mother went to the Fashion Institute of Technology in the sixties and worked in a department store as a fashion commentator. My father was a French-Italian fabricator in chrome and glass, who briefly studied nuclear engineering at Columbia following the Korean War. I was the first in my family to graduate from a four-year college.

My aunt, Rusty Hoeffner, a watercolor artist who supported herself as a commercial artist, gave me my first professional artist materials. I didn't know she studied abstract painting with Joan Semmel at that time. By age 10, I was taking classes at a local art college. At age 12, I had my first experience with drafting, as the doctor diagnosed the x-ray of my spine. For 10 years, I wore punk clothes several sizes too large to camouflage my corset-like brace. I was told not to attend an art college because I was intelligent.

I have an AQ (Autistic Quotient) of 43. I do not know my IQ. I learn kinesthetically. I give a high number of detail, texture, white space and vista responses in Rorschach testing. I watch KDrama to understand human emotion. I like Pink Floyd. My husband is a mathematician. My imaginary friends include Henri Michaux, Gordon Matta-Clark, Donald Judd and recently, John Cage. I smoke cigarettes, drink coffee and have yogurt for breakfast every day. I rarely disclose personal information in publically presenting my work. I rarely use "I."

In raising my profile, can I distance myself from profiling? With filial lines, locations, academic trajectories, narratives of experience, I re-inscribe boundaries. I am boxing myself into a corner. Regarding myself, there's a lot I won't tell you. Today, I am not myself. I, myself, am elsewhere.

["From your birthplace to the place where you live, you can try to put everything in its place, but place can still exist as a blank space to be filled." October, 2013]

2. Artwork (On Labor)

I trained as an architect. I am a conceptual artist, sometimes mistaken as an architect, who uses architecture as a medium. The architects tell me I'm an artist. The artists say I'm an architect. For 20 years, I taught architecture studios at UCLA, RISD, and Columbia, mostly concurrently. I have calculated I spent a total time of 198, 24-hour days (seven months) commuting from Boston.

My studios explored blindness, sleep, flaws, holes, pretending and dreams. I sometimes thought to myself that these studios were one of my best conceptual art projects. After 20 years of teaching, I was released back into the wild. Here, I find myself.

My work is in ink and concrete. My works are cast on location at the scale of my own body (as sole laborer). I cannot help myself from doing-it-myself. I find myself amidst workers--laborers who work all night in Beijing, and who never met an artist before in Rio. Putting myself into their shoes.

I ask myself is my work work? If my labor is not expedient and cannot be instrumentalized, do I have a job? Is my working class industriousness an imitation, a lost labor? I can't seem to work out if my plain workaday attitude personifies a form of therapy, mimicry or charade. I ask myself if my work resides in artistry, in the artifact or the act? To me, it is unclear if the artwork is a representation, an incarnation or an embodiment.

Still, I work at it. I busy myself to better myself. I see myself getting all worked up; deciphering structural workings or a musical piece, working out how to make a poem workable. I wonder to myself is it really all play and no work?

My works take energy and form but what is their relation to agency and influence? What am I working against or for? Am I working within or without?
["A banana is still a banana even when it's a phone." December, 2012]

3. The Art World (On Value)
To myself I wonder is hard work valued? I give myself away. I rarely sell work, myself preferring economies based on gift.

I exhibit in museums and institutions. As yet, I do not have gallery representation nor any current institutional affiliation.

If I try to price, appraise, estimate and account for everything can I put myself across? I wonder to myself why conceptual art still tries to occupy the limit conditions of value. I think of Duchamp's urinal, Piero Manzoni's shit exceeded by Damien Hirst's and Jill Magid's diamonds. What is the matter, I ask. The conceptual is always already material.

I can barely restrain myself. Does having substance make me materialist or materialistic? I end up reminding myself that the most valuable thing in the world is the head of a dead cat because no one can name its price.

If I were to deny myself love, value and respect, would I be good or great?

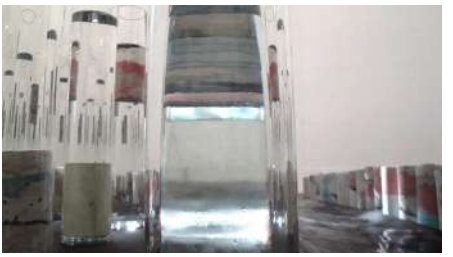
As for myself, the work is always dear. My most honorable self. For me the equivalence that value establishes between things seems antithetical to their importance. Left to myself, I am profitless, valueless. Is that worthless?
["Wood may act as paper or as petrified stone." September, 2008]

4. The Art Practice (On Use)
I am superflous. What's the use?

I cannot make myself useful. For myself, inutility is freeing. I can become a law unto myself. Without giving myself airs.

I make solutions to non-problems, I tell myself. Unproductive, purposeless, unpractical and impracticable, mine. My non-functioning, inoperative strategies belie my work.

Once I was told my work was too beautiful. Is the aesthetic unethical? Aristotle drew



a clear distinction between ethics and aesthetics. Vain efforts—obsolete or past it.

My making useless may be designed to disable, impair, obstruct and disarm. My loss-making may sabotage, emasculate and unman. My incompetence, ineptitude, lack of skill may contribute to my non-profit.

Be(cause). For myself, a close consideration of being in the world may critically complement acting in the world. Perhaps I am misusing myself.

["Turning something that was not present into something that was actually perceived." April, 2009]

5. The Art Movement (On Time)

Were all the previous art movements a waste of time? I wonder to myself when does an art movement end? 10 years? 100 years? Or is it stopped? Does fixing a movement as a moment in time historically produce finality? Must time be stopped for a movement to be time honored?

I whisper to myself, but this is provisional, constraining the present to the futurity of progress. Is the contemporary perpetual, time-consuming and wasteful? I ask myself if you bury a movement, does it become a timebomb? If a movement recurs, can it be timely?

Am I early or late? Emerging, midcareer or established? Am I invisible? I blame myself. I make slow imperceptible movements. In decade-long projects.

Finding people like myself cannot be constrained by circumstance and chronology. I find myself in lags and lapses. Anachronistically, I time capsule.

One day, I thought of myself trying to communicate to people 100 years in future. Which meant I, myself and everyone around me are ghosts. Everyone seemed fragile and beautiful to me. I found myself trying to decipher messages from previous ghosts. I let myself imagine the possibility of an unperceived existence.

As for me, I'm ghost.

Now, I am out of time.

["What does sound mean to the tree?" July, 2016]

Images: Michelle Fornabai, Concrete Poetry: 10 Conceptual Acts of Architecture in Concrete, act 3 mix ("To a Waterlily"), 2015.

In Defense of the Inarticulate | Tara Geer

Perhaps we have acclimated to so much talking. Even as a visual artist, I write artist statements, bios, FB posts, emails, explanations of work, proposals, press releases, essays, applications, grants. I give talks to collectors, curators and owners of galleries. I give interviews, lectures, critiques on everything everyone around me has made, and critiques on critiques. This amounts to a lot of talking for a drawer. Critique, as in the articulation and discussion of judgments about made things, has long been the bedrock of adult art education and even casual conversation in the arts. Educators expect to make artists by critiquing their work. Artists expect to know their practice by explaining it clearly. My question is, how well do all these explanations serve the work of *making* art?

From my perspective, the most important element of being an artist is actually making things. And while the parts of making that involve following through, or finishing up aren't usually too hard, there are messy, emotionally dense, inarticulate parts for which we are taught few skills of navigation. These swallow people up. My driving objective for myself, for my students, writing here, is to keep *making stuff* –for the long haul. This means having some ability to ford the swamp parts. With this purpose, standing within the din of so much talking, I would like to defend the inarticulate.

I will describe something that feels vaguely embarrassing. When I was getting my MFA at Columbia in the '90s I was given critiques at least bi-weekly and by the time I left school I was so crowded with voices I didn't know what I wanted, or was doing, or liked, or if I was even cut out to be an artist. The strategy of my MFA program, like most, was to strip the students down and then build them back up, largely through the critiques of Professors or Critics. It wasn't that they didn't like my work, I think largely they did. It was just that my head became so full of opinions and explanations, and these were repeated and considered though the night as I paper-machéed my oddly comical, wearable, lumpy sculptures, or as I drew elaborate plans for sculptures I had no ability to make, until irrelevant critiques turned into bracing and personal judgments. Unless one can, without wincing, make the argument that they are making a significant contribution to culture with whatever obsessive project is creating a mess all over the kitchen table, you are screwed in the context of much critique. How do you justify your behavior? Art doesn't actually hold up well to the big questions: Why make art? What does an artwork mean in the broader picture—compared to say being a doctor for refugees? Are you any good? Although these big questions feel important, they don't help get work done. This was not useful self-evaluation I was doing, or finally coming up against worthwhile higher standards, or laying the groundwork for a new approach. It was burning the place down. It was a waste of my time. If you can't stop what you are doing, you have to find a way to make it workable-- judging it, questioning it, talking about it doesn't help. The large majority of art-makers –observant in some way, sensitive in some way, compelled to spend long hours doing atypical things-- are not perfectly confident, and should not have to be.

It is my understanding from teaching art for over 30 years now that no one sane lacks internal critique, particularly when trying something new and therefore without standing. There should be nothing wrong with being unsure of what you have done. Critique

plays to our moments of vulnerability: we seek approval, encouragement, to feel a little more on solid ground. We like to talk. But these moments may require protection more than judgment. They are too potentially flammable for a lot of talk, or maybe any judgment at all. I am blurring the line between a critic's evaluation and self-critique because in my experience both as critiquer and as critiqued, one begets the other. Good critique is hard to do, and many critics, called on to go from artwork to artwork talking continuously, use severity as a crutch. As if the issue at the moment someone asks for critique, is their inability to see that their work has flaws. We can all find lots of faults, we just don't know how to actually move beyond them. Sometimes any suggestion about a next move will do, or even an encouragement, it's just the force that is needed to move from an unclear tangle onwards. Meaning, it is not for any of us to judge, or put into play the machinery of judgement and justification and language production, the only role needed at that moment is strategic –to get the artist working again. From what I see, critique is overused and over-rated –especially as it is considered better when negative and harsh. This may not be best-case critique, but it is commonplace critique. Explanations, judgments are also addictive: they make us feel correct. They hold power. But use them too much as an artist, and at best you are in danger of illustrating your own explanations, and at worst you find yourself not working.

This is the point; all that talk doesn't get most people working-- it stops them. It stopped me. For a little while there I lost my bead on the joy of making things – a joy that has stood by me my entire life. After graduating, I rented a tiny studio, did not let anyone in for 10 years, and re-taught myself in the quiet, in my own way. All that critique was rather like getting bedbugs, I spent a long time getting rid of them, and I itched long after the actual bugs were gone. And what was actually said didn't really matter –though my teachers all probably tried to convey something useful. What feels embarrassing about all of this is the suspicion that I might be lacking something that artists should have-- a manly, unerring purpose that no opinions could touch. But I have since heard the same story, and the same note of humiliation, from so many art students and artists, many of whom were not able to start up again. So this essay is also an argument on behalf of those of us who have inched backwards during all the art talk in the mortification that we haven't quite made the grade: I'd like to remind everyone that there is no one kind of artist, and there is no one kind of art talk, and not talking at all is a useful option.

I believe the world would be a better place if more people made artwork. Without regard to level or quality, I think making artwork holds a contentment that should be shared. I think the easiest way you get to making good work is by making work period. We seem to assume that art is made by clarifying the articulation of the ideas behind work, but that doesn't pan out. Making art is not just an intellectual activity. It is is bodily and marbled with emotion and space and action, and it needs to be made and taught and seen on all these levels. We focus myopically on the speakable ideas to our detriment. We mistake the discussion of the work with the work. We confuse the articulation of ideas with the working through stuff in your hands.

So you know what you are dealing with, here, I make intricate, not-exactly-representational black and white drawings by myself in my studio. This is probably anachronistic,

and may not serve well as an example, but I am including below 4 cell phone shots taken of a drawing during the 5 months I worked on it, and the final result. The drawing is pencil, charcoal, chalk and pastel on paper 40 inches wide by 30 inches high. I worked on it from May 2016 through the Fall, when it went up at the Jason McCoy gallery on 57th street for their *Black & White* show. It was then titled, *fluent in darkness.*

7/23/2016

8/3/2016

8/13/2016

8/22/2016

9/4/2016: Tara Geer. "Fluent in Darkness"

Before we can say what we have done or why we have done it, there are long stretches of making that are inarticulate. Beginnings, for example: I like my final drawing, fluent in darkness, but I don't really know what the first drawing has to do with it, except that it was where I started. Beginnings do not necessarily know where to go or what lies ahead, they move us from stopped, by doing something, anything, even just a little random-seeming, illogical bit. An important activity in making stuff may be allowing the roots to get rain, before anything visible has grown above the soil line, before we can articulate what is happening, maybe before it feels like anything is even happening. Artists at their most creative mostly do not know what we are doing in an essayed, articulate sense. (That comes much later, if at all.) I might feel something, like the engine heat when you sit at the rear of the bus. I reach

for it as a thing more unknown than known. I may reach for the wrong thing, which actually works too –you can see that I did not know where I was going in these drawings. (I could generate a plausible explanation, but why?) Fundamental artistic capacities such as curiosity, openness, flexibility, sensitivity, hard work, focused attention, mistake-making, persistence, incubation, or independence may be better cultivated outside of all the talking of critique. When we face a blank page, literally and metaphorically speaking, we are standing, toes on the edge of nothingness, with no instructions. There is no way around that. The poet, Denise Levertov, wrote, "it is to hunt a white deer in snowy woods." It is to feel something unnamed and without definition. Giacometti says, "When I make my drawings... the path traced by my pencil on the sheet of paper is, to some extent, analogous to the gesture of a man groping his way in the darkness." We grope and feel. We do not see. How to honor the delicacy and inarticulacy, groping and rough-draft-ed-ness of artistic invention? Matisse, who did not practice a religion, claimed that, "the essential thing is to put oneself in a frame of mind which is close to that of prayer." So call on curiosity, awe, entreaty. Get your hands dirty, make moves, start somewhere. Each of us is a unique weed in the garden of humanity and each make our own seeds, germinate, take sustenance in our own ways. Making is not a logical, or reasonable behavior. It is felt and important and urging. It's unlikely, uneven, illegible, not especially correct. It's hard. It's not particularly suited to explanation either–as you can see here. T. S. Eliot wrote of listening for "the stillness between two waves of the sea." Making things is itself articulation, is itself a kind of thinking with its own rules. The activity of drawing -the scribbling busywork of it- kind of shuffles me towards felted edges of silent things– it helps me feel where I am. I don't see and then draw: it's as if the drawing is my seeing. The problem with my drawing as of 8/13 was not that it wasn't skilled, it was. I found it self-conscious, explanatory, the spaces too prettified. I kind of hated it. That week I heard the poet Douglas Kearney, tell a room of poets re-writing poems that to dislike and attack is of no clear use, one has to re-build, substituting the original structural goal for another. So I rebuilt the space and tried to make a drawing that wasn't so prissy. That had some integrity.

The artists who make articulate, compelling, confident arguments, are often assumed to be better at what they do. Those who make interesting things, but have little to say about it, or those who may make less clear arguments but better points, or those who mumble unsurely, are not necessarily worse artists, but usually these days they are considered to be. Good work should itself do the talking–however less audible or less immediately articulate or more ambiguous. We, as audience, often sacrifice a direct experience with an artwork for the clarity of an explanation about it. Art in K-12 public schools is also mostly now taught as a series of steps to be followed, with correct and incorrect ways of proceeding, and a pre-defined end result. You can find how to do any art project you want on YouTube, as you can learn to write an artist's statement and a blog. Art that is about manipulating unknowns has gotten buried in all the explaining. The challenge, the real learning, in making things, is not following steps, but when you wander off the edge of the map. We need artists to come up with things that have not already been done. Making mistakes, solving ambiguous prob-

lems, seeing new things in the same world lying before us is thrilling and it also takes discipline and work and muscled cognition. We overly value a well-made argument, and expect to make artists with them.

Certainty and eloquence can be applied indiscriminately. We need to stop with the debate club, and learn how to navigate the hard parts of making. The moment the mind can stop observing the unknown –unsure and uncomfortable as it makes us– and follow some familiar steps, it does so –the youtube projects are enjoyable. Yet, it seems extremely important to honor those who keep struggling with transactions in the areas beyond where we can see reason–those slogging through the messy work of invention and unlikely observations. An artist working at their best is not knowledgeable, is not articulate, is not an expert, but is capable, adapting, full of life, working. We have to learn and teach how to listen for unarticulated ideas. How, otherwise, do we move towards the ideas not yet thought up? How do we make a place for originality? Some lack of certainty, or stumbling backwards into the areas we are not sure how to explain, serves us in actually making work, because it allows for new possibilities to open, and the making to lumber on. How can we talk so much and still know how to grope in darkness? It can be useful to shut up, when in snowy woods, hunting a white deer.

Critique[1] | Liselot Van Der Heijden

Critique is an adventure.

Devote full attention. Critique one art project at a time.

Allow the time needed to explore issues and questions provoked by the artwork.

All observations are valid.

All students participate actively to generate the critique.

The professor listens and interjects only when necessary.

The student whose work is critiqued listens and does not talk until the very end.

The class is only as good as the students will make it.

All students have unique ways to contribute to the class.

Encourage students to help each other to make the best work.

Stimulate the students to think differently and resist literal solutions.

Establish high expectations for the work under consideration.

Encourage students to experiment and take risks in their work.

Everything in the work is considered intentional.

Focus on process as well as outcome.

Feedback is about the work, not the person.

Promote trust, candor and generosity.

Describe what you actually see instead of what you think you should see.

State the obvious.

Question *why* a student responds to a work a certain way.

Point out the decisions made in the work.

What are the results of these decisions and

strategies?

Does the work match the assumed intent?

Does the project meet the criteria of the assignment?

Ask specific questions generated by the work.

Propose different interpretations, opinions or contradictions.

Focus on the potential of the project and underlying ideas.

Consider potential for other contexts, budgets, and audiences.

Consider the next steps or possibilities for the project.

Confront fear of failure.

If a project fails, let it fail gloriously.

Failure and success are relative to the explored potential.

Success is measured by growth and discovery.

It is possible to critique a work without stating whether it is successful.

It is what it is.

Honest critique is the most generous form of feedback.

Tough critiques are painful and can generate impressive growth in the student.

Students can redo their project.

The student whose work is critiqued speaks only at the very end.

This student is encouraged to ask the class questions about the work.

The method of critique is explained to all students.

The class and the professor support each student to meet their full potential.

Endnotes: [1]Group critiques in undergraduate visual art education. For the section: What makes a successful critique?

Art Critique: Torture or Nurture? | Jesse Jagtiani and Students

I am an artist and art educator. I teach studio art classes in video, photography, and digital art in higher education. Throughout my long-term art education, which included several prestigious art schools, such as the University of Arts (UDK), Berlin, Carnegie Mellon School of Art (CMU), Pittsburgh, and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts (SMFA/Tufts University), Boston, I have experienced different styles of art critique, with various mentors and advisors. I had positive critiques and negative critiques, successful and unsuccessful ones. My experience of art critique that I am sharing in this essay may not present any novel ideas; yet, they are still significant and relevant.

The unceasing question is: What makes a critique a successful one? I suggest a successful art critique occurs when students leave the critique feeling motivated and are driven to further develop. This does not mean that during such critique students' works are not stringently evaluated, which might feel difficult and uncomfortable at times, but that the critique generates something in students that makes them want to keep working, on themselves, and on their art practice–a drive for personal and professional growth. In contrast, an unsuccessful art critique is a critique that leaves students feeling defeated, hurt, misunderstood and unmotivated. In regards to that notion, in what way can we facilitate successful art critiques and avoid unsuccessful ones? How do we evaluate students' work without wounding their stimulus to work, but instead motivate and inspire them?

In my art career track, I have observed and experienced many methods for critique.

I am sharing selected observations here that, I perceive, work counterproductive to a successful art critique.

1. Negative Associated Language

Some art professors present the assumption that students need to be broken down or treated harshly to prepare for the art world. While we break things in art practice and through thought processes–we deconstruct and reconstruct, the notion of breaking a person is disturbing. A person does not need to be broken; we are whole beings on a path of discovery. We are in art class to grow and develop, not to break each other. Some students, such as myself, might come from past trauma, and art might be their outlet. Therefore, such imagery seems problematic. Instead, I value seeing students employ their art practice to break what needs to be broken to remain whole.

2. Facilitating to Students in the Same Way

Educators may aim to give all students the attention they need to succeed; yet, a common misconception exists that equity and equality mean the same thing. The reality is that students come from different backgrounds, have different learning styles, personalities, etc., and therefore need different amounts of attention, and divergent educational approaches, to be able to reach their highest potential. It is important that educators are aware of this.

3. Treating Students Differently

All students deserve full respect and equal treatment. Even if your chemistry or ideology does not match with a student, all belief systems must have the same value in the classroom to be able for students to freely express themselves, and learn from each other. It does not mean everyone has to agree, but everyone must have the same rights. In my experience, this will furthermore encourage students to show interest and respect for each other.

4. Creating Space for Unhealthy Competition

Competition may be a good motivator at times. However, during art critique, I trust it is essential to create a space that does not promote direct comparison of students, but focus on their own work, to assure each student's individual growth, and to generate trust amongst the students.

In my studio art classes, prior to the first critique day, which is usually in week four or five, I have a conversation with my students, in which I emphasize the following guidelines:

- We are aiming to create a space for exchange, support, inspiration, and growth.
- Everyone has something to offer. Contribution is appreciated and critical. Be perceptive. Respect each other, but be honest. Don't hold back. Say truthfully what you observe and feel about each other's work.
- If you criticize an aspect of someone's work, explain why and aim to give suggestions on how to improve that aspect.
- Other's responses are not meant to hurt you. Do not take them personally.
- You do not have to accept and take on everything that is said to you in a critique. Opinions and visions differ. Choose the elements wisely that seem significant to the development of your work.
- Every artist experiences failure frequently and learns from it. Therefore do not be intimidated by it. Failure is success because it is the moment we learn and know how it

does not work – it is knowledge made.

• Have confidence. Don't aimlessly put yourself or your work down during a presentation. Doing so can negatively influence other's opinions and perceptions, and most critically hurt your own self-respect.

• Be grateful for the community and the feedback – it is tough to find such regular critique group once out of art school. Employ it well and cherish it.

• Take responsibility for your own learning. Learn for yourself and no one else. You have control over your learning through your own contributions, directions,and choices. Empower yourself.

• Reality is subjective - so is art. Art is not truly teachable; it is an expression, an experience, and an open concept. This provides a lot of freedom; make the best out of it.

On critique day, then, the class experiences each other's work. At first, when students present their work, the presenter is asked to not speak but listen to what their peers observe, feel, think, and question. In the beginning, this might feel contrived, but it is a great way to take the opportunity of receiving raw perceptions of others. It also teaches to listen, and provides time to process before entering the defense.

Once the class feels there is no more to discuss and is eager to have their questions answered, the presenting student is asked to speak about their intentions, techniques, choices, aims, etc. Questions are raised and another conversation follows that includes the presenter. Once the work is fully evaluated the group closes the individual critique with appreciative acknowledgment. Every student experiences the same procedure of being a presenter and part of the evaluation group.

Two to three times a semester, students respond to a short survey about their experience of the former critiques. Reading and analyzing the responses later provides me with insight about the collective voice. In the succeeding class, I present what I have learned from the survey and we mutually discuss how to progress in our next critique to validate further development and growth. The following are voices of three of my former students of the video art class of Fall 2016, at Teachers College Columbia University. These students have encountered the above-mentioned model of critique, and present a brief insight about their experience.

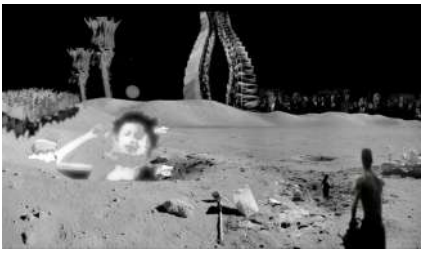


Image: "Garden of Lunar Delights", video screenshot, © Evi Yiran Li, 2016

I am a first-year arts administration student at Teachers College, Columbia University. I enjoy critique because I constantly seek for other's genuine point of view to perceive aspects of my work that I cannot recognize myself. However, the way that teachers approach critiques greatly influences how I as a student express my points of view in class. Jesse's video art class helped me form my personal concepts about art in a positive and inspiring way. She led us to recognize our own as well as others' personal styles by making sure that we paid attention to everybody's unique visual, audial, and

thematic components. Learning to appreciate others' perceptions and artworks encouraged us to freely exchange notions about what can be altered and improved, while also making us realize that critically looking at others' works is ultimately a self-reflective practice. This mutual beneficial experience can only be possible when we trust each other. Evi Yiran Li, 2016

Image: "The Moon May Be Dim or Bright", video screenshot, © Zhenzhen Qi, 2016

As a doctoral student in art education, learning video art is both exciting and challenging for me. Art critique provides a unique prospect for me to engage with my own work from a distance. It provides a rare opportunity to see how others perceive my personal voice. However, expressing myself via video also means exposing intimate thoughts and feelings to a group of people that I have never met before. Furthermore, employing video techniques mediates and augments my expressions through a technology, which I feel I have limited control of. Therefore, the most important aspect for me in art critique is to feel safe enough to express without reservation. Realizing that a teacher is going out of her way to protect me, and welcome me as who I am, makes me feel empowered to express myself freely, and take in criticism objectively and effectively. Zhenzhen Qi, 2016

Image: "Release", video screenshot, © Juan Carlos Santos Andrade, 2016

As a former design student, I have had many critiques, both, bad and good. I have had teachers try to break me down and those that have at least tried to build a communal sense of trust among students. In my own experience, classes that have enforced the tradition of breaking down the student have rarely yielded very exciting, and creatively unique works, in contrast to those that promoted a more constructively friendly dialog, like Jesse's. The ill thought out comments, generally made for the sake of getting a participation mark, created not only a distrust amongst my peers but also in themselves, myself included, leading to works that were more "to the book" than innovative and individually unique. It is my belief that the creation of a cooperative environment, where students learn to recognize and appreciate differences, and respectfully comment on the artistic perspectives of others, helps build truer and more daring expressions and therefore stronger bodies of work. Juan Carlos Santos Andrade, 2016

Hearing the voices of my students is rewarding, and validates my belief that an essential aspect of facilitating critique, in regards to any subject, is to attempt to truly see your students as who they are – even if one can really only catch a glimpse.

Our current physical world is an illusion of steady connection – we link, like, and network much, but do not truly connect with each other. Connecting with students, and bonding them with each other, offering a space for a possible growth of trust, may generate true exchanges of individual experiences that may lead to collaboratively creating new inspiration, knowledge, and skill. At the beginning of a semester, I truly mean when I say to my class: "Let us go on a journey of discovery, in which I learn from you, as much as you learn from me, and everyone from each other." In my experience, the more trust and respect a class can achieve for each other, the more adventurous the journey becomes, which is then reflected in the quality and excellence of the work. One can only learn for their selves. We develop self to be able to create and express ourselves in the world. Every single human has its sole perception of the world, similar to the uniqueness of a fingerprint. My aim as an art educator is to accordingly facilitate to each individual student in regards to their path and their needs. The size of class plays a role. Currently, at Teachers College, my classes generally comprise around twelve students, which works well for the presented critique model. I am aware that the task comes with difficulties, and the critique method may not work in every situation and environment. However, my sincere goal in facilitating art critique will always be to stimulate students to seek self-expansion, refinement of skill, and purpose in their art practice, by discovering self through the work of and with others. Art critique is nurture.

Prisoner of Love | Baseera Khan

As students investigate relationships between research, practice, theory, aesthetics, personal histories, and action, they develop models for community engagement whether intentional or not. These investigations fit squarely within contemporary art, but at other times becomes activated into social-spaces that are far from the pomp and glory of the art market. Social-space is not to be confused with social-clubbing. Art action has a thin line of solipsism and can confuse social space with club mentality. I am constantly policing this line in my classroom. If students do not think about sustainability, personal politics, and social justice in their practices I'd like to make the argument of how can we as artist and thinkers proceed as members of this society today.

Critiques however, manage both the views of the artist instructor, such as myself, and the opinions of the student body. Not everyone shares my views and position as an artist. The critique balances and allows space for multiplicity within the classroom. Critiques allow space for students to grow and permeate their own sense of responsibility, or irresponsibility. Critiques help to build vernacular and descriptors of what one wants to achieve versus what is achieved by the autonomous object that we are tasked to critique.

I think irresponsibility is an interesting and perplexing term to think about, especially with regards to pedagogical forums within Universities. In the aftermath of our elections, irresponsibility is a word that keeps slapping me in my face. I have come to terms with the realities we are in and

have found in this term irresponsibility a new productive outcome. To be irresponsible is to deliberately not do things that are expected and asked for us to do. Critiques have a rhetoric that sometimes asks students to do things a certain way, so I'd also like to talk about the language around critiques that can give students a sense of empowerment to do what they need to do, to do right for themselves, instead of solely embodying the instructor's point of view. I have in the past weeks seen so many people acting irresponsibly and creating groups that are retaliating against what this country apparently wants. I gain power and hope from these small acts of devised irresponsibilities. Art is the most exciting when it comes from the space of defiance. And yes, I am still talking about the classroom, but also as a larger body of living breathing people in this country.

Experimental and iterative critiques throughout the semester pull conversations into reality. Thoughts need clarity and shape and can wax and wane all of which occurs in the act of crits. The highly contested role of the student and the artist-teacher's relationship is leveled and the group as a whole generates collaborative collective behavior. Must we act politically? Do we have the privilege not engage at all? The work we do can impact the contemporary art world, the political world, and one's own personal lived experiences, I ask my students to tap into their power and potential to complicate the spaces of acting and stillness. The critique sets miles stones so we can all stay collectively aware of one another.

Design Thinking as a Framework for Pedagogy | Joshua Korenblat

Design Thinking as a Framework for Pedagogy

"Beliefs are the psychological material we use to co-create a shared world, so we can live, work, and do things together," writes design entrepreneur Dave Gray. "Changing a shared world requires changing its underlying beliefs." Art and design students understand how to work with materials. They can translate tangible experience into a vivid exercise of imagining their own belief as a material. Does their belief look and feel like foggy glass or is it soft like cheesecloth, for instance, or is it more kaleidoscopic? After considering the material properties of their own beliefs, students can describe what they see to their peers. Educators can then discuss how belief manifests itself in unique ways for each individual. Beliefs are founded on often unseen factors, such as an individual's early childhood environment, and the attention devoted to these formative experiences. Theories and judgments coalesce around those variables to create a viewpoint that seems self-evident and unquestionable. Just as a ceramicist explores the properties of clay spinning on a wheel, students can examine their own beliefs from multiple vantage points. The contours of an innovative idea may appear when a student questions an old belief. A long-held assumption confronts new impressions, a hint of intriguing new understandings. To create an innovative space in the classroom, art and design educators can use this visualization technique about belief to launch projects energized by the rapid creation of sensory artifacts: roughly scribed and prototyped, shareable in nature.

In an industrial economy, influential companies seek to replicate results in a predictable way, like a sewing factory driven by patterns and processes. Many art and design students, however, will join a knowledge-based economy that revolves around startups. These agile companies gain momentum with exploratory, inventive ideas that respond to human needs, motivations, and behaviors. To prepare students for this startup mindset, educators must give students a system for promoting empathy for the communities they serve. This system must provide enough guidance for navigating terrain that may not have a set path. Within this system, students must swiftly gather and generate ideas, examine and explore them from multiple vantage points, and demonstrate new understandings of once unexpressed problems. In this context, art and design students no longer have a primary focus on aesthetics—though aesthetic experiences may be one of many final outputs. Instead, art and design students can practice becoming the empathetic, open-minded creators of ideas, positioned at the center of dynamic idea exchanges.

This hands-on approach to innovation resides at the core of Design Thinking, an ideation method for companies coined by IDEO founder Tom Kelley in the mid-1990's. Design Thinking remains an integral process in many innovation companies. First, the designer interviews stakeholders to learn about their needs and unexpressed motivations, related to a topic about human interactions within the world. Then, the designer collaborates with others to prototype shareable ideas that remedy pain points about that topic, which may appear during the interview. Designers hold off on immediate answers and commit to process of discovery.

Design Thinking appears in many guises. Many art and design educators may struggle with the very concept of Design Thinking and how to implement it into pedagogy. Instead, educators may choose to present Design Thinking using a more familiar term: a game. The Design Thinking space becomes the stage; the designers, the players. Designers playfully work within boundaries and coordinate planes, mapping and manipulating shareable ideas, often written on sticky notes, to identify patterns, clusters, and outliers. Games give protagonists a set of rules with room to play, make them the hero on a journey, and allow them to work with artifacts. Educators can even give participants an extrinsic motivation, drafting a point-scoring system to vote on viabl ideas.

The art and design studio classroom is well equipped to become this game space. Suffused with visual material, a studio presents a rich environment for exploration, surveying a landscape of ideas. Through practices such as sketching from life, artists and designers learn about the difference between looking and seeing, adhering to Henry David Thoreau's musing in his *Journal*, August, 5, 1851, "The question is not what you look at—but how you look and whether you see." (24) Educators can create a studio space primed for creative thinkers who understand how work can also be enjoyable. Immersive games allow students to become less self-conscious, free to explore, and lose track of time. As John Dewey notes in *How We Think*, "To give the mind this free play is not to encourage toying with the subject, but is to be interested in the unfolding of the subject on its own account, apart from its subservience to a preconceived belief or habitual aim."(203)

While a studio environment provides an apt setting for Design Thinking, art and

design educators need to expose students to communication strategies and processes that often reside beyond traditional conservatory walls. Educational spaces—even art and design hubs—don't often promote the skill of observing without judging. No wonder Mark Twain's quip about schooling resonates today: "I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know." While fine artists often work in ambiguity, guided by process, many art schools still offer critique models founded on judgmental principles that create hierarchies between the judged and those being appraised. Often, the subjective, deeply held aesthetic values of an instructor can become the unexpressed motivation for critical judgment. These judgments can make it difficult for a student to move forward while fully understanding other viewpoints.

During the initial interview phase of a Design Thinking game, students need a more empathic communication strategy to observe without judging. They must understand human needs that are met or not met—even if the individual interviewed lacks the vocabulary to truly express those needs. Nonviolent Communication, a framework adapted from meditative Eastern philosophies and developed by conflict mediator Marshall Rosenberg, assumes that most people have innate empathy and compassion for others. Yet that common need to flourish and find companionship can be motivated by myriad values. For instance, some people prize independence above all else; others, interdependence. When those needs are met, an individual is happy. When they are not being met, that individual is unhappy. Emotions arise from preexisting needs that are either met or not met by whatever circumstances a person might confront. Too often, judgmental language can obscure the roots of human motivation and behavior.

To illustrate this concept, a couple on a blind date might give a poor review to a waiter who is late with service—especially if they are hungry, irritable, and not enjoying each other's company. The same waiter may receive no such review if the couple already enjoys a pleasant, convivial experience. In fact, the couple may welcome the extra time together. In both instances, the waiter acted the same. Yet the reactions varied. The waiter did not make the couple feel pleased or disappointed; their response arose from preexisting needs that were either met or not met. Art and design students must understand this subtle yet powerful distinction in human interaction. Students can try to trace the underlying values and motivations that people carry with them, but which might be expressed through opaque, judgmental language and strong emotions. In this way, students can help mediate experiences to fulfill needs in an intrinsic way, responding to once unexpressed values.

This communication framework can help students slow down, question and observe during the generative phases of Design Thinking games, reflecting upon how needs are being met or not met. These phases can be categorized as Open, Explore, and Close. Educators can evaluate artifacts created during each phase. During the Open phase, students create an abundance of ideas without being too judgmental of them. Next, during the Explore phase, students identify viable ideas, and then examine, experiment, and explore those ideas with guiding questions. This process involves twinned skills in observation and imagination. In *How We Think*, John Dewey explains, "The proper function of the imagination is a vision of realities that cannot be exhibited under existing conditions of sense-

perception...Imagination supplements and deepens observation; only when it turns to the fanciful does it become a substitute for observation and lose logical force." (207) Educators can appraise how many variations on a theme students create during this phase, and how they balance observation with imaginative possibilities.

These first two generative stages benefit from an observational template: "When I see [specific observation], I feel [an emotion] because my need for [an intrinsic value is met or not met]." Then, students can relate this response back to the subject of inquiry and the original stakeholders interviewed. That way, they test out new ideas outside of their own belief system, which can create its own self-validating world.

During the Close phase, students hone their ideas into a singular solution, and demonstrate their new understanding with clarity and crafting. As author Dan Roam has observed, this process tracks with how we experience everyday life. First, we look around our surroundings and gather information (Open); next, we see what is important in that information and imagine possibilities for how we might engage with the subject of our inquiry (Explore). Then we demonstrate our knowledge (Close).

In a Design Thinking context, art and design students today need to ultimately think like a conflict mediator, anthropologist and archaeologist. The conflict mediator interviews subjects to learn about authentic needs and values, even if they differ from expressed motivations. The anthropologist surveys the social landscape to see how these needs contextualize in greater human interactions. The archaeologist collects artifacts and describes them using keen descriptive language, placing them in a meaningful, mapped space for further evaluation.

Without a set of tools from disciplines across traditional academic boundaries, creative people may make judgments about reality that do not encompass its multivariate nature. In *Liminal Thinking*, Dave Gray shares the popular parable of the blind men and the elephant: A king summons a group of blind men to his palace, and asks them, "What sort of thing is an elephant?" He gathers them around an elephant. One man feels the elephant's head and compares it to a pot. Another feels the tail and describes a rope. Each blind man feels a different part of the elephant. Instead of sharing and comparing what they glean from their vantage points, they present their subset of experiences as a definitive reality. If one of the blind men had walked around the elephant to feel what others were feeling, he would have practiced the type of observational skills prized in innovative spaces.

Art and design students have the hands-on experience requisite to imagine belief as a material that can be touched and changed. By creating a metaphor for their own beliefs, students may yield an abundance of meaningful ideas for classroom discussion. This exercise demonstrates how shareable, vivid artifacts can become guides for understanding how others think and feel about the world. Educators in art and design can use this exercise to transform a studio environment, already rich in visual displays, into a non-judgmental, convivial place for games that enhance creative thinking skills. Here, art and design students hone their empathic and observational skills in a collaborative way. They generate artifacts that function as signposts on an exploratory creative journey, all the while considering varied perspectives and stakeholders. This interdisciplinary practice prepares students for the mindset inherent in a knowledge-based economy. In this

microcosm, art and design students become creative explorers, collaborating to share vivid ideas of change and possibility.

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The Poem as the Shared Imagination: How to Teach Poetry in a Poetry Classroom | Dorothea Lasky

Poets alive in 2017 often find themselves in front of the classroom. Teaching a poetry workshop goes hand in hand with the work of contemporary poetry. This is especially with the rise of MFA programs in the last fifty years, which necessitates having poets to teach the program's courses. The first formal writing program was started by the University of Iowa in 1936 and nowadays we have close to 250 programs across United States. Often in these programs, teaching poets are charged with instructing literature courses or seminars, and very often obligation calls that we teach students how to successfully compose the "essay." But more often than not, the poet is leading the poetry *workshop* and is asked to help students write their very best work, in the hopes that they may one day publish a book of poems.

A workshop! Such a strange beast. What is a poetry workshop, you might ask? It is that hallowed and haunted form of a course construction, where many curricular activities are present, like writing exercises and discussions about pop culture, politics, and literary tradition. However, the major aim of any poetry workshop is to provide a place for peer-to-peer critique and to simulate what close scrutiny a poem might go under when submitted for consideration for publication. The main goal is to help students write better poems than they would have before taking the class.

The traditional poetry workshop model has a definite set of "rules" that it is expected to follow. The class format is much like any critique space for artists in other forms,

just through a poetry lens. The cold reading approach is often the way classes are organized. In this method, the poet who is set to be critiqued by the group, reads his/her/their poem aloud and then is muzzled for the rest of the class, while the group discusses the poem's merits and pitfalls. The poet's own intentions, opinions, and aesthetics are often disregarded, because they are silent during this discussion. In talking about the success of the poem, it doesn't really matter what the poet meant to say, it only matters what is said and how the group reads that said-ness. The poem in front of the group is seen as objective truth to craft or work into submission and the multiplicities of its genesis and construction have little place in that discussion.

A poetry workshop's goal is to craft a "good" poem, oftentimes without defining what "good" is (or dealing with the idea that "good" is impossible). The aesthetics of the instructor are at many times forced on the student for defining that goodness, as feedback can be teacher-centric with the teacher's comments as the final and most important word. If the teacher favors poems in couplets, for instance, it can be seen in his/her/their workshop that many of the poems coming out of the class may favor couplets as well. Likewise, if the teacher enjoys surrealistic surprises in other's work, you might expect to see many poems coming out of the workshop employing these gestures as well. Part of the idea is that the poetry students are in the workshop to apprentice themselves to the senior poet's ideals and learn from his/her/their successes.

This is really only a problem if you believe art making, particularly art-making by poetry students, should be a place for absolute freedom and self-expression and not a place to learn just what is the desired, perfected craft. The pressures on students to behave in these workshop spaces is often immense and far-reaching past the hours in the classroom, as resources, such as publications, internships, or extra attention, can be given more to students who fall in line with workshop critique.

As a poet and teacher, I have definite beliefs about poetry writing and the best educational gestures that support its infinite possibilities. I also have ideas about how imagination and art-making intersect, and have been inspired by the work of some of my favorite educational theorists, such as Maxine Greene, Lev Vygotsky, Paulo Freire, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, and Carlina Rinaldi. My main belief is that art is a place for a shared imagination—where creators and readers/viewers enter a space where the imagination and imaginative world is living. That's what makes art important, because it resists the idea that the imagination is contextless. Instead, when we create something out of our specific contexts, we access this shared imagination and can commune with others through art.

It is also my belief that this idea of a shared imagination has trouble existing in a traditional poetry workshop, as this type of traditional pedagogy fences in the contexts and systems of understanding of the poetry student. Because of this, in my own teaching, I have undergone several types of pedagogical resistance in my classroom.

The first method of resistance I have employed is to work against the silencing of the poet. Whenever possible, I give opportunities to allow the poet to speak freely about poem's process in workshop. The group can then see the context of the poet's imagination, instead of just commenting on the ob-

jective language they see in front of them. I also try to engage students in a 'Town Hall' workshop, where group members can ask poets any question they want to, including associative or tangential concerns. The group can then see how each other's contexts influence their shared imagination.

Another type of resistance I use is to ask all group members (including the teacher, of course) to hand out individualized poetry exercises for everyone, geared to help each student work on both what their interests are and to work towards the places in their writing they want to work on. This resists the problem of just the aesthetics of the teacher being filtered down on the students, as he/she/they hand out exercises more likely to produce the types of poems they write. Instead of "one-size-fits-all" writing exercises given out in the traditional poetry classroom, exercises are given out that honor the distinct voices of specific members in the class.

Another type of resistance exercise I use to avoid the traditional workshop model is one I stole from my own poetry teacher, Peter Gizzi, while studying for my MFA at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Peter would have us write letters to our favorite poets, with the goal of erasing methods of hierarchy that tend to remain strict between new and established, published poets. In my class, I have my students write letters to not only their favorite poets, but I also have them exchange work with a partner in the class and write letters to each other that discusses where they believe their partner's work originates (this origination does not have to be situated in the context of poetry). I believe both of these types of activities promote collaboration and models to students that poetry is part of a living history and not simply a clinical apprenticeship to poets who have had success.

Lastly, an activity of resistance that I use in my classroom, steeped in ideas of object-based learning, is called "The Poem Necklace." This activity was inspired one semester as I helped a student re-see his manuscript by going to a jewelry store and making poem necklaces of his book. I made one, too, which helped me immensely with a book I was working on at the time. In a poem necklace, each bead can stand for a whole poem, a section of a book, or even just a line or word that is important to the manuscript. This activity helped my student so much that I transitioned into always having students make them in my workshops. Students collect the beads before class (defining beads as anything that can be strong and has an opening, so they could be a piece of fabric or plastic or any other material). We devote part of class time to making the necklaces and then I have the students wear them repeatedly during the semester. You can see examples of poem necklaces created in my spring 17 poetry thesis course at Columbia in the figure below.

Fig. 1. A collage of my students making and wearing their Poem Necklaces.

Beyond the resistance activities that I have already undertaken in my classrooms, I have dreams of larger-scale curricular interventions. It is a great goal of mine to incorporate

a maker space into all poetry classrooms. I tried out this approach a few years ago in an alternative summer poetry program in upstate New York and studied the effectiveness in a set of case studies with my research collaborator, Emma Anderson. We found that allowing students to engage with poetry in a maker space helped students see their poems differently. In future classes at Columbia, I'd love to develop one in my office on campus for students to visit and create both inside and outside of class hours.

Two other future curricular interventions I would like to undertake would be to expand the possibility of group workshops during class time. This is difficult to do in the current workshop model, because students often seem to need the feedback from the teacher in each session, or else they feel shortchanged, especially in economical terms. I would

I would love to de-center power and have the students engage in inquiry-projects and critique sessions in small groups without them feeling like the class was missing some important element.

I am also in the beginning stages of creating a week-long summer workshop space where students interested in both image and text can come together and work with artists that engage in both poetry and visual art. There would be critique sessions and as well as a chance to do a collaborative project with a visiting faculty member. Ideally, it would be held in a natural setting and include a community maker space.

To recap, I feel that as poets and poetry teachers we need to constantly interrogate and revise our understandings of what the best classrooms are for us and our work. It can be problematic when the goal of a poetry workshop is to discuss craft only in regards to the creation of a "good" poem and oftentimes silence the poet's intentions, opinions, and aesthetics. I hope I have begun here to provide alternatives to this model, such as open dialogue, collaborative projects, and multi- and interdisciplinary approaches to understand the poem and its possibilities. There is still much work to be done to re-envision a new kind of poetry classroom, one that resists structures of power that alienate future enthusiastic readers and writers of poetry. In re-seeing what art school can be for poets, I, for one, am up for this challenge.

Firewall: International Internet Critique | Joyce Yu-Jean Lee

The Critique 2.0 symposium asked artists, "As makers of culture, what broader social issues do they address?" This paper describes how I addressed Internet freedom as a Chinese American artist through a socially engaged art project named FIREWALL, an interactive pop-up Internet Cafe. The project investigates online censorship by comparing the disparities of Google searches in the U.S.A. versus Baidu searches in China.

Background

Introduction to Censorship

In the summer of 2011, I worked with American curator James Elaine on a cultural exchange residency for a dozen emerging North American artists in the 798 Arts District of Beijing, China. As foreigners, we used VPN software during our trip to circumnavigate the "Great Firewall of China" and access banned websites like Facebook, New York Times and Google search engine. The Communist Party of China censors information available online to an estimated 730 million Chinese internet users.[1] Administered by the Ministry of Public Security, the "The Golden Shield Project" (official Chinese name) is the part of the firewall that limits potentially unfavorable incoming data from foreign countries. Sherisse Pham of CNN Tech reported in January 2017 that the Chinese Communist Party, "announced a 14-month 'clean up' of internet access services, which included a crackdown on virtual private networks, or VPNs." As an artist, I am interested in how pervasive media technologies like the Internet draw invisible boundaries delineating international identities. Specifically, I want to see how the Internet shapes our cultural perspectives in China compared to the U.S.; and how digital consumption defines worldviews. I designed FIREWALL to invite the public to research terms and images online with the goal of finding limited, controlled, or banned search returns. This participatory process explores the complexities of a rapidly developing Internet culture, the nuances of English and Chinese language translation, and the elusive notion of Truth online.

Post-Studio Practice

This "post-studio" project developed as I attempt to keep pace alongside the ever-changing production and dissemination of information online. In a socio-political age of "fake news" and "alternative media," authenticity and the truth are vulnerable. In her essay, "The Function of the Studio (when the studio is a laptop)," Caitlin Jones[2] responds to Daniel Buren's 1971 essay[3] "The legacy of 'post-studio' art is amplified for artists working with digital forms and online environments ... post studio practice in a contemporary sense could be understood less as a reaction against established norms of productionand distribution and more a reaction to expanded cultural platforms writ large.

The interactive format of the pop-up Internet cafe pushes my creative production beyond my art studio and site specificity into collaborative cultural production online with the public. Through a side by side image search result comparison, participants see the biases of the Internet revealed transparent. Jones continues:

> *The emergence of the Internet accounts for probably the largest divergence between a physical studio and the laptop studio ... The image of the solitary artistic genius is replaced by a more collaborative mode*

of production ... Researching, viewing, compiling, production, post production, exhibition and distribution double and triple back on themselves in a way that renders their separation untenable, and possibly even undesirable.

Institutional Critique

This revealing of the Internet presents the worst of biased, curated information; yet also the best of free universal information—both rife for critique. In Brendan D. Moran's "Aesthetic Platforms" essay in Art School: Propositions for the 21st Century,[4] he defines "the now ubiquitous 'crit,' which dates back to the 1950s for both artists and architects ... is a public revealing of a private activity" (Madoff, 37.) This public revealing of a private activity holds merit beyond teaching in a studio or classroom; it is also a valuable tool for artists working with social and relational praxis.

Institutional critique arose as a conceptual art practice with Marcel Duchamp's use of the ready-made object. With the proliferation of television in the American home, the early video artists of the 1960-70s criticized our televisual society, culturally leveling commercial mass media with interventions by independent guerilla media. It is in this tradition of Institutional critique that I provoke and cajole viewers with FIREWALL to respond to the problems of Internet censorship today. The existing Internet is my ready-made medium, and the custom-designed FIREWALL software is my guerilla intervention into this mass media.

Research Inquiry

Simple values drive the criticality of this project: I aim to bring awareness to Internet freedom issues and international cultural-political perspectives; and to generate discourse with both an art audience, and a general audience. Unlike typical social research, I did not pose a hypothesis, rather kept the visual inquiries open-ended, allowing the participants and subsequent viewers of the search archive to draw their own conclusions.

- What will FIREWALL searches reveal about U.S. vs. Chinese society?
- How will participants be transformed by their FIREWALL experience?

Social Practice

The format of the Internet cafe embedded in the Lower East Side/Chinatown neighborhood in New York City disarms viewers from presupposing current art gallery or aesthetic dialogues about FIREWALL. By combining digital interactivity with participatory performance, art production becomes an unique activist art experience. Nato Thompson writes in his essay, "Contractions of Time: On Social Practice from a Temporal Perspective:"[5]

At times in tension, at times in collusion with capitalist scarcity, the scarcity of experience encourages forms of art that are not as easily distributed as—and thus more distinguishable from—the mass produced goods of the broader market. Massive installations, sculptures, performance, civic institutions (the museum), time-based relational aesthetics all find value in their experiential distinction from larger markets.

FIREWALL creates an experience encouraging participants to pause, look, and ponder cyber time as it unfurls in fast forward with a constant barrage of images, advertising, and news. The project empowers the public to direct its research out of creative intellectual curiosity rather than consumerist consumption. Thompson describes:

This kind of shifted aesthetic disposition resists not only the pace of the information economy, but, perhaps more importantly, our very ability to consume our experience ... As accelerated time comes to characterize not only survival in the arts, but also the default condition of the public, we find forms of meaning that resist the tide of capital and gravitate toward not only the long term, but also the profoundly civic.

As cultural producers, I believe artists have a civic responsibility to critique the structures of media and visual culture to which we are beholden. FIREWALL steps outside the capital art market in order to slow down the public to question the Internet and investigate how censorship affects us.

Use of Technology

Anonymous hacktivists under the organizational name, *Great Fire*, hosted a virtual private server in an undisclosed location in China. Searches were proxied from New York City to this Chinese server via a peer-to-peer proxying tool called *uProxy*, a *Jigsaw* desktop product (formerly *Google Ideas*.) Developer Dan Phiffer collaborated with me to build the FIREWALL software, a browser plug-in that translates image searches between both search engines in either direction. The FIREWALL software takes the search input and references it against a database of pre-translated sensitive or censored terms to account for idiosyncratic language the Chinese have developed to circumnavigate the Great Firewall of China. If the search does not match one of the terms in the database, then the software defaults to *Google Translate* for machine translation.

Production

FIREWALL opened in New York City on the 2016 Chinese new year in February, and was on view through the March anniversary of the arrest of the "Feminist Five" activists in Beijing, China. The Internet café offered hot tea, desktop computers for web surfing, dual-projections playing back searches from the main search station, and a space for connection and conversation. It was generously funded by Franklin Furnace Fund, Asian Women Giving Circle, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Creative Engagement grant. FIREWALL traveled thereafter to St. Pölten, Austria that December.

The search results were presented in two forms for viewers to compare, contrast, and crossreference: 1) A virtual FIREWALL search library catalogued daily at www.firewallcafe.com, displaying parallel images from Google and Baidu showcasing the diverse visual research interests from the visiting public. 2) An evolving dual video projection exhibited screen captures of searches by select participants, including key leaders in the academic, activism, art, journalism, and Chinese communities of New York City and beyond.

Search Results

While the FIREWALL experience cannot pinpoint exact censorship methodologies used by The Great Firewall of China, it does provoke participants to ask why and how the search results differ. The project fosters interpretation and dialogue about the role of the Internet and contemporary culture in a global reality.

Relatively obvious threats censored by the Chinese government were found on sensitive search subjects like the deadly 1989 crackdown on "Tiananmen Square" protests or activist artist, "Ai Wei Wei." Below are examples from the search library of parallel searches on Google versus Baidu:

Figure 1: "Tianamen Square" image search results on www.Google.com versus www.Baidu.com

Figure 2: "Ai Wei Wei" image search results on www.Google.com versus www.Baidu.com

The FIREWALL app also revealed problematic nuances of language translation and cultural lexicon. When resorting to machine translation, idioms were lost in translation due to culturally specific language and concepts rooted in different value systems. For example, the terms "black face" and "white-power" are culturally specific to America and not China, a country with comparatively more nhomogeneous ethnicities. As a result, these terms were machine translated literally in Baidu, presenting absurdly unrelated images that reference everyday life and advertising:

Figure 3: "Black Face" image search results on www.Google.com versus www.Baidu.com

Figure 4: "White Power" image search results on www.Google.com versus www.Baidu.com

Divergent search results were also caused by national internet security practices. For example, Google abides by more stringent restrictions on pornographic content and identity protection policies in the U.S. than Baidu in China. So searching for the word "myself" returns social media profile images in Baidu, while Google will not pull any profile photos from American social media sites, instead returning only visualizations of the word itself.

Figure 5: "Myself" image search results on www.Google.com versus www.Baidu.com

Audience

In an effort to engage broader audiences, I hosted several events: school classes as well as two public roundtable discussions, the latter which provoked a response from Chinese authorities. As a result, discussion around FIREWALL expanded to address questions about artist as activist, self-censorship, censorship offline, and American versus foreign civil liberties. Public programs?

Students

As an educator, I see the influences and effects of Internet and digital culture on student worldviews, attention spans, learning habits, and ideas of scholarly research play out in my classroom. In order to see these effects in my project, I invited a couple of school classes to participate and discuss their FIREWALL findings. 60 middle schoolers visited from Apex for Youth, a non-profit organization that delivers possibilities to underserved Asian youth in New York City. Bilingual children to Chinese immigrants, many of these students types searches in both English and Chinese. uProxy engineers presented to the students about their role in developing the proxying technology, a touchpoint to the after school computer science programs in

which the students were currently enrolled.

College classes visited from Marymount Manhattan College and New Jersey City University. The Marymount class, "Digital Media and Society" taught by Sarah Nelson Wright, discussed the topics of "Censorship & Control" with preparatory readings assigned in advance. These millennials were fascinated to learn about the origins of the Internet and surprised by how early ethical issues regarding a digital democracy were still relevant and problematic today and evident in FIREWALL findings.

Public

Two roundtable discussions were held in conjunction with the exhibition:

1) "Creative Hacktivism" - Discussion about Internet censorship in China and international hacktivism in its many creative forms: constructing virtual networks; implementing collateral freedom; creating research, journalism, infographics, development, and design. Panelists included: Jason Q. Ng, Research Fellow at the *University of Toronto's Citizen Lab* and author of *Blocked on Weibo*; Sisi Wei, an investigative journalist, designer and developer at *ProPublica*; Josh B., who works on uProxy, a censorship circumvention tool which also powers part of the FIREWALL experience.

2) "Networked Feminism in China" - Discussion about China's feminist activists and the role of the Internet in this movement, moderated by Susan E. McGregor, Assistant Director of the Tow *Center for Digital Journalism* at Columbia Journalism School. The panel featured: Lu Pin, Program manager of *Media Monitor for Women Network* and chief editor of *Feminist Voices* in China; Siodhbhra Parkin, Fellow of the *Paul Tsai China Center* at Yale Law School; Mingming and Shitou, queer filmmaker and artist collaborators/activists from Beijing, China.

Government

One of the roundtable panelists was a Chinese national whom I invited to speak about the One-Child policy, a population planning policy in China that was relaxed in 2016. When Chinese government officials discovered the panelist was scheduled to participate, they exerted pressure on the person's employer to forbid them from attending my exhibition and event. Unfortunately, even after I cancelled the speaking engagement, their threats escalated nonetheless. The Chinese officials demanded the person cut short their activities abroad in the U.S., return immediately to China, and never speak outside of the country again.

This overseas intervention from the Chinese government demonstrated that censorship crosses offline into personal relationships and real-time activities. The threat also illustrated that the civil liberties of Chinese nationals were vulnerable while traveling and/or working abroad on American soil. The incident was covered by press in *The Washington Post, Hyperallergic, ArtCritical, ArtFCity, China Digital Times, Committee for Cultural Policy, Apple Daily Taiwan* and other international publications.

Conclusion

FIREWALL proved that art can activate the public to address problematic issues of power and authenticity, invoking a response from those in control. The project exemplifies how artists can work collaboratively across

disciplines, geography, and language to bring the public together to experience and "see" foreign perspectives not readily visible otherwise. Together, art can change worldviews one participant at a time, and ultimately create a collective experience that transpires culture and nationality.

Endnotes: [1]Sherisse Pham, "China Fortifies Great Firewall with Crackdown on VPNs," CNN Money, 24 Jan. 2017, <http://money.cnn.com/2017/01/23/technology/china-vpn-illegal-great-firewall/index.html>.

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[3]Buren, Daniel, and Thomas Repensek, "The Function of the Studio" October, vol. 10, 1979, pp. 51–58., <http://www.jstor.org/stable/778628>.

[4]Moran, Brendan D., "Aesthetic Platforms." Art School: (Propositions for the 21st Century) Ed. Steven Henry Maddoff (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2009) 37.

[5]Thompson, Nato, "Contractions of Time: On Social Practice from a Temporal Perspective," e-flux.com, Journal 20, November 2010, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/20/67649/contractions-of-time-on-social-practice-from-a-temporal-perspective/>.

Pragmatics of Studio Critique | Judith Leemann*

We study in the sound of an unasked question. Our study is the sound of an unasked question. We study the sound of an unasked question.[1]
Fred Moten, 2013

One cannot not communicate.[2]
Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, and Don Jackson, 1967

I teach studio art in a public art college, where collegiality and trust of faculty leaves me great room to shape what happens in my classes. When something arises that wants to be studied, I may lay it out before my students for collective examination. In the Spring semester of 2010 I found myself teaching an advanced undergraduate sculpture studio with a number of students I already knew. I mention this familiarity because it made possible what in retrospect stands for me as one of the most fruitful moments of collective study with my students, a richly productive turning over and around of pedagogical habit in the service of renewed attention to what studio critique might yet become.

My own undergraduate education was not in a visual arts school. I recall collectively looking at work produced in the art classes I took, but critique wasn't the centralized practice I encountered in the graduate pro-

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gram I later entered. The lack of familiarity with the form produced in me a kind of anthropological fascination with the way studio critiques unfolded in that art school setting. *What is this well-rehearsed performance and how do I enter it?* The rules of engagement are never made explicit. I have to extrapolate them by watching and trying to find my way in.

I grew up as a girl, and as a queer person at a time when, at least in my environs, queerness was neither visible nor acknowledged. I grew up the child of immigrants. These are positions from which one learns to look behind the construction of normed forms to see what the "normalcy" of those forms conceals. One learns to do that looking- behind because survival (be it bodily or psychological) is at stake. Richard Wright borrows the phrase "frog perspectives" from Nietzsche to describe that which can only be seen from the down position of any dynamic of oppression.[3] From a frog perspective, what caught my attention about the way critique was practiced wasn't in fact anything about the practice itself, but rather the naturalized way it was assumed everyone in the room already knew what was expected and how to dance the dance. What was notable was the lack of explicit instruction in the practice. From a frog perspective these assumptions of common understanding have so often masked the preservation of old power that the simple lack of explication sets off small alarms.

If biography primed me to suspect the many tacit arrangements animating studio critique, it was a set of writings encountered in my early twenties that provided the language I would later need to move from suspicion to study. These were the writings of Gregory Bateson, Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, Don Jackson and others taking a cybernetic approach to communication studies. In their 1967 book *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson lay out a number of useful tools for teasing apart the many things happening at once in a communication system as complex and enfolded as the one we call a studio critique.

Pragmatics

Fundamental to the research described in *Pragmatics of Human Communication* is the axiom that every communication "not only conveys information, but ... at the same time it imposes behavior."[4] Every communication functions as both report and command. "The report aspect of a message conveys information and is, therefore, synonymous in human communication with the content of the message. ... The command aspect, on the other hand, refers to what sort of a message it is to be taken as, and, therefore, ultimately to the *relationship* between the communicants."[5] Essential to understanding how these aspects can function simultaneously is recognizing the distinction between digital and analog modes of communication. "Digital" indicates the purely informational aspects of a communication: *what* is being said rather than *how or to what end*. It is the part of a communication that can be transcribed into text with little loss. "Analog" refers to that continuum of affective, bodily, and historical relations through which any digital communication takes place and which every communication re-inscribes or bends in its own way. It is everything we register about what a communication *produces*, *generates*, or *does* in excess of transmitting content.

Watzlawick and his colleagues offer this example to illustrate the distinction: "the

messages 'It is important to release the clutch gradually and smoothly' and 'Just let the clutch go, it'll ruin the transmission in no time' have approximately the same information content (report aspect), but they obviously define very different relationships."[6] Digging further into the operations of the analog, they offer this: "All such relationship statements are about one or several of the following assertions: 'This is how I see myself ... this is how I see you ... this is how I see you seeing me ...' and so forth in theoretically infinite regress"[7]

Central to this systems-oriented approach to communication studies is the practice of questioning how cyclical behaviors get habitually punctuated. "Where the *why*? of a piece of behavior remains obscure, the question *what for*? can still supply a valid answer."[8] One can know a thing by seeing what t produces, generates or does without needing to take up the difficult if not impossible task of prying into origin or intention. Dropping the notion of linear causation for ever-circling interaction, any partial arc becomes a valid place to gather information about the system as a whole. Translating this approach to the studio art classroom, we take a chance and trust that reading the arc of a made object forward in terms of what it now produces/generates/does for viewers will reveal as much as any digging after the origins, the *why* of the work. We arrive in a place as speculative as it is pragmatic.

Propositions

I don't recall when I decided to fully open up to my students my accumulating suspicions about studio critique. I had established the habit of sharing with each new class a brief text I called *Observations on Forms and Patterns of Critique*,[9] in which I took up in a broad way the kinds of things I noticed happening in critiques. I trusted that if we examined the form, taking time to discuss what we thought we were doing, we could produce a space for more consistently meaningful encounter.

We began in pairs: *What is the best thing a critique can do? What is the worst thing a critique can do?* And those conversations then shared with the whole group and that leading into another round of questions. *You say that critiques make you a better artist. How? What is it exactly that happens in critique that sends you back to the studio with greater capacity? You say the worst thing a critique can do is make you want to quit making art. What kinds of things get said that lead to that? Is it* what *is said or* how *it's said?* Here, though I don't at first make it explicit, we invoke the distinction between analog communication (tone, how it's said, the way you can read the assumptions playing out about you and your work) and digital communication (content, the concrete observations about the work itself).

In past classes I would jump from this priming conversation right into critique, but in this particular class I laid out my concern that it seemed too often a chance operation whether or not any given critique would be productive. I proposed dissecting out the parts to see what we could make of them. I taped a large sheet of paper to the wall and we began by listing all the kinds of questions that get asked in critiques. We began teasing out what *else* each of those questions was doing: *What are you trying to say? Did you think about ...? Did you mean to ...? Why did you...?* Not only questions but familiar frames of response: *It reminds me of .... I wish this part were ....*

I drew a simple diagram: a central circle for the work, an X to the left of that work, indicating the maker but also the time of the making, the protected space of the studio.[10] To the right of the work, I arrayed a half-circle of Xs indicating viewers but also the time of looking, the space of becoming public. We diagrammed what parts of these relations each question foregrounded. We mapped *What are you trying to say?* as a direct arrow from maker to viewers, noting the implication that the work *should* be able to deliver something like a statement directly to a viewer in the same way that the maker's speech could. Someone offered that there was in the word "trying" both a suggestion that work *should* be able to say like speech says and that the work was failing to do that, why else use the word "trying"? To map *Did you think about ...?* we needed to add to our diagram a kind of unborn sibling of the work sitting ghostly next to the work that was in fact made. We noted that having more feedback addressed to the unborn sibling of the work than to the work that was in fact made too often left a maker disoriented, confused, impotent[11]. *It reminds me of ....* was mapped as an arrow that left the viewer to bounce quickly off the work before landing on something that was already there near the viewer all along. Here the work mattered only as satellites do – as relay or reflector for some signal already prepared in advance. Reflection of this sort can be also *de*flection, a way to refuse engagement with the object at hand, a way to substitute a rehearsal of expertise for dialogue with this material thing newly arrived in the world.

Having worked our way through a number of these questions, registering how many of them veered away from actual encounter with the object that was in fact made, steering either toward the backstage process of making, the unborn siblings of the work, or to the tastes or associational ecologies of individual viewers, I asked what it would take to let those objects that were in fact made take center stage more consistently.

I proposed two broad categories of response to any object under critique. The first included observations about the work so obvious we would never think to mention them. These observations were generally verifiable and consensual–we could all agree that the thing before us was in fact the size of a fist, stark white, made of coarse cloth. We seemed, though, based on how rarely we took the time to name physical attributes (size, color, material, orientation to other things in the room, etc.) not to value that information much. On our diagram I placed these kinds of responses right on the skin of the object – far more about the object than about us as viewers. The other type of response had more to do with observer than object. *It reminds me of ..., I like how you ..., I wish you had ...* Not verifiable, not shared, but seemingly more interesting, or at least more frequently spoken. These kinds of communications we diagrammed as little moons orbiting viewers. I suggested we call them associations and understand their limited relationship to the object at hand.

We would need to take time to make obvious, verifiable observations about the object, no matter how silly or tedious it first seemed. Only then could we articulate connections between those things we could agree to call verifiable consensual facts about the work. To articulate a connection was not the same as making an association; it was re-tracing through language a relation between verifiable facts about the work in order to then articulate what this relation was

itself generating. If we were serious in our belief that an artist should leave a critique with a better sense of how her decisions in the process of making communicated themselves to viewers, we would need to root ourselves firmly and consistently in this habit of spending time on the thing itself, the object before us. The question of what the object was doing, generating, or producing became our central focus; the work of building connections from first observations our central labor. We dropped questions about the process leading up to the making of the work. We dropped in fact all questions to the maker, unless they were framed as observation (one of the things a work can do is generate questions) *The way this part connects with that one makes me think about which part came first* rather than *Which of these parts did you build first?*

With all this effort to ground ourselves in observation, there was an important speculative component to our experiment: *Assume everything you see is intended.* We know full well that every made object is the offspring of intention and accident (and necessity, habit, budget, will). *Choosing* to see an object as fully intended freed our minds from the lure of parsing intention and accident, in order to give ourselves over to the demanding task of articulating what a form is doing in the full complexity of its internal and external relations. Similarly held at bay was the expression of wishes for the work to be different. Instead of saying what we wished to be different we tried to name what the form was doing *as it was* that led us to wish it otherwise.

Looking back, I suspect that what these several constraints did was in some ways very simple. They conspired to keep us from escaping encounter with the object itself. Quite simply, it is easier to make associations and to share wishes for a slightly different version of the work than it is to settle the eye and mind and to humbly begin to name what is there.

We asked the artist to just listen and take notes. We asked the artist to say nothing until the following week, and in that time to take up privately the connect and disconnect between what was intended and what was in fact communicated. These are ethical choices with real consequences – time and privacy to contend with information this multiply loaded makes it possible to move one's thinking forward. Performing one's response to feedback before an audience limits greatly the ways forward. Intimate reading of a work needn't require skinning the maker.

We practiced this form for the remainder of the semester. Mostly with objects, but also with video and installation. Each slow start naming the seemingly obvious verifiable aspects of a form temporally re-inscribed our shared belief that materials and forms have the capacity to communicate. This common ground of observation served also to anchor dissenting views. *Can we come back to the way this section opens into this other one? We keep reading that as an invasion, but I see it in relation to this other opening and then it seems more like an inviting passage through.* I was particularly interested in these branching moments when, from the common ground of verifiable observation, there emerged very different, but legitimate ways of connecting relations among elements.

We developed a nuanced sense of what constituted a connection and what an association, and which of those insistent but not immediately connectable associations were worth bringing forward. One person

might say *Ok I know this is an association, but I keep thinking about carnival rides.* Or *I don't know why but I feel incredibly sad the longer I look at this.* And then it was our work to trace back through the verifiable elements what relations it was among them that could be producing that sense. In one of the more beautiful moments of the semester, a series of four minimal towers, thin plaster skins around concrete cores, began to produce in the group a sense of estrangement, specifically familial estrangement. We traced our way back to the verifiable fact of the distances between the towers, in relationship to the proportion between insides and outsides, the cold neutrality of the outsides. I watched out of the corner of my eye as the artist sat quietly taking notes, her face reflecting the humble assurance of someone whose work was generating the very dynamic that led her to make it. Absolutely different than if she'd stood before the work telling us what it was about, before letting us loose to play the relatively easy game of comparing her work to her words.

Confluences

Classroom experiments like these happen all the time. Artists do not invent only in the studio. We work to forge spaces of study with and for our students. Sometimes a discovery is made of a precedent that, if known, would have made of one's own experiment a continuation rather than a seeming beginning. Artist and philosopher Erin Manning makes the useful distinction between influence and confluence, where the latter describes exactly this moment of discovering a heretofore unknown precedent.[12] To situate this classroom experiment within a wider ecology of pedagogical inquiry, I want to trace several bands of both influence and confluence.

In the realm of confluence there is the vital precedent of artist and professor Mary Kelly's method of critique. Recently brought to my attention, I attempted to track down some detailed report of it, and found only fragments tucked here and there. In a video interview, Kelly delineates the essential approach as "a very very detailed reading of the work where the artist doesn't speak at all but everyone else kind of works on the reading of the piece, semiotically speaking."[13]

> *I start with the phenomenological. ... Oh it was light or it was empty or it was confusing. How much meaning is already in place there and how do you kind of pull yourself away from what you're bringing and what the artist is bringing to that situation through the work. But not through their biography. You actually just unrealistically pretend you don't know them in my class, which I know is absurd. But just trying to pull away from that, not to make any assumptions on that basis. And often we as artists are not fully knowledgeable about exactly what it is we've done. There is an intentionality; you appreciate it if people could try to follow that argument, but you can find out things yourself. So why put you on the spot to say over again in words what you did in another way. ... There must be more to it than someone just asking you why did you do that? Well maybe you don't even know, but I did* that *so what does* that *mean.*[14]

I'm glad in some way that my students and I were able to make our own discoveries, but I do wonder how much else of early feminist pedagogy is lost to my generation and hence to succeeding ones.

Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, in their book *The Undercommons: Black Study and Fugitive Planning*, offer a notion of study that resonates strongly with my own understanding of what constitutes a

rigorous studio practice. Requisite for both studio practice and study (and by extension for any practice of studio critique as close reading) is the devising of methodologies for holding back those forces that would otherwise encroach on the open field of study. A classroom can still be a place of study, but practices must be implemented to continually clear out all the calcifying habits that will otherwise maintain that space as their own. Moten offers this:

> *What's totally interesting me is to just not call the class to order. And there's a way in which you can think about this literally as a simple gesture at the level of a certain kind of performative, dramatic mode. You're basically saying, let's just see what happens if I don't make that gesture of calling the class to order – just that little moment in which my tone of voice turns and becomes slightly more authoritative so that everyone will know that class has begun. What if I just say, 'well, we're here. Here we are now.' Instead of announcing that class has begun, just acknowledge that class began. It seems like a simple gesture and not very important. But I think it's really important. And I also think it's important to acknowledge how hard it is not to do that.*[15]

I introduce this provocation of Moten's partly as a dare (I have been experimenting with it and it is difficult) and partly to establish an order of nuance in what I am calling for in this paper. It might seem that Moten's refusal to call the class to order and my own insistence that the practice of critique be framed explicitly are on opposite sides of a continuum, but what they have in common is more important. In each case it is about recognizing and interrupting the habits of power in the context that is a classroom. *Not saying* "ok let's get started" and *saying* "how do we understand this thing called critique that we are about to engage in?" are each a kind of renunciation.

Jacques Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* oriented me to the significant role of the *verifiable*, be it text or art object, as necessary ground for common study and influenced my first attempts to distinguish among different ways of responding to an object. Rancière's text builds on the "intellectual adventure" of French-speaking Joseph Jacotot, sent in 1918 to teach in the Netherlands. Facing students with whom he shares no common language, he brings them a bilingual edition of *Télémaque* and instructs them to begin teaching themselves the French language. "He had only given them the order to pass through a forest whose openings and clearings he himself had not discovered"[16] Difficult not to read passages such as the following as renderings of what studio critique as study might look and feel like:

> *..by observing and retaining, repeating and verifying, by relating what they were trying to know to what they already knew, by doing and reflecting about what they had done. They moved along in a manner one shouldn't move along—the way children move, blindly, figuring out riddles. ... All their effort, all their exploration, is strained toward this: someone has addressed words to them that they want to recognize and respond to, not as students or as learned men, but as people; in the way you respond to someone speaking to you and not to someone examining you: under the sign of equality.*[17]

His translator's choice of the word *stultification* to stand for Ranciere's own *abrutir* ("to render stupid, to treat like a brute")[18] captures precisely my objection to the opinions of teachers being the primary thing communicated by any critique. If a student leaves a conversation about her work with only the opinions of her teacher, she has indeed been educated, but perhaps only in the aesthetic inclinations of her teacher.

By contrast, when time and effort are given to collectively tracing how a student's materialized decisions communicate, and effects are understood as arising from verifiable observations about the relations (and the relations of relations) of which any work consists, then a student will learn something about *and from* her own work. As one student put it: "I remember the ability to go back to the studio with concrete action points. Instead of being filled with people's personal stories I was filled with communication from the piece itself."[19]

Remainders

As I prepared to write this text, I wanted confirmation that what I thought had taken place had in fact taken place for my students as well. I've kept in loose touch with many of them and they generously responded to a query I sent out. In reading their reflections five years on, I was struck by the centrality of what one student dubbed the "Axiom of Intention." I had seen it as a secondary constraint, but as their responses accumulated it was clearly more central than I'd thought:

> *There were few rules, but they were non-negotiable, and the first rule was more an axiom than a rule, anyway. The Axiom of Intention, let's call it. It's the idea that the art, the object, is exactly the way the artist wants it to be. Without that, the other ideas just sort of evaporate into a lot of talk. ... When you assume intention, you give the artist a respect they can grow into. Does that make sense? I know and you know that when I produce a sculpture, some of it probably gets away from me. Who cares? That's life. Hopefully I'll have better control the next time. The Axiom of Intention focuses the discussion on an actual concrete object or experience that everyone in the room can perceive, and doesn't abuse the artist who was kind enough to put work on display.*[20]

Several of the students wrote of the silent looking that kicked off our close reading and the clarity it produced:

> *Not only did we nurture the observers' fresh perspective we recreated it for the exhibiting student artist. By beginning in silent empirical observation we gave the artist the critical distance that is lost while creating. In that moment of silence and final execution he/she is given time to see if all the elements involved are actually serving the work in the way they were intended. In that still moment removed from the chaos of the communal studio space and relieved of the stress of preparing for that very critique the artist is finally able to step back and really see what it is he/she had put together.*[21]

In the time elapsed since this classroom experiment, other lines of curiosity have joined themselves to the ones that first led me in. One of these has to do broadly with how little trust members of the public appear to have in their own experience of art viewing. A person fully capable of noticing and responding to a tree outside a gallery crosses the threshold into the gallery and becomes suddenly unable to muster that same capacity facing a work of art. (It strikes me that tree, work of art, and viewer are all underestimated here.) Could changing how we talk about work amongst students and teachers ripple out to offer other kinds of orientation to works of art? And what of this fiction my students and I allowed ourselves: becoming "just eyes" for one another's work? How does this square with our knowledge that all seeing is located and that a viewer's gender, sexuality, race, class (but also humor, anger, hope) inflects their seeing? These differences don't make a difference equally, and in the context of higher education in studio art, it feels particularly vital to take up the question of racialized seeing.

Very much an open question for me is whether this close reading my students and I practiced tends toward the interruption or the reinforcement of those pervasive dynamics of marginalization that make it so difficult for students of color to get what they need out of classroom practices like group studio critiques. It was both sobering and heartening to see in the results of a recent diversity survey at our college how often studio critique came up as a concern for our students of color. Sobering in the sense of seeing how much I hadn't seen of the way this central pedagogical practice, especially when performed in classes with one or only a few students of color, becomes another place in which insides and outsides, "included" others against a normed white background, get inscribed. Heartening in the sense that addressing that which is visible from a "frog perspective" may yet force a rigor and transparency to the practice of studio critique that will benefit every student artist. I want to be absolutely clear here: while "frog perspective" arises from navigating conditions of oppression (and is thus inextricable from a certain lack of privilege), where *sight* (and I would add *insight*) is concerned, this *is* the privileged position. It sees more, knows more, can name more.

I want to propose that we view the habitual enactment of studio critique as a kind of symptom. Our common understanding of a symptom is as an indication of some disorder in a system. Here symptom is seen primarily as expression. But in the cybernetic approach of those communications researchers whose thinking has so influenced my own, a symptom is not only a thing that kicks out of a body but also one that kicks back in and *makes* a larger collective body. In the context of family therapy, Watzlawick et al. suggest moving "... toward viewing symptoms as one kind of input into the family system rather than as an expression of intrapsychic conflict"[22] and further as "a piece of behavior that has profound effects in influencing the surroundings."[23] What happens if we transpose this repunctuation into our own context? Might we begin to recognize how certain dynamics of our field are protected or even produced by the seemingly minor habit of keeping studio critique a tacit set of agreements, not plainly asking in each new gathering of students what it is we mean to undertake. Habit is efficient, it need only remain unnoticed to continue its work

Gregory Bateson famously called noise the only source of the new.[24] My students and I made one kind of noise in the system within which we found ourselves, and something came of that. Something immediate and something with a longer tail that flicks about still. Everything communicates; in the realm of studio critique, the lack of explicit instruction communicates whether we mean it to or not. When I addressed the distinction between digital and analog communications earlier, it may have seemed that I was most interested in those aspects of the analog realm that have to do with affect, with the state in which a student artist leaves a critique. That does matter to me. If we can transmit the same content in ways that leave students affectively mobilized, eager to get back into their studios, why would we *not* communicate that way? But there's another way that our lack of explicit instruction communicates analogically. Recall that analog communication is always a proposition about relationship. Every student studies her teachers as much as their subjects.

To the student studying her studio art teacher, what gets taught explicitly about

contemporary art practice must always resolve itself against what gets taught implicitly about the context, habits, and power arrangements patterning the field. Recall this oscillation at the base of all analogic communication: "This is how I see myself ... this is how I see you ... this is how I see you seeing me ..."[25] In how we practice critique, in whether we take the time to find out what understandings of the task pre-exist each particular gathering of students and teacher around a work, in how we privilege some subset of the multitude of communications that could be made in response to a work, we not only reveal our most fundamental epistemologies of art making and viewing, we enact them.

Endnotes: [1]Fred Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," South Atlantic Quarterly 112, no. 4 (2013): 756.

[2]Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin and Don Jackson, Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1967) 49.

[3]Richard Wright, White Man, Listen! (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1978) 27.

[4]Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson Pragmatics of Human Communication, 51.

[5]Ibid., 51-52.

[6]Ibid., 52.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid., 45.

[9]Available at http://www.judithleemann.com/teaching

[10]Illustrations and additional images at http://www.judithleemann.com/teaching

[11]The word impotent I borrow here from Fluxus artist Robert Filliou: "as soon as you have left a house where you were talking to friends, to a girl, etc. you realize clearly what you should have said or done, but somehow didn't. ... Feeling too strongly that what we should have said is more important than what we actually did say, can only lead to guilt, or impotence, or both." Robert Filliou Teaching and Learning as Performing Arts (Cologne: Verlag Gebr. König, 1970) 74.

[12]Erin Manning, personal interview, July 30, 2015. Montreal, Canada.

[13]"Mary Kelly – Experimental Impulse Interview (2011)," YouTube video, 21:33, Posted by "East of Borneo," November 14, 2011 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxKarmQ_T-I.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013) 126.

[16]Jacques Rancière, The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation, trans. Kristin Ross (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press: 1991), 9.

[17]Ibid., 10-11.

[18]The principle of stultification emerges from the emphasis on explication as necessary to learning. "The pedagogical myth ... divides the world into two. More precisely, it divides intelligence into two. It says that there is an inferior intelligence and a superior one." Ibid., 7.

[19]Courtney Kim Benbernou, e-mail message to author, September 23, 2015.

[20]Inanna Underhill, e-mail message to author, September 22, 2015.

[21]Lidija Ristic, e-mail message to author, September 22, 2015.

[22]Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson Pragmatics of Human Communication, 44.

[23]Ibid., 45.

[24]Gregory Bateson, Steps to an Ecology of Mind (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000) 416.

[25]Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson Pragmatics of Human Communication, 52.

Art as Proof of Concept: Beyond Semantics |

Ellen K. Levy

Artistic practice-based, interdisciplinary research generally involves both theory and practice, each informing the other. As artist/educator Stephen Wilson predicted, increasing numbers of artists involved in scientific inquiry and technological innovation are addressing scientific research agendas largely ignored by the mainstream. The art that results, often designated as a proof of concept, needs more clarification if the art projects are to be understood as something distinct from a positivist enterprise. What is at stake? I offer several examples where the art expands basic philosophical notions about the nature of reality and probes our relationship to the planet and what being human means in our time. For example, the team SymbioticA (comprised of Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr) combines wet and dry technology with synthetic biology to explore ideas of creativity and the status of animals. As another example, Tomás Saraceno works collaboratively with scientists to explore social cooperation in spiders.

A "proof of concept" tests ideas or products for feasibility and is generally associated with the sciences, engineering, and manufacturing professions (e.g., drug design). It has been adapted to PhD programs in the humanities (e.g., art and design programs) to standardize research paradigms. The term has become controversial in the arts for its link with scientific validation. Without becoming entrenched in definitions, I believe that the proof of concept may be useful for the arts, but it needs clarification how it can be distinguished from a positivist enterprise. I can best suggest this by providing some artistic approaches to scientific issues.

Many artists for whom the proof of concept is applicable engage another discipline such as science. In most PhD programs for artists, extensive questioning will take place about the proper methodologies. It is often in this context that the concept of proof occurs. Artists need to know the research methodologies and tools of the other subject to engage its content in a deep way. To formulate research questions one needs to understand the important issues and contested areas of the other discipline. It helps immensely to attend lab meetings and public conferences and to speak with valued practitioners about their experiences as professionals. Work in the laboratory and field trips can also be helpful.

Even as one is gaining a high level of knowledge in the secondary discipline, other challenges will appear. These may encompass re-defining the creative research status of an art object or performance. In addition, language, even when identical may have altogether different meanings. For example, the common-sense meaning and neuroscientific clinical meanings of "attention" are not identical. Evaluation problems and issues of replicability can also be problematic. At transdisciplinary art and science conferences, artist Stephen Wilson pointed out that any acceptance of an art form in the science community needs to encompass the idiosyncratic.[1]

I offer several examples, which suggest that the artist has adapted a proof of concept in a way that enriches the art. For example, artist Kerry Tribe explored the life of H.M., a man who since undergoing an experimental operation on his brain

for severe epilepsy, could no longer make new episodic memories. He suffered from epilepsy seizures following an accident at age 10. When he was 27, Dr. Scoville performed a lateral medial temporal lobe resection, removing the hippocampus and some surrounding cortex areas. This had disastrous results that left H.M. unable to recall his past.

The question asked by Tribe concerns our ability to empathize with H.M.'s situation. For this, Tribe created a simulation that served as a proof of concept (this is my interpretation and not Tribe's term). Tribe ran 16mm film through two side-by-side projectors, so that footage appears on one screen projected 20 seconds after the other. This 20 second delay is significant because that is H.M.'s length of recall, and it became the subject of Kerry Tribe's video installation. As Matthew Goulish stated in *Art Journal*:

> *The quality of H.M.'s consciousness that Tribe's installation captures is not precisely the loss of time, but the loss of the capability to place the self in relation to time. The lost ability to grasp the elusive near-at-hand as it passes by leaves the impression of a possibility of grasping, of repair, or of relearning the missing skill, dimly remembered. So the search continues, the search that looks like a loss of short-term memory, and all life becomes searching—for time, pattern, self, twin sea horses. The film keeps running, echoing itself.*[2]

Seeing the film places us, the viewers, in the same situation as H.M. who never has access to his past. I suggest that the proof of concept occurs as the viewer realizes that his or her lack of memory mirrors the experience of the protagonist. If I were to single out one of the greatest divergences between artists and scientists it is that they differ in the questions they ask even when the methodology may be very close. For example, in 2004 artist Jane Philbrick set up an experimental situation very close to an early dichotic listening task conducted by psychologist Donald Broadbent in 1958. Broadbent wanted to learn what participants would hear if subjects received different information in each ear through headphones. He devised an experiment, which provided a proof of concept for his theory that "attention" to language presupposed the ability to receive it. The resultant data revealed limited ability to report what was heard in the unattended ear. If one was distracted, all was filtered out except for whether the voice was male or female voice.

Broadbent's experiment has its philosophical counterpart in an artistic experiment by Philbrick. Her artwork, Voix/e (2003), took the Biblical poem, the Song of Solomon, and internalized its dialogue of love and seduction for listeners. She recreated the Song in both male and female voices with a voice synthesizer, and she also separated out the vowels and consonants for bride, groom, and companion parts. The recordings were scanned digitally and each word was separated phonemically, between the percussive consonants and the soft vowels. The recording was hard panned (the sound in this circumstance comes from front and center). The visual setup was important as well; separate sounds were fed to each ear via gold-plated headphones. The presentation was staged to enhance the participant's sense of the object transmitting the sounds. Rather than resulting in one attended and one unattended feed as in the Broadbent experiment, the sounds were experienced as if fused within the listener's brain. I was informed that this determination was made by interviews conducted by the artist after visitors experienced the work. Philbrick's

sought to set up an experimental situation that could test the importance of the body in comprehending language. Her proof of concept was to set up a situation in which the partial recording in each ear might resolve themselves in the listener's body. The recording would only make sense to a listener if the sounds were meshed together, despite being split phonemically. (Presumably methods involving brain imaging could now test for the ability or inability to fuse the separate streams of information at this time. This could have been possible in 2004 but it would have been prohibitively expensive.)

My experience is that artists like to set up a path for the unexpected to take place. To do so, artists will often invent new ways to visualize a proof of concept. One of the reasons these art experiments work as art is because they stay within a rigorous framework. They have a plausibility conferred, in this case, by the neurosciences. And it is precisely their departure from any scientifically-expected result and gains in affect that may give such works poignancy.

Endnotes: [1]Steven Wilson was author of Information Arts: Intersections of Art, Science, and Technology. (MIT Press, 2001).

[2]Matthew Goulish, "A Clear Day and No Memories: Neurology, Philosophy, and Analogy in Kerry Tribe's H.M.," Art Journal, February 5, 2014, 19.

Boundary Issues: On the Divisions between Art and Design | Pooneh Maghazehe

The purpose of this analysis is to isolate the qualitative factors that can exist between art and design towards an understanding of the term "Interdisciplinary". It explores a series of statements that provide the lens to view each discipline objectively and disparately from one another. Ultimately, this analysis aims to outline difference with the intent to locate conceptual commonalities. These commonalities, or "common denominators" then become the currency that can guide students through understanding interdisciplinary thinking.

But what is the value in the exercise?

It is worth considering that instruction on the relationship between art and design at the early university level is confused. In other words, the vagueness in the attempt to cross discipline on areas of study can be blamed on simply not claiming the territory that they are not.

As an artist with a studio practice and a designer who owns a small design company, the separations of the creative process between art and design has occupied me for some time. In my work as an instructor, the questions I ask myself on the fundamental difference between art and design are the same questions that dominate critiques with my students. In my practice, art and design in application mostly operate independently from one another. The chance to borrow qualitative measures between disciplines starts first with a space of separation – and only from this point might there be the chance for the two to occasionally co-exist. The creative process can then be transformative, whereby thinking as a designer or thinking as an artist can actually transform a project.

Betti Marenko and Jamie Brassett elaborate, "...the tangible embodying of speculative operations upon possible futures. Thought in this way, designing as creative process comes close to philosophy as creative process. Which is not to say that they become equivalents, but that the different planes upon which they operate have a momentary connection." (Marenko and Brassett, 2015). The emphasis, here, is that the notion of "possible futures" is hinged by "momentary connection". The ideas that inspire "momentary connection" are incorporated into this paper by two sections:

1.The Metaphor: The Line and the Spiral
I want start with difference. I will draw the boundaries within which art and design behave.

2 .The Common Denominators
What are the prompts that can work between art and design? How can theseprompts help grow interdisciplinary thinking in critique?

I should start by saying that I believe in interdisciplinary studies.

My experiences as an artist and designer have benefited from an interdisciplinary framework. As an artist, I can abstract and conceptualize parts of the design process, such as the programming of spatial layouts or the drawing of construction documents. In thinking on design, my studio practice benefits from the habitual process of translating an original idea into built space. Considered together, the design process and the attempt to "make an artwork" can be divided into visual metaphors – a line and a spiral.

The Line: One After Another
The design process classically works in an anticipatory fashion - linearly and solution driven. Barry Wylant elaborates, "...the level of specificity is tremendous, usually demarcated to a minuscule fraction of a millimeter. Each one of these specifications results from a decision made in developing the design, and in effect, the final object is a cumulative articulation of every minute decision arrived at in making the object....design can never be wholly about the new thing because it always involves linkages and loss, in association with past conditions. Further, the derivative quality described points to the emergent nature of the thoughtfulness associated with design, and a certain focus on the past in the creation of something new." (Wylant, 2015). And so, design enables task-oriented thinking, focuses on result, which inhibits the probability of what Deleuze terms, "collisions" or uncertainty in the process.
The etymology of the word design captures the concept of time in the design process,"Se dessine translated in the English publication as 'coming into view', is an interesting phrase for us. Dessiner is the French word that captures 'to draw' as well as 'to design', 'to make' and 'to form'; 'se dessiner gives us 'to stand out', 'to emerge" (Marenko,and Brassett, 2015).

A bullet point list of characteristics that define the design process could include the following statements:

- The design process is anticipatory
- The design process, ultimately, is compelled by responses or answers
- The design process relies on function
- The designed object is a product
- The designed product is client driven – its produced specifically for the other
- The design process relies on programming - it cannot begin with out limits

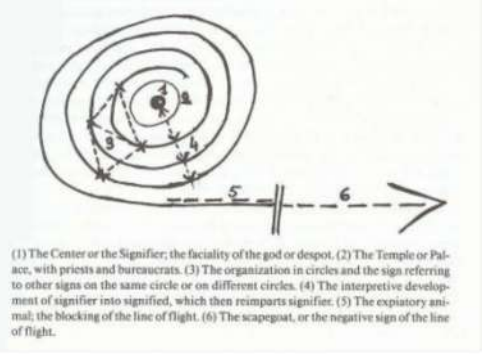
The Spiral: Perpetual Presence

But making art operates differently.

One way to think about the act of making, specifically in a studio practice, is by imagining the space of perpetual presence. Perpetual presence considers the practice of actively suspending an idea or a work. Suspension is attached to the notion of temporality or the temporary. If we look to science, the Meriam Webster dictionary refers to the term as a "the state of a substance when its particles are mixed with but undissolved in a fluid or solid" (Merriam-Webster, 2016)

Suspension, as an approach to art making, allows for time to slip in and out of the pockets that compartmentalize past, present and future. The movement between inward and outward is continuous, revolving, and without stoppage. This movement in the act of making is described in a 2004 essay by Briony Fer, "Spriograph: the Circular Ruis of Drawing," on Grabriel Orozco's studio process. Fer describes "Orozco's drawing nonetheless vividly demonstrates the twin action in his work, a ruination of center and infinite dispersal of its elements. His endless series of divergences and recombinations are continually in movement in ways that dislocate the normal coordinates by which things are linked together in the world " (Fer, 2004)

Fig. 1. Robert Smithson, "The Spiral Jetty", 1970



(1) The Center or the Signifier; the faciality of the god or despot. (2) The Temple or Palace, with priests and bureaucrats. (3) The organization in circles and the sign referring to other signs on the same circle or on different circles. (4) The interpretive development of signifier into signified, which then reimparts signifier. (5) The expiatory animal; the blocking of the line of flight. (6) The scapegoat, or the negative sign of the line of flight.

Fig. 2. Deleuze and Guattari, "A Thousand Plateaus", Diagram of the signifier

A bullet point list of characteristics that define the art making could include the following statements:

- The artwork does not have the pressure of function
- The artwork is not a product
- The art is not client driven, it may or may not consider the other / viewer
- The act of making an artwork does not necessarily rely on limitation in order to live
- The artwork remains suspended by problems
- The artwork is alive to ask questions - it is not motivate by solutions or answers
- In an artwork, time is perpetual - the distance between points in time is less definitive
- The artists over a life's work is to become familiar with problems

Differentiating disciplines based on these terms reveals the power of affiliation through mutually exclusive relationships. As in, art can connect with properties of design while maintaining the characteristics that clearly identify art alone. Only by critically separating the two can there be an alternative value system or a "third way".

Propositions on a Common Denominator

When the parts of a moving machine are separated, singular, disparate elements surface as potential prompts. The prompts, then, act as catalysts to re-draw relationships between the variables that classically define the processes attached to art and design.

Listed below are a series of titled, "prompts". Alongside each prompt are a series of suggested questions that hypothesize this reshuffling. They reformat the binaries that separate art and design. What results, hopefully is a third space that can then be called "interdisciplinary."

1. Prompt #1: Function: Product vs. Non Product (i.e. Use / Value):

The art object, in the most classic sense, is accepted as non-functional. Use and use value are qualitative variables that are "applied" to a work. Criticism legitimizes the art object, validates it. Phrases such as "what the work is doing", "how an artwork operates", or even the term "work" all express the attempt the make a work "function" and exhibit value.

Design, on the other hand begins with a number of assumptions that are inherently attached to an object. Design inhabits the role of the product/commodity, directly considers viewer/use, and embodies the site of labor. As such, the space of design criticism classically seats function next to form. Form, beyond or independent of function, then becomes defined by the subjectivities of tastes, pleasure, and beauty.

- If we eliminated usage/function from a design object, would it categorically be considered an art object?
- If not, then what can it be called?
- Is it possible to use function as the only frame to critique an artwork ? How would this shift our experience of the object?
- And if a maker determines an artwork "functional", do we critique it as a design object? Would it be fair to critique it as an art object with functional qualities?
- How can we move from theory to the application of these ideas?

2. Prompt #2: The Power of the Problem: Problems are Underrated

Traditionally, problems in the art practice are what solutions are to the design practice. But what if point-based thinking attached to design was reformatted to aim directly to the problems alone? In the introduction to the book, "Deleuze and Design", the point is made that, "design as problem finding has to do with increasing complexity, problematising the existent, developing a critical and conceptual perspective, first of all on design itself. For example, design for debate and critical design use their materials, whether objects or concepts, to raise discussion on specific issues and to frame new problems."(Marenko and Brassett 2015)

- What can we get out of problems that a solution keeps us from having?
- Can we convert a problem to actual use value, the way determinism traditionally operates in design?
- Can we only present failed work as options?
- What is the result of arbitrarily stopping a work – before it is "finished"?

3 – Prompt #3: Solutions / Completion:

If design presents solutions, then the solution inevitably is submitted as a complete thought or idea. As an instructor, it is my in-

tention to introduce concepts to students as a way to suspend questions (and problems) as long as possible to drive at the true statements behind a gesture in a work. Just as James Baldwin describes the completion of a short story, we can "drop a pin" to "stop" a work in order to critique it. The point, here, is that the life of a piece is perpetual – living until it is "stopped." I build this mode of thinking into the classroom by using the terms "prototype", "prop", "stand-in", "module", or "model". They infer a framework that allows for the next thing to happen.

- If we borrowed this property from design and applied it to Visual Art, labeled it as "solution" – how does that change the work?
- Can it still live as a work?
- What if we only search for value in the incomplete?
- Is it possible to stop short of what a solution might look like in order to discuss possible outcomes?
- What if we only operated in terms of the "prototype"? As if everything is a mock-up?
- What if we changed the "user" instead of our idea about "use"?

Conclusion: Explore to Exploit

The place of the interdisciplinary thinker is critical in every discipline. The hope is that re-imagining the possibilities of the visual art as it relates to design (and vice versa) can open the channels necessary to thrive in whatever it means to be a contemporary in the complexities of today's technologies, and for that matter, the world at large. And, in that way, there may be a strengthening in the relationship to interdisciplinary thinking and the terms used to describe it.

The artist Raymond Saunders describes sight such that it can be applied to interdisciplinary thinking, "seeing changes in the experience of the artwork...the reality of truth is in the variability, so there are no answers because there is no finite. It's all a matter of degree" (Saunders, 2012). This experience, while at times subtle, is the cornerstone that paves the way to awareness that is open-ended, explorative, and exploitative.

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"Suspension" Merrriam Webster Dictionary, (2016) https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/suspension

Wylant, Barry (2016), Design and Thoughtfulness, Design Issues, Vol. 32, No. 1, Pages 72-82

Draw it Out: Intersectionality within English and Arts Disciplines Department of English Education | Rachel McCain

The use of drawing and critique were examined in two writing intensive "capstone" courses at the same public four-year school in the Northeast U.S. The data collected contributes to an already existing body of knowledge where interdisciplinary connections between aesthetics and language has been concerned with student comprehension and articulation. Using aesthetically artistic practices as a pedagogical approach to inform the design of undergraduate academic writing curriculum is encouraged throughout. The data collected shows that students' writing can benefit from an interdisciplinary blend of English and arts-related educational methods.

Interdisciplinary Intersections

According to philosopher and education reformer John Dewey (1934) the process of creating and viewing art is described as being the "beholder's" process to perceive an artistic work. Dewey described that "[t]o perceive a work, the beholder must create his own experience." When I write, I receive and process verbal intercourse in a dedicated downtempo rhythm. Key concepts and phrases enter my cognition like a steady sedative. I pause. I reflect. I use word association tricks to paint mental imagery. However, I often draw explicit episodes of what I've heard, in order to visually capture what I understand. Ironically, writing has been defined as being a form of "originating" and "creating" a verbal construct that is graphically recorded (Emig, 1977). The overlapping definition of writing as a "graphic," or essentially a visual art, implies there are implicit connections between the broad disciplines of the arts and English. Therefore, notions of différance in adult learning should be expected– especially "if we are to believe the alphabet and most of the speculations that concern themselves with it" (Derrida, 1978).

Intersectionality within English and the arts disciplines are, as William Pinar would say, a "complicated conversation" (Pinar, 2004). Generally speaking, notions of literacy are often limited to reading and writing knowledge systems: linear structures that are fixed, one-dimensional learning practices. In higher education, these constructions of language and aesthetics may benefit some students–linear learners–and disengage others. In another limited sense, text–words, letters, sentences–isn't always a primary mode of communicating ideas. And in an English course, the use of the arts–drawing, painting, sculpting and other mediums–may "stray away" from tradition, in regards to reading, writing and communicating.

New Literacy and Nonlinear Learning

Still, the ever-growing field of New Literacy Studies (Street, 2003) continues to raise awareness about "nonlinear learning." I interpret this as a "coming together" of a "...multiplicity of possible perspectives..." (Greene, 1977). This coming together of visual, auditory, kinetic, verbal and textual elements, otherwise known as aesthetic literacies, is "...an intentional undertaking designed to nurture appreciative, reflective, cultural, participatory engagements with the arts by enabling learners to notice what is there to be noticed" (Greene, 2001). When working in tandem, aesthetics and language are capable of engaging the disengaged, as well as cultivating comprehension and fostering communication. Therefore, "there is

no reason to believe that learning from other subject disciplines does not in some fashion...'travel back to enhance arts learning'" (Burton, et al., 2000).

Sometimes, these nonlinear intersections between aesthetics and language can prompt students to "draw out" what it is they hope to articulate and/or understand. As Maxine Greene puts it, the "...contemporary learner is more likely than his predecessors to experience moments of strangeness, moments when the recipes he has inherited for the solution of typical problems no longer seem to work" (Greene, 1971). These "moments of strangeness" leave educators wondering how to implement interdisciplinary curriculum, such as the intersections of English and art education, in their classrooms. In this paper, I demonstrate how Greene's (1971) notion of disorder, and notions of transfer, in and through the arts, by Burton, et al., (2000) can be beneficial to students who are not engaged by linear knowledge systems. Additionally, I also demonstrate how educators can use interdisciplinary methods to cultivate "moments of strangeness" and deepen comprehension.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study was to explore if thought processes—such as forming concepts, problem-solving– *and* the use of cognitive skills developed through the arts– such as idea expression and imagination – have an effect on literacy skills, such as reading and writing text. With a view to inform current research and practice in relation to adult students, this study used the work of 27 college seniors from two different classes during the Fall 2016 semester (September 2016-December 2016) through the use of sketches, questionnaires and group interviews. Within the realm of the assignment, imagery and semiotics, which is notably absent from writing instruction in higher education, gives a view of the curriculum from the perspectives of students. In additionto "disrupting" writing practices and instruction, this paper shows that connections between language, aesthetics and transfer are relevant to adult students' classroom experiences.

Methods

Viewing art as literacy and literacy as art rejects many modern assumptions of social coherence. This postmodern practice "...denote new artistic, cultural, or theoretical perspectives, which renounce modern discourses and practices" (Kellner-Best, 1991). Nevertheless, nonlinear learning practices often seen and taught in artistic settings, can be beneficial to students who are not engaged by linear knowledge systems. Still, nearly all of the 27 students who participated had preconceptions about literacy practices other than reading and writing. For many of them, the discovery of what one wanted to say—and how one wanted to say it—excluded the use of visual art. Literacy was only acquired through limited semantic structures such as sentences, and then expressed orally or on the page.

To me, these notions of literacy were like a "tomb that cannot even be made to resonate" (Derrida, 1978); I felt the only way to disrupt them would be with a "graphic intervention" (Derrida, 1978).

As an in-class assignment, students read Anne Lamott's short story "Polaroids," where she describes the writing process as "seeing what develops," similar to the development of a Polaroid picture. After reading the story, they were asked to create a "Polaroid" or image of their projects' thesis. Students were

instructed to draw what it is they wanted to write—without the use of words. This drawing did not have to be a literal representation of their topic: figurative themes, symbols and other non-textual elements were encouraged. I also briefly explained how the use of color could construe meaning: red could represent love, passion or aggression; blue could mean sadness.

The premise of the in-class assignment prompted students to make deliberate connections between their thought processes, drawings and their writing. If a student's critique of another student's rendering was clearly understood it meant that the essay's thesis was specific enough to understand; the student had an idea as to what they wanted to articulate through their work. However, if the critique was very different than what the student meant to express, then said student's thesis was not clear; more than likely, the student was having difficulty articulating what it is they wanted to write about, and may not have had a firm grasp on their selected topic.

"But what if we have trouble articulating what it is we want to express?" said one student, after I read the assignment's instructions. "What would we do?"

They would "draw it out."

As such, the views and voices of the students are presented exactly as they were recorded or written in their own language, without edit.

Overview of Data

According to Maxine Greene (2009), "the obligation of the aesthetic educator is to make clear what it means to enter a created world. That world must be entered by acts of imagination, the faculty to summon up an 'as if', a vision or a conception of things as if they were otherwise." I can only interpret Greene's "acts of imagination" as the creation of mental imagery, which wildly differentiates from person to person. In the case of my courses, students' visual creations of their "mental imagery" would vary widely

Through the use of drawing, questionnaires and group interviews, responses from students were sought to a series of questions that [promoted] enhanced seeing [and] listening..." all of which could not be included here. For example, Figure one below shows one result after students of both classes were asked to "draw out" their essay theses using crayons and markers.

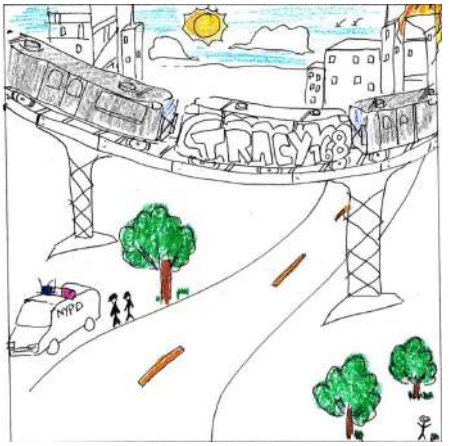

Figure 1: A scene from New York City, (left) depicting a subway car with graffiti. The drawing is representative of the student's essay thesis, which centers on street art.

The senior capstone classes that I taught were semester-long writing intensive courses required of graduating seniors at a public four-year college. The courses, which were initially designed for transfer students enrolled in the continuing education department, culminate with the completion of a "senior project": A 12-15-page biography "designed to impress both graduate schools and future employers."

In Fall 2016, I taught two of these courses–both of which met once a week. There were 18 students of varying demographics in each class–a total of 36 senior projects and 36 different paths toward degree completion. Students ranged in age from 20 to 77 and hailed from places like Arkansas and Indonesia, France and South Korea, just to name a few.

In my Thursday evening class, there were a total of 15 students--in three groups of five-- who participated in the activity. And in my Tuesday class, a total of 12 students participated--in three groups of four. Each class shared three boxes of 24 crayons. The remaining 9 students that did not participate were absent on the dates of the study While students drew their theses, the classroom was quiet. Although given the option to talk, students remained silent. "It's not a 'community event' to draw your thesis." said one student, when asked about the room's atmosphere. "We're focused."

After 20 minutes of drawing, students swapped their images. Due to collaborative discussions, each student group interpreted the drawings from an *adjacent* group of students, rather than interpret work from their respective groups. They passed around each piece and wrote words, phrases and sentences associated with what they saw—or believe that they saw. Students were also instructed they could decipher their drawings *as a group,* instead of individually, which in general, they seemed to prefer. They also looked for the deeper meanings in images, looking at the meaning of color and shapes.

The resulting images and critiques of said images were both informative and extremely intriguing, and showed genuine connections between cognition and creation. For instance, one student interpreted a student's butterfly, which shown in Figure two, implied that that student's thesis was about freedom. Interestingly enough, the capstone subject of the student who drew the butterfly was author Julia Alvarez; the paper also touched on politics and revolution in the Dominican Republic.

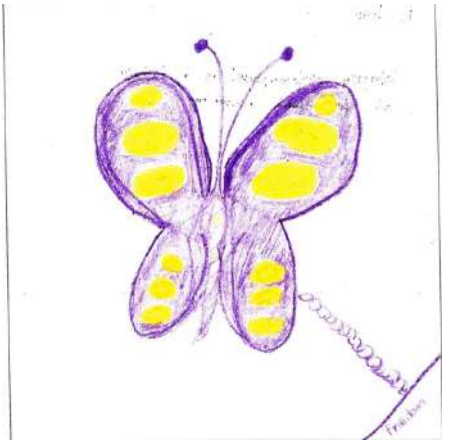

Figure 2: A butterfly (left) drawn by an adult student in the capstone course. The drawing is representative of the student's essay thesis, which centers on freedom in the Dominican Republic during the Trujillio Regime.

In terms of imagery critique by their peers, in both classes, students who were over age 27 had a stronger grasp of their theses. The older students also wanted to work individually, rather than as a group. Additionally, they used more colors than the younger students and spent more time on their drawings. However, the critiques of the older students were more objective and implicit, rather than abstract. Their writing was shorter; they opted to use bullet points rather than sentences, to explain their interpretations. Thus, students' capacity for abstract thinking is affected as they grow older; adult students who engage in aesthetic learning environments are likely to deepen critical thinking skills.

Summary Findings and Recommendations

It was very clear when reading the written responses and in talking to students about their drawings, this classroom activity was engaging. For example, students extensively discussed the use of particular colors and the opportunity to "use crayons again in the classroom.'" The assignment's intersectionality of aesthetics and language helped students challenge "...and [critique] the use of language, literacy and power" (Willis, et al. 2008). Additionally, the level of student engagement associated with my classroom activity emphasized the importance of "literacies involving the consumption, production and distribution of print and new media...promoting individual freedom and expression" (Willis, et al. 2008) and awareness beyond the one-dimensional (Greene, 1977). Therefore, the blending similar arts and English-related activities can "help students foster the skills to succeed socially and academically" (Milner, 2015). In a study about notions of transfer, from the arts to other disciplines, Burton, et al. (2000) noted that writing, reading, reading comprehension and verbal expression among elementary age children made gains from "creative and appreciative experiences in visual art." Therefore, in order for adult students to also make gains in English-related disciplines, I posit that these students also need to engage in visual arts experiences.

Limitations

Due to certain limitations and restrictions, this study only offers a preliminary view of English and arts-related intersectionality. In order to fully conceptualize future implications from these findings, I posit that a deeper analysis of students' connections to aesthetics and language, shaped by gender, socioeconomics, culture, ethnicity/race, age and other social identities, be explored. Additionally, examinations of students' cognitive processes and dimensions, in relation to their writing, artwork and critiques, would also be beneficial, as "other kinds of meta-cognitive thinking have been implicated in the arts" (Burton, et al., 2000).

Aesthetic literacy fosters critical thinking, as it integrates the arts with other disciplines, to form an interdisciplinary curriculum. However, access to this curriculum is limited, due to a variety of of factors. According to Jenkins and White (2009), "those youth who had access to books or classical recordings in their homes, whose parents took them to concerts or museums, or who engaged in dinner conversation developed, almost without conscious consideration, skills that helped them perform well in school." Given this, "instruction enriched by outside resources...leads to an excitement about learning that appears to motivate the transfer of certain cognitive capacities to other subjects" (Burton, et al., 2000; Fineberg, 1991). Therefore, it seems plausible that the connections and implications between adult students' overall school performance, cognitive capabilities, and access to the arts are not casual and warrant further analyses.

Conclusion

Overall, adult students in both capstone courses were able to construct worlds of understanding of text, social theory and writing conventions (Gutiérrez, 2008) through drawing. Their experiences critiquing their classmate's artwork, to further their own writing, highlighted interdisciplinary connections between aesthetics and language; as such, this aided students in the comprehension and

articulation of their own work. Additionally, these connections helped "bridge" students' curriculum and experiences to one another, further aiding students to "...re-conceive who they are and what they might be able to accomplish academically and beyond" (Gutiérrez, 2008). Through a close examination of their attempts to understand their abilities, the activity of "drawing out," or visually crafting an essay's thesis helps adult students see and think beyond what's on the page. This intersectionality between the arts and English disciplines in higher education allows for the "coming together" (Greene, 1977) of aesthetics and language. Therefore, English and the arts' complicated conversation with one another is not casual, as it critically challenges "traditional" notions of literacy and cognition. In short: chaos is complicated and constant; stability is linear—and fleeting.

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Toward Expansive Conceptions of Curriculum and Pedagogy |

Janet L. Miller

Critique is the movement through which the subject gives itself the right to question truth concerning its power effects -- and to question power about its discourses of truth. Critique will be the art of voluntary inservitude, of reflective indocility.
Michel Foucault

I here attempt a modest initial gesturing toward critique as "reflective indocility" – that is, of refusals to meekly submit. I do so in order to *decline* specific and prevailing *certainties* – positioned as "truths" -- about pedagogy and curriculum that circulate in education, especially in the U.S., as well as to question iterations of power that are exercised via these current discourses. Of course, I am simultaneously obligated to question all that I here too will juxtapose as expansive. Indeed, with any and all versions of critique that we variously employ, we are obligated to ask: what norms do my preferred assumptions about and practices presuppose, and what relations of power do they maintain, question or perhaps subvert?

Critique, regarded by Foucault as *voluntary inservitude, as reflective indocility*, is a practice whereby one not only looks for conditions by which any particular discourses and their associated practices are constituted. Such a practice also requires that we investigate any discourse's possible discontinuities and breaking points as means of posing questions about the limits of any discourse that functions as the "most sure" way of knowing (Butler, 2002; Foucault, 1978).

Here, then, I briefly review current discourses of *certainty* circulating around conceptions of "curriculum and pedagogy" positioned as fully observable and testable measures of learning and teaching. I *juxtapose* these prevailing discourses of certainty with challenging conceptions that I name as *expansive* (which of course have their own overarching discourses!) that interrupt, disrupt, and point to discontinuities in current and overwhelmingly dominant accountability education discourses. Simultaneously, however, I also must attend to the limits of my convictions that these unsettling perspectives on curriculum and pedagogy are "better" than those guiding current accountability-based versions of such.

This is difficult work, of course, primarily because "discourse," according to Foucault (1972, 1981), does not simply equate with language, but rather functions as a system that structures the conditions under which certain statements and assumptions, and not others, are considered appropriate and "true." Discourses that dominate, those that are most consistently circulating and available to us, thus also tend to structure our thinking and understandings. I therefore must work to interrogate ways that I am caught up in both the education discourses of certainty and the discourses spawned by what is known as the "reconceptualization" of the curriculum studies field, writ large, that I here position as *expansive*.

Thus, within limited time/space frames in which we all are pondering myriad aspects, contingencies and potentials of *Critique 2.0*, to engage here with all that Foucault intended for critique is impossible. Instead, I offer only woefully rudimentary, truncated sketchings of two very differing education discourses—one that I over-generalize as "certainty," and the other as "expansive"—as initial gestures toward a full-blown critique

conceptualized as *the art of voluntary inservitude, of reflective indocility*.

Current educational discourses surrounding testing and accountability posit *certainties* about "effective information delivery" *as* pedagogy; as well, they assume that pre-determined, decontextualized, "expert"-developed subject matter content *is* curriculum. Such positivist assumptions of surety, uniformity, and universality undergird accountability assumptions, measures and practices in the relentless high-stakes testing culture. Indeed, contemporary producers of high-stakes testing have appropriated, directly, the areas of finance and accounting and their rituals of verification, which include assessments likened to the financial process of "audit" (Miller, 2014; Taubman, 2009). Resting under the twin banners of high stakes testing and accountability, those persuaded and/or governed by such assumptions too often then must gloss over the nuances, complexities and indeterminacies generated by the impossibly messy details of lived lives that permeate both within and without classroom contexts.

In contrast to such audit culture containments are expansive conceptions of "curriculum" as more than pre-packaged, technical-rational versions "subject-matter content to be covered" and of "pedagogy" as *more than* codified "methods" that guarantee swift and universal modes of "dispensing" this content.

I am persuaded by expansive curriculum discourses via my participation, since the mid-1970s, in what has been identified as "the reconceptualization" of the U.S. curriculum studies field (Miller, 2005, 2014; Pinar, 1975; Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 1995). The "reconceptualization" in fact was spawned by those who wished to greatly enlarge technical-rational, factory-model, efficiency-oriented versions of curriculum as only "subject matter content" that had dominated in the U.S. since the early part of the 20th century. What is known as the Tyler Rationale (Tyler, 1949) neatly details those curriculum-as-subject-matter-content assumptions: the pedagogue (but more often, State standards, and/or a professional organization's "best practices" – but never "the student") determines learning objectives in relation to predetermined educational purposes; organizes subject-matter content and learning activities based on those objectives; and evaluates.

In large part, one major impetus for the reconceptualization was to theorize curriculum and pedagogy in ways that enabled *both* challenges and fresh conceptualizations of such decontextualized, linear and sequential assumptions about "curriculum." The reconceptualization initially posited autobiographical, political, and historical perspectives -- and later, incorporated a growing variety of theoretical lenses, including those that enabled (differently) focused interrogations of ethnicity, gender, race, and class, in particular, as affected and effected by the aesthetic, the theological, and the transnational, among many other contingencies. All of these perspectival possibilities, reconceptual scholars argue, can enable the theorizing and simultaneous interrogating of multi-variant living and non-living entities, materialities and relationalities. These myriad human and non-human entities, events, and social-cultural-historical forces indeed comprise, disrupt, disperse, re-form, and create "curriculum and pedagogy" as often unpredictable tangles of relationalities as well as of knowledges generated via those relationalities.

Obvioiusly, then, curriculum reconceptualized encourages situated psycho-social-political-historical theorizings and inquiries into normative as well as dissenting constructions of pedagogy and curriculum. Such inquiries, concurrently positioned as autobiographical, political, historical and intellectual, for example, not only can involve considerations of school district guidelines, textbooks, and objectives. They also can invite and encourage a focus on what and how historically, socio-culturally and discursively contingent norms constitute, reproduce, repress, and/or call into question what is generally assumed or determined by certain persons and not others, to be "the" knowledge deemed as of "the most worth" in specific education contexts and moments. At the very least, reconceptualized iterations of curriculum enable direct challenges to and interrogations of reductionist versions of curriculum and pedagogy. Curriculum reconceptualized, a version of *the art of voluntary inservitude, of reflective indocility*, *refuses* curriculum conceptualized only as "content;" as well, reconceptual scholars refuse conceptions of pedagogy posited as a "science" that generates "best practices" generalized as methods, techniques and skills that can be perfectly "applied" in all educative contexts, "practiced," and then replicated across all pedagogical situations and events.

Curriculum reconceptualized, in contrast, encourages inquiries into multi-variant education complexities, including normative assumptions that can conceal exercisings of power that are inherent in all educative endeavors. In challenging audit culture normative assumptions of attainable certainty, especially, educators persuaded by the Reconceptualization argue that curriculum ceases to be a "thing" that can be pinned down as "the content" of the most worth (by whose determinations? Whose interests do these declarations of certainty and fixity uphold and reify? Whose interests do they ignore, reject, marginalize?). Instead, "curriculum" becomes more of a generative process, an action, an engagement with and in the world, and within any pedagogical context. Further, interrogating curriculum, learning and pedagogy as contingently intertwined involves concomitant understandings of all of these as constituted by and through particular historical, socio-cultural, biographical influences, contexts, events, discourses, materialities and intra-actions. At the very least, these questionings clearly stand in stark contrast to current and dominant assumptions of audit-culture versions of pedagogy, content knowledge and learning processes that equate "delivering pre-determined, pre-packaged codified information" as enactments of pedagogy and curriculum that always supposedly lend themselves to overt testing and measurement of "information imparted" and "retained."

I obviously am influenced by a Foucauldian notion of critique as *reflective indocility* that urges constant complicatings and challengings of versions of pedagogy as a "science" and of curriculum conceived only as course content to be covered and mastered – all in the service of raised achievement scores. But Foucault's stance of *reflective indocility* requires too that I constantly interrogate my own taken-for-granted assumptions and the discourses toward which I am drawn, including those that frame my versions of "good teaching" as well as of "preferred" artist/educator/researcher/student/administrator/parent/ identities and practices that underlie my responses to

the classic curriculum question, "what – and whose – knowledges are of the most worth?"

What I here gesture toward, then, are some of the very challenges posed if one wishes to engage in and with critique as the *art of voluntary inservitude, of reflective indocility*. Such a version of critique does enable me to consider reconceptual conceptions of curriculum and pedagogy that – through their open indeterminacies, necessary contextualizations and complex relationalities -- encourage examinations of operations and relations of power/knowledge and the norms by which these are typically constituted. At the same time, I must regard as daily work my efforts to question my assumptions that either challenge or maintain suppositions that the "critiquer" (the teacher, the artist, the textbook developer, and so on...) has greater access to "the truth" than does the one who is being critiqued.

So, in terms of pondering various perspectives on possibilities and difficulties of imagining "critique *as* pedagogy," I am encouraging questionings of particular norms framing not only any version of pedagogy and curriculum to which we adhere, but also our favored versions of critique itself. And to do so, I return again and again to Judith Butler's ponderings about Foucault's work on critique. Butler points out that "the exercise of critique . . . is a practice or, indeed, [as Foucault puts it,] an 'attitude' that asks after the means by which truth becomes established, and the terms through which truth become justified" (Butler, 2010, p. 334). In particular, as she especially questions "Who (and what) will be a subject here? Who and what will count as a life?," the primary task of critique will not be to evaluate whether its objects –social conditions, practices, forms of knowledge, power, and discourse–are "good or bad," valued highly or demeaned, but to bring into relief the very framework of evaluation itself. Like Foucault, Butler challenges us to investigate and constantly question socially defining norms that solidify into "givens" by asking us to rethink critique as a practice in which we pose the question of the limits of our most sure ways of knowing.

But in lieu of performing "critique" in ways that Foucault fully intended and that Butler too has encouraged, I here have only been able to simply encourage your own interrogations of the discourses of both *certainty* and *expansiveness* that I've briefly sketched here. And I assume that you are well aware of my preference for versions of curriculum and pedagogy "reconceptualized," that, at the very least, also require my own constant questionings of those norms that currently are governing and framing my assumptions and expectations about curriculum, pedagogy – and critique.

I thus offer deep thanks for your considerations of your own possible interrogations of those discourses framing your preferred versions of "Critique 2.0." Such work might indeed generate fresh forms of critique as *the art of voluntary inservitude, of reflective indocility*.

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Intent and Purpose | Curtis Mitchell

The critique is a fundamental event in the course of every artist's life. It is a social forum, an intellectual forum, a forum devoted to aesthetics and empathy. It can elevate the understanding of its participants as well as rearrange their sensibilities. It can expand one's context of difference and reconfigure aesthetic receptivity. The subject of a critique is limited only by the purview of the work being considered. The role of the professor in an art school such as Pratt is one of mentoring, enabling, encouraging, of providing guidance and assistance. By the senior year critiques each student has become confident in their abilities and assured in their ambition. This year includes a midterm critique in the fall, a final critique in the fall, and a culminating thesis final in the spring. These are formal critiques, with core faculty attending the fall midterm, departmental faculty the fall final, and by spring both faculty and outside critics attend a major public event in the main campus gallery.

Fall Final Critique, December 2014

The critique in its truest form is neither academic nor pedagogical. It is a format that provides a captive audience of serious viewers willing to offer their thoughts on the work before them. When successful, it becomes one of the more fecund events encountered in an ordinary life, teasing out aspects of self-awareness from the myopia plaguing us

all. And it is we all who usually gain, as we listen to the reactions mount, edifying one another and ourselves.

As each critique commences, only the critics speak. The author is mute and no artist statement is provided. By this time the author is comfortably familiar with the expectation that a work exhibit a sufficient clarity of purpose. What is shown is expected to establish its own language without the manipulation of the author's linguistic prompts. This often amounts to a cold read. The conversation here is usually a bit fraught and almost always the best way to supply a foundation to the conversation, prioritizing the salient.

A third of the way in, the statement is handed out and the value, coherence and relevance of its content are assessed. As a formally considered text of the students' intent, the statement is a vital aspect of the critiques. Frequently these texts come to function diagnostically, revealing metaphors, references or concepts that can clarify the fuller intent of the work or focus unwanted ambiguities. They never dictate, but may enhance or contradict the reception of the work.

Senior Thesis Final Critique, May, 2016

For the rest of the critique, the author, critics and students all are offered a voice. This conversation relies heavily on the student voice as they know the author and the style and usually the intention and these may contribute to another perspective. In most of our critiques, there is little frustration of this voice; the chronic frustration is the time available. Michael Asher's critiques are regularly mentioned as an enviable luxury of spent time.

Each participant is expected to honestly articulate their experience of the work and to justify that articulation as honest. Those who have a point to make not relevant to the work at hand are shushed fairly quickly. And all are tasked to speak without filter. At times this entails enduring impolitic statements, fatuous statements, hurtful statements, etc., but I hesitate to install any filter due to the collateral constriction of voice that would ensue. This constriction would adulterate an authentic encounter with the work. As a consequence, there are times when the critique can feel like a free-for-all, with raised voices and no politesse, and these are usually times most fertile to the author and students present. In addition, the theater of it all is not to be overlooked. This is a flash community in which the filtered voice is discouraged, so drama is assumed. The students miss it when it isn't there, and it references any number of lively, contentious, intelligent conversations we all have had about the importance of art.

From several points of a constantly shifting artistic realm, the critics (both academic faculty and outside critics) are essential to this mix, in small part because they have not seen the work in its gestation, in large part as an edifice of established cultures: elders who reflect the cultures we all live amongst, some with relatively recent views, some more traditional or conservative. Here is an amalgam the students need to acknowledge, maybe confront, even dismiss; the encounter is what is important. As a whole this group of professionals provides an ambience steeped

in recent history, personal history, non-academic history, an ambience familiar with the parade of contemporary cultures over time. I begin the critiques by introducing each critic with a short synopsis of achievements not connected to the institution. If you have a professional practice you are encouraged, indeed expected to speak with a voice from outside the institution.

Senior Thesis Final Critique, May, 2016

The art critique is a most primitive and pure form of community. People from different cultures and different eras come together through a shared interest. It is a modified real world, with intelligent conversation amongst a group of engaged and knowledgeable people.

Critique itself is the exhibit of internal experience. It establishes the author's output, if not as sufficient then as discreet. Commentary is as substantial to the work as the elements constituting it. It finishes it, births it and ushers it into the world. It is its first encounter with the real world and its first opportunity to become reified.

Knowledge can be transferred; understanding must be reciprocal, shared, and experienced. It is in this sense that the critique excels and has a depth and longevity unmatched in education.

What Can Philosophy Do for Critique? | James F. Moyer

What can philosophy do for critique? One philosophically serious reply to that question is, "I'm not sure." Another serious reply is, "Which philosophy?" What follows comes out of my experience. For me, three phenomena occasion the question.

First, philosophy attracts fine artists. Many sign up for the existentialism course I teach at Moore College of Art and Design. Art historically, the attraction is noteworthy. One example is Jacques Louis David's *The Death of Socrates* (1787). The painting substitutes a Greek, sentenced to death for his commitment to critical questioning of authority, for Christ as the heroic martyr of Enlightenment, hence revolutionary, consciousness. If anyone doubts the power of art to animate a philosophy–like the one that says every man has inborn reason and therefore has the right to govern himself or choose who can govern him, as in "We hold these truths to be self-evident," self-evidence the work of imperishable mind–then let him ponder David's work. If Enlightenment ideas of rational republicanism and universal self-evidence have fallen on hard times, then the role of art to convert despair to philosophical encouragement presumably has not. Socrates gives the Socratic method, so anytime we begin a critique with a question, and respond to someone's (or our own) answer with another question, then another, toward a clearer, perhaps humbler sense of at least what we do not mean to say, then we practice, we personify, a philosophy. Personifying it is the point, otherwise lost: we practice a questioning ethos.

Second, fine art since Duchamp has become a form of philosophy, if Arthur Danto's formulation is no fanciful dictum. Dan-

to means that art is now conceptual—more about its ideas than its formal properties. If the work or performance increasingly resembles ordinary objects and activities, then what distinguishes it is its concept, its critique of life and world. Paradoxically this makes the art less accessible, which in turn requires the engagement of critics and interpreters in some sense equal to the artists themselves—an institution of philosopher-artists and philosopher-critics. The studio during critique is one such space. Notice how our anxiety in it has shifted from whether various skills and crafts have been mastered to whether we can make sense of the work, whether, indeed, we can justify it as meaningful work, as work that society should regard as such. That we spend so much effort critiquing students' work implies both our belief that their arts training needs no justification, and our anxiety that it does.

Finally, and most recently, philosophy, paradoxically against all odds of recessionary times and utilitarian expectations—as Marco Rubio pronounced it, "We need more welders, less philosophy majors"—has seen enrollments surge and departments expand. If philosophy is suddenly, perhaps always already, wanted in the unlikeliest of settings—the high school, the two-year college—then the art school, that anxious, half-articulate quest to defend and explain what artists now do, may want just as much its clarifying, or its usefully questioning, terms. So, what might philosophy do for artists, and for the critique as a vital and fraught moment of the art school experience? And what might they do for philosophy?

I'll focus on three things, moving from the general to the specific.

Existentialist philosophers argue the priority of philosophical questions, like what is being, how do I feel about being, and should I be. They do this because they are philosophers, nervous about the impressive knowledge and reach of science. And they do this because they think which questions you ask of the world in the first place is a matter of expressing your being in it, of how, or rather, that, you feel about it. Science knows reality objectively, but what this means for me in a world of objects remains open to question and feeling. Science therefore cannot exhaust the answers I seek of my being, the question of why, not simply that, I am here, which only I can answer, or keep from answering. This may sound like academic philosophy pretentiously claiming priorities for itself. But Heidegger's point is at least as generous as it is grandiose, in that he thinks everyone is philosophical, not in the professional sense, but because everyone interprets their being, asks questions about it, wonders about its future. He thinks many people forget this, and therefore live less true to themselves than they'd otherwise choose. So when students bring philosophy and philosophers into their artist statements, it's not just a pretense, the dropping of names and concepts. It's not just that they want their projects to mean something, though they do want this. They want them to mean everything, as in mean the world. Heidegger helped me to appreciate more seriously that this may be what is going on when many of my students self-consciously turn to philosophy, or, more accurately, turn from philosophy to their projects again, committing their beings to the questionable project of their art.

A second use of philosophy goes to Danto's point about conceptual art, which now is much art. No surprise then that students use theoretical terms; their artist statements bristle with the argot of contemporary the-

ory. If they are expected, urgent, reluctant, to do this verbal work, then talking with a theorist can help the student get the most out of such terms or save him from the embarrassment of misusing them. The discourse is collaborative, as the theorist thinks about the relevance of theory. Philosophers, whatever else they do, practice using such words. They try to make distinctions of their definitions. They link or contrast them toward a conceptual frame, a way of thinking more clearly about something confusing. This conference recalls that art critique is a densely, deliriously verbal practice; Homo artifex remains a verbal species. For all of our visual saturation, we talk. We talk about art, and talk about it, and talk some more. Our critiques aren't conducted in mime or music or visuals by proxy. As long as the language remains at the center, at the depth and surface, of our philosophically artistic lives, then we aspire to a language both public and philosophical, the one our work deserves. An unfortunate stereotype of our discourse, whether of artist or critic, is its slackness and obscurity. Criticism can't and shouldn't drain its subject of ambiguity; art is as ambiguous as life. Paradoxically, linguistic clarity can focus which concepts are ambiguously in tension, or in ironic play, or in unstable emergence, or, as it sometimes happens, too messy or unfocused to signify. But even if an artist never talks about her work—and she doesn't have to—someone else will. And that someone else may not have her interests at heart. One practical suggestion I've learned the hard way: take time to define the terms and concepts, and try to use just a few. A jargony discussion is often a sign of terminological insecurity. Working definitions are one antidote to this.

A third use of philosophy goes to helping the artist's practice as much as the public's understanding it. I doubt these aims can be unraveled, so here I'll give an example of my teaching experience, regarding a student I had several conversation with about her work. She took my class and was impressed by the term phenomenological and its implications for her art. Phenomenology is the study of consciousness and experience from the subjective point of view; it implies the lived experience as a starting point for perceiving and knowing. A sculptor, she constructed jagged metal domes and boxes with openings and wings, illuminated from within. The light escaping these metal abodes produced faint streaks and flickers, with large penumbrae visible on the walls and floor. At her senior critique, she relied on the word phenomenological to sum up this work. The ensuing discussion, with her work as the generative focus, helped us explore and feel what she meant. We noted that in Western thought light has been a symbol of pure, stable, rational knowing, like in David's brilliant painting of Socrates. But here, it was unstable and ambiguous. Here, even light was fraught with the doubts, anxieties, and tentative hopes of lived experience. How perceptive, to use light itself as the element of such awareness.

When a philosophical idea helps us imagine the work in its very presence, when we feel the work's power in that moment of word and object, object and word, discovering each other, then philosophy matters, indeed, takes the form of matter. It leaves behind the page, it leaves the classroom, it leaves the instructor in his sometimes empty discursive effort. It takes form—in both senses of "takes." It assumes form, giving meaning; it requires form, receiving it.

On Self-Criticality, Self-Reflectivity, and the Studio Critique | Saul Ostrow

The artist Lidija Slavkovic sent me the following note: *Analysis is an inherent part of human consciousness and understanding of the world – advancing from one's analysis is part of certain openness – to inspire this openness is the future of the critique which moves from the "distant" way of working to addressing the way of thinking –*

It was in response to my email that I was going to speak about: Self-Criticality – the ability to analyze and judge, one's actions in a self-aware manner and Self-Reflectivity – the capacity to exercise introspection to learn more about one's fundamental beliefs.

In general, my interest in these subjects is part of an on-going inquiry concerning: who does the artist speak for, and whom do they speak to. This probe focus' not only on the formulation of intentions but, also on how they come to be represented, understood, and interpreted. Being invited to speak here, has given me the opportunity to rhetorically model and objectify this systems network relative to the "critique" as a pedagogical tool. My approach to this subject though is the result of an intuition concerning the effects of how art students are taught to understand Roland Barthes' *Death of the Author*.

I have observed over the years, the teaching of *Death of the Author* results in students opportunistically thinking they have been relieved of any responsibility for the reception of their works. They come to believe their work's content is authored by their audience, whom they have no control over. The artist/ students who do try to control the meaning of their work tend to retreat into making works that are literal, or didactically so specific that they do not permit speculation. Through wall text, or other means the viewer is told how and what the work is meant to convey – in other word what the work is "about". In other cases, the pendulum swings to the other extreme and students use their "death" as an author, as a license to make works that function as a kind of aesthetic Rorschach test. What these student/artists fail to understand is that their didacticism, and subjectivity are the content of their work and therefore are also subject to analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.

The reason students misunderstand *The Death of The Author* (1967) is because they are not aware that this 50-year-old text is part of an on–going debate concerning the question of what "is an author?" This question has been raised and responded to by others: Walter Benjamin, Samuel Beckett, Michele Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. In the case of *Death of the Author*, Barthes was responding to the prevalence of the intentionalist fallacy; a critical position that asserted that a text must be judged, in accord with the author's stated objectives, or sense of purpose. Barthes advanced in its stead the idea that all there is the text, and what we know of the author and their intentions is through their texts and not visa-versa. In other words, the author's intention is for their text to be read and interpreted and thus the reader expands upon it. Consequently, Barthes is not writing about the end of authorship, but the importance of the reader's comprehension in the process of making sense of a text, which is not limited by the author's authority.

Twenty-two years earlier, Merleau-Ponty makes a similar argument in his 1945, essay *Cezanne's Doubt*. In this text, he dismisses

art historical, biographical and psychological interpretations of Cezanne's work. He argues instead that we must turn exclusively to the work, because only in the work we find the traces and palimpsest of the artist's decisions, which supply us with clues as to how their works might be made sense of. As we all should know, the difference between what is intended and what is made is a result of the broad range of decisions based on habit or reflex that are unwittingly made. These actions establish myriad relationships, though they seemingly have no direct bearing on what was intended. If we hold to this perspective, then the studio critique is one of the places that a student might learn to see how the point-of-view they subscribe to, their aesthetic choices, and the semiotics (sign systems) they deploy efface and alter their stated intentions. In doing this they may come to see, what has been made from the inter-action between their intentions, skills, talents, and knowledge as well as to what standards, criteria and values they hold themselves to.

The critique rather than being a place where the student/artist learns to articulate, or defend their intentions, or advance theories should be an occasion for them to explore what they have produced – and to recognize what is the product of personal associations, and taste based preferences, as opposed to those aspects that may function inter-subjectively – as shared experiences and concepts. By distinguishing between the two, the student/artist may learn to distance themselves from their subjectivity and their knowledge of what they had intended – and instead attempt see their work as something that is to be encountered in the world.

Given the sense and reasoning of my hypothesis – the Studio Critique should also be the space in which students learn the importance of asking; what are the texts of their intentions, where do these come from, and what do they unintentionally replicating, or relaying through the form and content of their works. If I asked you to define your values, standards and criteria, I think you would be hard pressed where they come from and what they represent. More likely, you would reduce them to a question of preference, taste, ethics, or morality – but such things do not come "value" free each is ideologically loaded. So, let me propose some rudimentary - general definitions for these terms and the economy they form.

- Standards are a fixed model or measure of what we identify as quality (the degree to which something adheres to its ideal, or model).
- Criteria the terms of appraisal (evaluation) we use to determine if something meets our standards (norms).
- Values represent the means, by which we determine a thing's worth, desirability and significance in accord with our standards and criteria.

These three terms generate a comparative scale of quantitative and qualitative terms, which are then used to measure the relative appeal, quality, or importance of a given act, condition, object, etc.

Obviously, not everyone adheres to the same values, standards or criteria –within a given society these differences tend to be a question of variants based on social and cultural conditions. Regardless of their specific content, structurally these terms form an operating system, which directly and indirectly affect the complex network of conditions that involve, not only the social,

cultural, psychological but our very sense of being as an embodiment of an ideology – an imagined set of relationships. This often, unconscious aesthetic "pattern" informs the symbolic dimension of our consciousness of everyday life, which here, references the standardized and naturalized relationships that create our sense of what constitutes the norm – be it of our behavior and that of others, or knowledge both practical and theoretical or these come to be used to organize various disciplines – which are then used as the basis for how we think of ourselves as individuals or the world as our field operations – this permits us to believe some of us have the capacity to make art – but, it also permits someone else to counter with the idea by that what they make isn't art, but material propositions that a recursive system of discourse, turns into art –– but that's another story to be discussed on some other occasion.

Returning to the question of the Crit – it is my observation that students are not encouraged to question their operating systems or even acknowledge that one exist outside of what they call their self as natural or given – if they do acknowledge an operating system, it is an external one - it is the social or cultural one – often they have learned to target the system of commodity and exchange, which they identify with the system of fame, power, and fortune. One reason students are not encouraged to hack their operating system is because to do so may put one's sense of self, and purpose at risk –because problematically, the same paradigms that we use to formulate our intentions we also use to construct our sense of Self. This would seem to be the double bind, for while the student may want to affect change externally, they want to achieve this unscathed - that is, they un-intentionally resist the possibility of becoming something other than their Self, they wish to affect or transform others but remain and affirm their sense of Self.

The fear of losing oneself – leads to the modeling of self–affirming practices – in which, the practioners unwittingly relays a secret program that when executed affirms that there is no need for them to be self-reflective or self-critical - because to do so will undo the truth of the expression of their feelings, aesthetic, or conception of the truth. In other words; standards, values, and criteria under these conditions become an expression of ego, for while they permit us to challenge an imagined other's truth or awareness. To do the latter requires self-affirmation rather than a critical evaluation – We see this, in the way that analysis, judgement and criticism – substantiated critical evaluation has been displaced by exegesis concerned with semiotics, and narrative, and theory or some bastardized version of these three terms.

In the face of the dilemma of subjecting oneself to interrogation whose results will most likely be self-affirming – to quote Lenin "what is to be done?" – can someone self-reflectively critique their own work? Obviously, I do – so let us begin by introducing the notion that our operating system also permits us to imagine ourselves as "other" – that is step back. This can be achieved by having the student ask themselves:

- If someone else did this – what would I say to them about it?
- How much have I learned in making this work?
- How much have I challenged myself in making this?
- What are the critical consequences of what I'm doing?

• How does it correspond or diverge from their understanding of my role as a cultural producer? and of course, the all-important question:

• What are the values, standards, and criteria my works represent?

If these are the questions we encourage the student/artist to answer, then the studio critique becomes a vehicle for the them to take two step forward and one back which for Lenin is the way revolutions advance themselves.

Reports from the Field
Critique in Three Frames: Studio and Art Education Collide |

Amanda Newman-Godfrey and Lynn Palewicz

Foundation and Art Education faculty discuss critique in three frames, and its role in facilitating peer collaboration, student growth, and professional development at Moore College of Art and Design in Philadelphia. Frame one situates critique in the classroom as open-ended, reciprocal dialogue to encourage student self-reflection, self-efficacy, and honing of personal voice. Frame two defines collaborative critique as spark for faculty self-reflection and self-assessment. Frame three positions critique as means of modeling faculty peer assessment to produce more authentic and growth-oriented feedback. Both faculty observed art making in each other's courses, and discuss how published self- and peer-assessments in Blumberg 2014 fostered a collaborative critique. They also share how student-centered critique, when implemented in their courses, built bridges across fields of study, modeled collaboration for students and faculty, and may inform new trends in professional assessment. We felt a joint investigation of critique could help us strengthen our thinking around and documentation of a critical issue for both our professional fields. We also identified with a recurring theme heard at the symposium in that we both personally experienced critique as a punitive measure that triggered anxiety and close-ended thinking.

Introduction: Field Observations of Critique in Our Higher Education Classrooms

We have a comprehensive Foundation program that serves all incoming students at Moore. Some primary goals are to help young women establish strong studio practice and develop skills such as visual thinking, artistic decision making, and expression of personal voice. We also have an Art Education program that provides certification in PreK-12 Art for BFA, post-baccalaureate, and concurrent graduate students. Our goal for this mini-study was to observe, assess, document, and synthesize the following: how a common teaching strategy, in this case critique, was employed in both courses; how certain models of critique encouraged communication (student-to-student,-student-to-faculty, and faculty-to-faculty); in what ways student learning and growth could be observed during critique; and how might peer critique, using rubrics created by educational researcher and professor Phyllis Blumberg 2014, model an effective and growth-oriented faculty review process.

Figure 1: Art Methods, Amanda Newman-Godfrey

For our reports from the field, Lynn Palewicz, Chair of Foundation, observed Amanda Newman-Godfrey, Assistant Professor of Art Education, and vice-versa. Lynn observed Amanda teach Art Methods and Curriculum Design I, and Amanda observed Lynn's Visual Thinking course. We deemed it essential that we observe art making in each other's courses to best connect our application of critique, and our reflections on both student and faculty learning. In Lynn's course, Amanda viewed an "Instruction-Based Art" activity and critique that Lynn designed. Lynn observed a materials exploration lesson on drawing and mark-making in which students were asked to assume the roles of elementary aged children. At Moore, faculty observe one another within their departments, and utilize a standardized form for documentation. In this way, our observations across programs were unique. As we will share later, the Blumberg 2014 rubrics are designed to promote growth in one's teaching through documentation and self-assessment. We simply took the process of critique and reframed it using Blumberg's 2014 rubrics to document our self- and peer-assessments.

Critique in Action: A Narrative Account of Lynn's Observations

In Amanda's Art Methods and Curriculum Design I, students were engaged in an explorative art making experience focused on drawing processes adaptable to any K-5 learner. Amanda invited students to role play as child learners while fully exploring a range of media and mark-making processes. Students were directed to choose a drawing material and (prior to drawing) spend time answering questions about the smell, texture and weight. The prompts effectively slowed the pace of the exercise so that students could experience the time a child learner needs to observe and reflect on an experience. As students moved into drawing, Amanda ensured a variety of lines by asking that students make marks based on different emotions (happy, angry) and movements (fast, slow). The experiences were often paused so that students could share observations about the sounds of their drawing and/or movements of their body.

Figure 2: Art Methods, Amanda Newman-Godfrey

After several drawing prompts, Amanda directed students to hang their work on the critique wall for a "compare and contrast" of different responses to the same activity. Using role playing, Amanda demonstrated how K-5 critiques focus and direct the learner's attention to formal observations. She would ask questions like "how do you see the lines changing" and "if you squint, how do the marks change?" Sometimes, Amanda would ask two students to demonstrate the same material during the critique as a way to show how different learners make different decisions. All of these prompts worked together to help students identify ways to meaningfully incorporate critique into curriculum design.

Amanda used a "teacher side-bar" to emphasize the course learning outcomes. Midway into a critique or drawing experience she would step out of character to address best practices in K-5 teaching with statements like, "teacher side-bar, this is a great opportunity to reinforce vocabulary with your child learners." This was a particularly effective way to remind students that the role-playing was only part of the experience and that they should always be asking themselves how the language, pacing, prompts, etc. will impact the decisions they make as educators.

Throughout the lesson, Amanda referred to readings, research, and earlier lessons that her students had experienced. She created a culture of building on past experiences to help students grow as educators. She also effectively modeled how a K-5 teacher creates a learning atmosphere conducive to risktaking, failure, challenge, and fun. This was evident in the ways that students responded to teacher corrections of their answers. Nothing seemed to deter the students from active participation in the course material.

Critique in Action: A Narrative Account of Amanda's Observations

In Lynn's *Visual Thinking*, students were engaged in an "Instruction-Based Art" activity and critique that Lynn had designed. Students were provided prompts to choose an office supply, and create a process with it that could be repeated and sequenced into the group activity. Each student selected an item such as a stapler, highlighter, or envelope, and determined how they would transform or use it. As the students' impromptu artworks looped around the table, each person added her own mark. The activity was set to Donna Summer's 1983 song "She Works Hard for the Money" as both a way to help motivate students, and as irony within today's context of working women. Students were not only asked to think outside the box on how to make art with unconventional materials, but also had to communicate effectively and make quick decisions.

When Lynn stopped the music, students quickly began to talk amongst themselves. Her activity was not only energizing and enjoyable, but also naturally facilitated dialogue. It was clear than Lynn had worked to establish a comfortable classroom environment, and that students were used to critiquing independent, classmate, and collaborative work. Students installed their altered objects on the white classroom wall, and examined the collective piece. Next,

through a series of open-ended and carefully crafted questions designed to elicit critical, reflexive, and reflective thinking, Lynn guided the students in a critique that invited all students to participate. She fostered a supportive environment by responding positively to student comments, maintained receptive body language and tone of voice, and continued to prompt students with questions rather than answers.

Figure 3: Visual Thinking, Lynn Palewicz

Lynn masterfully facilitated critique so that students could apply their learning from this activity to broader goals in her course and the Foundation program. Students were asked how different decisions could have impacted the outcome, and how an instruction-based activity might be applied to future art making. Lynn asked students to think about how critique can be used to value and assess other art forms. The critique was peppered with both informal and formal aesthetic language so that students could define their personal voice in familiar terms. Lynn utilized critique to locate moments when her ideas and her students' responses aligned, and how similar experiences have prompted her to adjust her art making. In this way, she unveiled her thinking to her students through the critique process by discussing personal impact and reinforcing the day's activity to broader Foundation goals.

Figure 4: Visual Thinking, Lynn Palewicz

Tools for Capturing Critique Outcomes: Research on Self- and Peer-Evaluations

We selected Phyllis Blumberg's 2014 text *Assessing and Improving Your Teaching* to frame our observations. Blumberg provides principles and models for assessing one's teaching in higher education, and how rubrics can document and support growth in faculty performance (4-6). Blumberg's rubrics help faculty: establish beliefs on what success means for them and their students; what effective teaching looks; what effective teaching produces; ways to document critical self-reflection; ways of using an evidenced-based strategy to document teaching success (rather than the laundry list method that tends to favor outside achievements over in-professional growth); and using research to support one's decisions in teaching (13).

We discovered that research on self- and peer-assessment can help faculty engage in deeper, more growth-orientated examinations of their teaching, including critique strategies. In Blumberg's 2014 rubric *Provide Opportunities for Students to Reflect on Their Experiences*, she prompts faculty to facilitate "frequent, well-structured opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences so they can link them to learning in their educational program" (300-301). The Blumberg 2014 rubric "*Provide Opportunities for Students*

to Reflect on Their Learning" encouraged us to ensure students have "frequent, well-structured opportunities" to engage in student- and faculty-generated assessments of their work, assignments, etc (254-255). The last Blumberg 2014 rubric used was "*Creativity in Teaching*" which prompted us to look for creativity in the way we teach and evaluate students (275-276).

Intersections and Discoveries

Through our observations, we agreed that college students love to play, and are more engaged in their learning when they are having fun making for a more successful critique. In our respective fields, we are quite focused on helping students develop professional skills and produce college-level outcomes. In Amanda's lesson, students enjoyed role-playing as children. They were focused, engaged, and quick to respond to questions. During "teacher side-bar" moments, students returned to college level with questions about best practices in implementing these activities and techniques into their curriculum design. In Lynn's lesson, students were also asked to be playful and take creative risks using office supplies as art materials. They were then invited to share self-assessments of their participation and ideas about the formal aesthetics of the art work.

In both critiques, students could comfortably describe their process and reflect on possible changes and future applications of their learning. They felt invited to be open, use familiar language, and were supported by their professor. Our chief discovery centered around critique as a means of assessing student learning, and how through our mutual use of rubrics and open-ended questioning strategies, we can determine students' grasp of required concepts. We both use critique as opportunities to listen carefully to our students, to help them craft their personal voice, and to model both reflective and reflexive dialogue. We discovered that despite the differences in our respective departments at Moore, this way of engaging students in an open-ended, student-centered critique could be applied across disciplines with positive results.

For Future Consideration: Critique as Professional Development

As mentioned, we had several pedagogical and philosophical overlaps in our thinking around and use of critique. An additional goal of this mini study, however, was to have critique prompt moments of professional development and test new methods of peer assessment. As a result of observing Amanda's class, Lynn has become interested in bringing more academic research into her classroom. She is inspired to develop lessons based on art education research at the college level. Amanda recommended that Lynn read the writings and research of Stacey McKenna Salazar, Ed.D, whose 2013 work "*Studio Interior: Investigating Undergraduate Studio Art Teaching and Learning*" addresses issues around art college instruction. Lynn's hope is to contribute to this area of research as she tests new ideas in her higher education courses. As a result of observing Lynn, Amanda has been inspired to develop a version of "Instruction-Based Art" for art education students to test one another's lessons. Lynn's observations also helped reinforce Amanda's teaching philosophy, informed heavily by John Dewey, by pointing out moments where the philosopher's influence was evident. These connections between teaching philosophy and classroom practice often went unnoticed previously, and will be used to better evidence teaching and curricular decisions.

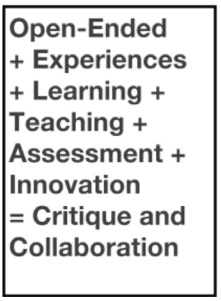

Figure 5: Diagram for Critique and Collaboration

The opportunity to work together on examining critique in our respective courses prompted one area of interest we plan to investigate further. Currently the criteria for higher education peer reviews which determines items such as contract continuations and promotions, focuses more on demonstrating service to the field and the college, and documenting student learning through summative assessments. The Blumberg 2014 text, which makes faculty reviews introspective and growth-oriented, has prompted us to more deeply assess and document our teaching effectiveness, including use of critique. We feel the Blumberg 2014 rubrics could be a path worth pursuing as a college initiative not only as a means of examining critique practices, but also reframing peer-assessment practices to improve student performance and professional development.

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Seminars, Studio Critiques, and Community Building: A Hybrid, Student-Centered Liberal Arts Course for International Art Students | John Peacock

In their book Integrating Multilingual Students into College Classrooms: Practical Advice for Faculty, Johnnie Hafernik and Fredel Wiant make the following six observations about the cultural background of Chinese students:

1. In the People's Republic of China (PRC), students do not like to be singled out for praise, yet do enjoy performing.
2. In China, the 'I' is always subordinated to the 'We.'
3. Students in the PRC are not expected to voice their opinions or reactions to issues presented in class.
4. This is attributed to] the widely shared belief that young people are far too inexperienced to generate responses that would sound interesting, or worthy of attention.
5. Chinese students [themselves] ask how they can possibly have an opiion about an important topic on which many scholars have so eloquently written.
6. [Such is] the clash between the importance the West places on individuality and the value other cultures place on collectivism (p. 35).

Whether Hafernik and Wiant were projecting Western stereotypes onto Chinese students was the subject of an interesting but finally inconclusive discussion during the Q & A after the conference presentation of a pre-publication version of this paper at Columbia Teachers College in New York City.

The audience of experienced educators at the conference did not hesitate to accept

the claim quoted from Dongfang Liu and Linda R. Vogel's article "Mitigating Transitional Challenges of Chinese Students in U.S. Higher Education" that "Many Chinese students face emotional issues, due to the extreme environmental transition, feelings of homesickness or loneliness, extreme cultural differences, and differing social networks" (102).

My hybrid "Reading Literature for Artistic Inspiration" course objective was *to build a community of international student artists whose reading affected their making and vice versa*. Eleven Asian or Asian-American students co-authored the course student learning outcomes: understand the relation between image and text and between literary and visual storytelling; deepen artistic thinking and knowledge of literature beyond critical theory and art history; channel inspiration from books into artistic practice; learn to write in their own voices; negotiate the difference between Western and Asian educational systems.

Before seminar meetings, students responded online to each other's questions about the reading. Here are some of their edited responses. All quotes are with their permission.

Sung Hoon Cho wrote that Tolstoy's

> *Ivan Ilyich spends his whole life trying to be something that he is not. In doing so, he neglects life's true pleasures. Near his last moment, he gets the 'sensation one sometimes experiences in a railway carriage when one thinks one is going backward while one is really going forward and suddenly becomes aware of the real direction.' Do you think, as artists, we are facing the right way in this metaphorical railway carriage? Are we [going backward] by engulfing ourselves with work, or could we argue that our work is actually pointing us in the correct direction of the carriage?*

Olivia Fu responded:

> *When I read 'The Death of Ivan Ilyich,' it seems at the end of his life, he realizes his whole way of life is wrong [and that his] 'scarcely noticeable impulses . might have been the real thing.' Just like one can have the 'wrong' priorities in life, one can have the wrong priorities in art. One can follow artistic trends, and popular styles and techniques in order to get a well-paid art related job. However, I can say that for myself, I hope that I continue to tap into my 'scarcely noticeable impulses' at least every once in a while. [Otherwise], I would have no way of knowing what direction I am moving in.*

Face-to-face seminar meetings began by asking what we needed to discuss to complete the online discussions. In the Tolstoy seminar we compared the transformation of 19th century Russian society to what is going on in China today, especially with respect to the growth of an upwardly mobile, professional middle class with consumerist aspirations, a comparison that only reinforced the students' intuitive identification with Ivan Ilyich.

Before face-to-face studio visits, students posted images online of their studio production and paragraphs explaining what kind of critique they wanted, to which others replied online.

Olivia Fu posted this image:

Fig. 1. Temptation, Ink on Watercolor Paper, 15" x 22" (left) Fig. 2. Stereotypes, Ink on Watercolor Paper, 15" x 22 (right)

Olivia wrote:

These are two ink drawings that I plan to color digitally. The piece on the left is about sexual temptation. The idea started with me thinking about my own struggle coming to terms with my sexuality and how giving into something you know is true to you on a gut level can be a very good thing. It can even be transcendent. The piece is meant to express that sort of transcendent sense of clarity one might have, when one embraces their full self.

The piece on the right is about the complicated relationship I have with stereotypes of Asian women. Working as a Chinese woman in New York, I became very aware of my ethnicity, being in many situations where people commented on my appearance (exotic, Chinese baby doll, etc.) and demeanor ('soft spoken due to my culture'). I was always either fighting against what people assumed about me or using it to my advantage. That's what this drawing is about, these sorts of contradictory feelings. I purposely made this female figure look in control because of her gaze and body language, but included the bondage and masks to symbolize the limiting feeling one has when facing discrimination.

Li's classmate Yifan Wu responded:

[T]he way you express temptation by giving the girl on the right a snake tail . . . remind[s] me of a traditional Chinese folktale, Legend of the White Snake, in which the heroine [is both] seductive and pure. . . . And in the second illustration, the girl is constrained by chains of masks [and] looks back at the audience with a half-bare back as if she wants to lure us or tell us some stories of her own rather than struggling against stereotypes symbolized by masks, which remind me of masks in Japanese Noh theatre.

Sung Hoon Cho posted this image:

Fig. 2. "CuddySkateshop" Acrylic on Cardboard, 11" x 9" x 9"

Sung wrote:

Skateboarding has been a big part of my life for the past 15 years. It is something that is always in the back of my mind. As a child, I used to receive catalogues of skate goods in the mail. I would take these weren't looking. I would browse through each page, and circle all the items I wanted. I rarely ended up buying anything, but there was an undeniable joy in just the thought of skateboarding with my chosen skate goods.

With this piece, I wanted to revisit my childhood. The cardboard/paper sculpture is a model of a fictional skateboard shop. The inside is decorated by objects that only exist in my made-up world. The door will be decorated with more stickers and posters. The back of the building will reveal more skate goods. The whole exterior will be surrounded by various skateboarders interacting with the building in their own way (skateboarding the ledges, drinking and smoking, peeing on the wall, etc.) I wish to create a visual representation of a slice of my own idealized skateboarding world.

Sung's classmate Fang Fu responded:

Even [though] I have no personal experience with skateboarding . . . [your piece] successfully conveys the feeling of nostalgia.

I have [observed] how people are crazy about fashion brands generated from skateboarding culture—skateboard shoes, T-shirts, shorts and art designed for skateboards. I know some people who are no longer skateboarding but

their outfits look like they are still doing it. I understand this as a choice driven by both nostalgia and pop culture influences. [In] your piece . . . this world seems mysterious. An 'open' sign hangs on the door but there are no windows or glass in the door. So I cannot see what is inside. [The piece] sends an invitation but actually never really invites me. And the big shop window has everything displayed; however, I still only see those flat images. It is a sealed world [with] 1980's feelings . . . like a shop closed for years . . . standing alone in your deep memories, which only you yourself can enter and browse, but which, nevertheless, is beautiful to me.

Here, finally, is an image by an alumna of the course Xiofu Wang:

Fig. 3. Tropical acid is 12 x12 ", oil on canvas , 2016

I want to end with something she wrote not about this image, but about Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground:*

Some young artists act like the underground man, thinking all famous artists are insincere and only themselves pure, while, in the deepest [recesses] of their minds, they pray for any little opportunity. And when it comes, they torture their consciences. Feeling like the underground man, however, can help us figure out that when [we] struggle, we do not need to be afraid, just leave a little space in our mind to let our struggles grow with us. . . . The Buddha said 'All appearances are illusory. To see that they are is to see the Buddha.

Addendum: Having intended this paper to foreground the voices and visions of my students, I hesitate to end with another issue that came up in the Q & A following the conference presentation of the paper. Proud as I am of my hybrid "Reading Literature for Artistic Inspiration" course, it really is just a Band-Aid on the problem at MICA and, judging from conference attendees' responses, at similar institutions, of (not) preparing international English language learners, especially from China, to mainstream into courses in which, unlike in mine, class-time is generally not allotted for students to explain things to each other in their own language(s) whenever anyone does not understand an English passage in a text or discussion.

According to Liu and Vogel, many Chinese students come to the West less prepared in English listening comprehension than in writing because in many of the courses they take in China to prepare them to study abroad, the principal language spoken is Chinese, with instruction given mainly in how to write in English, not to speak or understand it pragmatically in the context of Western higher education.

If this is true, the scale of the problem is potentially immense: the number of Chinese students studying abroad, mostly in the U.S, exceeded 580,000 in 2003, according to Liu and Vogel, and by 2015 they were the largest cohort of international students from any single country. "The Asian international student population accounts for 64.1% of all international students in America" (Liu and Vogel, 100). MICA's 2016 entering class of graduate students is 30.3% international, of whom 60.3% are Chinese, according

to MICA's director of graduate admissions (personal communication).

Consider what Western academic institutions gain financially: Chinese students contribute approximately $21.8 billion in tuition and another $12.8 billion in additional economic impact to their host countries, a "major service" export, in the words of Liu and Vogel (p. 100).

That so many English language learners from Chinese are clearly not getting their money's worth when it comes to English language instruction in U.S. colleges and universities is a greater ethical lapse, I would argue, than the adjunctification of American higher education, and related to it in that unprepared Chinese students are often taught by adjuncts who are the least prepared to advocate for them in their U.S. institutions

Attending the Q & A in which this issue was discussed was a member of MICA's board of trustees who thanked me for bringing the matter to her attention and assured me she would bring it up at the next board meeting, for which I am extremely appreciative. I don't know whether the board ever met about this, but so far I have heard nothing. . .

References: Hafernik, Johnnie and Fredel Wiant. Integrating Multilingual Students into College Classrooms: Practical Advice for Faculty. Multilingual Matters, 2012.

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Provocative Communities | Barbara Putz-Plecko

Throughout the world, societies and the structures that define them have been subjected to social, political, economic and technological changes of such a fundamental nature that the far-reaching consequences of these changes have long since made themselves felt in all areas of social action.

Crises, processes of reorganization, polarization, tensions and divisions within democratic societies and communities currently determine, alter and delimit individual, collective and, consequently, institutional fields of action and room for maneuver.

At the same time we see resistance, new forms of social organization that are emerging, movements that defy the mainstream of political discourse.

The enormous magnitude and the tempo of global changes as well as the complexity of the demands that these changes implicate and the issues they raise call for a comprehensive and at the same time nuanced awareness of the problems posed. This requires constantly questioning and deconstructing dominant viewpoints and forms of systemic logic; it requires, in other words, not only developing spheres of activity, but also opening these up, creating linkages and synergies in order to nurture a cognitive ability and an ability to act that is commensurate with the challenges that arise.

Some 10 years ago, Simon Rattle, an outstanding artist and orchestra conductor who has taken great interest in the inherent connections between social issues and matters that have to do with education, drew attention to the potential of the arts with respect to future social challenges in the following words: "In matters of education, it is becoming very clear that society is changing: We

no longer need the model that assumes there are a thousand obedient worker bees for each queen bee. We are educating our young people for the demands of tomorrow. We don't need people who think in straight lines. We need people who can see the wider picture; we need people who can make connections, unexpected connections. This is the area in which the arts are supreme."[1]

From time immemorial, both art and the artist figure have been in a constant state of transition and have had to evolve, at all times and in all places, in relation to the prevailing social conditions.

Today, we see such an immense variety of forms of artistic practice that we are justified in asking the question: Just what is art when there are so many degrees of applicability to be considered? And just where does art stand in a post-industrial society where the meaning of the notion "work" is changing totally?

We currently find ourselves in a tug-of-war between forms of logic specific to art, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, a claim to autonomy; we are caught up in a conflict between market logic and contextual forms of work logic, which postulate that art should have relevant social impact.

Given the present constitution of the world, we need to rethink the position of the artist in relation to social, economic and political structures. And of course we need to reflect – with consistency – on what is meant by art and education today and how we can conceive of it in the future. When we speak of aesthetic experience as being a mode of reflective distance that enables us to encounter other worlds of real-life experience, I personally see an allusion to an attitude of critical empathy that takes us instantly to the heart of a certain conception of academy.

Gaining an art education is an investment in social agency, to refer to curator Okwui Enwezor, who, in 2006, was making a case for an art education beyond economic models.[2]

The task he sees for art schools lies in reconciling the experimental, radical practices of the individual artist with the unruly, unpredictable, asymmetrical relations that constitute the world in which such art is fashioned and brought to realization. What seems pertinent to him in this new context is the relation between art and education as being two versions of a process of reaching awareness, namely: self-discovery and self-emancipation. Both involve taking chances; both involve opening oneself up all the way to one's limits – and being challenged by the labor of making obscure knowledge immanent and palpable. This space for which Enwezor makes a plea – this open space for experimentation, for daring, for emancipation, one in which self-awareness and worldly wisdom enter into a relationship and in which constant innovation is self-evident and unaffected by the sway of economic policies – this space is not only being undermined, it is also gradually being altered and even spoilt by regulations, by the focus on effectiveness, the definition of "innovation" as being, above all, technical progress. Consequently, those open spaces that should foster development are being reduced and suppressed – spaces which, considered holistically, are so essential to a society's awareness of important, urgent issues of today and tomorrow, spaces so essential to society's ability to deal with problems. Under constant pressure to conform, educational institutions such as art schools wear themselves out struggling to keep providing these open, generous structures, this room for thought, this room for maneuver, room for action and freedom, which is prerequisite to what Irit Rogoff from Goldsmith College, referring to

Giorgio Agamben[3], sees as being essential to structuring education for, with and through the arts, namely: potentiality.

As Rogoff puts it: "Potentiality inhabits the realm of the possible without prescribing it as a plan; as being at the very centre of acts of thinking, making and doing – as being at the heart of academy – this calls for a stance to be taken against the marginalization of educational spaces as strictly organized and clocked training grounds through simplistic, input-outcome forms of logic."[4] (Rogoff, 13)

What, in concrete terms, does this mean with respect to an academic area for which I personally bear direct responsibility? I am referring specifically to two departments of my university: the Department of Art and Communication Practices and the Department of Textiles; and I am also speaking of the University of Applied Arts as a whole. What sustains this open, generous space that allows potentiality to emerge? What structural foundation? What forms of cooperation?

Like other art schools, my university is manageably small, in relative terms, and it maintains spaces that are consciously structured to ensure that encounter and debate regularly take place, for example, in the form of art classes, but also in various other formats of dialogue, these often crossing both horizontal and vertical institutional boundaries.

Art classes are collaborative communities structured to allow a long-term interexchange between students and teachers. They are spaces in which individuals, with their experience, show and recognize themselves as being distinct, spaces in which meaning and value emerge through mutual exchange – through the recognition and creation of relationships, interconnections and affinities within groups and networks. In these "provocative communities"[5] (Verwoert, 59) experience and knowledge can be understood as forms of social relations.

Often, processes of a provocative nature – such as experimentation, the dissolution of boundaries, the breaking of rules and sequences – have a part to play as an impetus in artistic exploration.

Gerhard Treml: Eden´s Edge. An artistic research project. University of Applied Arts / FWF (PEEK). 2013 © Treml

In this sense, every artist faces decisions: every artist – in varying degrees – goes either along with or against current values that society establishes as signposts; every artist goes either along with or against prevailing modes of thinking, formats and practices considered to be fail-safe. Indeed, provocation (from Latin "provocare", meaning "to stimulate", "to excite", "to arouse", "to challenge", "to expect something of someone or something"), is a quality that is not only encoded in the practice of any given art, it is a dynamic process of sensuous and affective stimulation that is directly at its source.

It is precisely this provocative exchange among persons of different ages – which can also mean different generations – precisely their "provocative asynchrony" that sets something in motion. "The task of the academy," as the critic and curator Jan Ver-

woert puts it, is "to provoke experiences by provoking relations that are enlightening"[6] (Verwoert, 68). Provocation, understood in this sense, is a constructive key element of critique.

And the different "provocative communities" that take shape in an institution such as an art school constitute precisely that vital, constructive space for debate in which a critical – which also means self-critical – emancipatory and transformative practice can steadily evolve, on the condition that the structural framework – deliberately or unwittingly – does not prevent this from happening.

What can a group do?

This question, which is a central one, has often been asked in various projects of the Department of Art and Communication Practices. On one particular occasion, we made it a central topic of investigation – especially artistic investigation – with specific reference to a performance by Steve Paxton in 1967 entitled "The Stand / The Little Dance" and to a Steve Paxton Dance Workshop at Intermedia, Beatty Street, Vancouver in 1969, which studied the dynamics of a group constellation - the open placement of individuals in relation to one another and their spatial context - as well as the physical work on the movement of standing, which implies both conceptualization and enactment or action. What is the individual, and what is the individual as a part of the collective?

The photograph shows the re-enactment of the performance at Vienna's Generali Foundation, a laboratory for contemporary art. The performance was put on by students and teaching stuff from the department as well as other participants from both within and outside the art-school system.

Johannes Porsch, Tanja Widmann: The Purloined Letter. Re-enactment. Generali Foundation, Vienna. 2011 © Porsch

What, then, is a collective – beyond being the mere sum of its parts? What does a group know, and what can it *do*?

Every day we find ourselves asking new questions: Questions that generate new possible answers and that are of the very essence of what I consider to be an education that corresponds to our times. Questions that keep open the space for collective thought and action, a space that fosters critically reflective and emancipatory practice. It is a space that supports potentiality (the potential to be and to not-be), one that supports learning and un_learning experiences, which – if we are willing to process them – shatter the self-evidence of the ways in which we are used to dealing with reality; learning processes that transform the pre-set requisites that are supposed to be fundamental; processes that make clear the necessity of transforming the fundamental structures of our behavior and of the conception we have of ourselves.

Seen in this way, art education is always an experimental situation – in the best sense of the term; a situation in which thought processes that do not automatically fall into line with the knowledge that is being conveyed can be set in motion; a situation that encourages the creation of spaces for thought that

are open to difference and disagreement.

It is a central concern of the University of Applied Arts to continually work to ensure the conditions necessary for potentiality – to preserve them where they are threatened with being impaired and to create them where they do not yet exist. In terms of systematic practice and the structures that surround it, this means, on the part of each individual, maintaining the will to be alert and critical with regard to one's own established routines and with regard to unquestioned complacency and institutional inertness as well. It means looking self-critically and self-reflectively at the structures one creates oneself for learning and teaching and constantly sounding out ways to transform these – and getting on with the job of doing just that.

Endnotes: [1]Simon Rattle in the NDR Kultur broadcast "Simon Rattle – Querdenker auf Erfolgkurs" (2008). Re-translated into English from the German language source

[2]Cf. Enwezor, Okwui: "Schools of Thought" (2006) in: Frieze Magazine. Issue 101. https://frieze.com/article/schools-thought?language=de. Accessed on 15.10.2017

[3]Agamben, Giorgio, "Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy" (1999), Stanford University Press

[4]The quotations in this paragraph were all taken from Rogoff, Irit: Schools of Thought (2006) in: Frieze Magazine, Issue 101, London. Cf. Rogoff Irit: academy as potentiality, called up on 3 October 2013 athttp://summit.kein.org/node/191 Summit–non-aligned initiatives in education culture. SUMMIT is organized by Multitude e.V., in collaboration with Goldsmiths College, London University and Witte de With, Rotterdam.

[5]The notion of "provocative communities" was introduced into the discourse by Jan Verwoert. Cf. Jan Verwoert (2007): "Frei sind wir schon. Was wir jetzt brauchen ist ein besseres Leben." In: Belzer, Heike/Birnbaum, Daniel (Hg.), kunst lehren teaching art. Städelschule Frankfurt/Main. Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Köln 6Ibid.

Teaching Art | Lucio Pozzi

There no longer being any consensus about the purpose of art, today there are no shared criteria for making art, judging it, teaching it. The art school is now a place in which art is made and examined in an open-ended conversation.

I engage in a Socratic dialogue with the artist whose art I view, not to seek answers but to understand better what is seen. I make it clear that we are not there to find solutions. Both the modern artists and their totalitarian political enemies sought final solutions and these have repeatedly generated rigid endgames. The politicians ruined the lives of millions, the artists produced short-lived orthodoxies that morphed into mere marketing devices. I prefer a dynamic, flexible approach to art and culture, based on uncertainty and regeneration. Paying attention and asking questions allows us to probe the immense field of art.

There is nothing I can teach, I can only attempt to chance a focus, to come near a fresh gaze. Before every meeting I empty my mind in order to clear the path for my looking and seeing. More than on any other pattern I rely on observation in the here and now of our encounter. I describe in detail the ingredients I see combined in what I am observing. I do so without interpreting, although I warn the artist whose work I am approaching that my description is inevitably subjective. I also remind us both that we both share a wider context our talk is part of.

While acquainting myself with my own reading of that which is seen, my description often can reveal unacknowledged aspects of her/his work to the artist whose art I am looking at or it may confirm views s/he was aware of. After the description, I start asking simple questions regarding what, for

instance, may seem to be a mere technical detail or a repetition or an insistence or a contradiction, and from then on the artist and I both begin to understand our respective perceptions and our emotions start to surface. A question could be: "Did you do this before or after that? Were you following a plan? Was this touch born from inner need or from an agenda?" I don't ask for the enumeration of intentions or of meanings.

It is crucial that when asking questions I truly do not know the answer. The artist I talk with is generating her/his own understanding and so do I mine. I am often surprised by the direction the exchange develops in and mirror myself in it. In this way, we come near achieving the old ideal of the utopian reformers of the early XIX Century whereby in a school everybody is a partner and is both teacher and student.

As the conversation advances, we begin to extend its reach to include historical references or echoes of current artistic and non-artistic events. The students may press me for approval or disapproval and I regularly skirt that trap. It would be too easy for me to take advantage of my authority by depriving the student of his/her privilege of risking panic and excitement in making decisions. When my position has become clear, eventually, some few times, I may venture an opinion, but I always try to qualify it by informing about my biases and where they come from – for instance I may say that my taste is rooted in what I and my friends were fascinated by in the seventies: process, materials, environment or in my being attracted by Bauhaus and the culture it came from.

There are basic dilemmas the students have expressed over the decades. Since they echo my own quandaries I have understood they not only represent personal doubts but also that these doubts are structural to our culture at large. So, I have tried to design simple schemes that without imposition may allow us to confront them in our practice, regardless of the flow of our personal interests.

Success

There can be no gauge for measuring it. In 1985 Joel Fisher curated a traveling show titled The Success of Failure. No one who saw it believed that the artists had responded earnestly to the request that they contribute works they felt to be failed. Once selected and exhibited every single piece acquired the aura of satisfied completion. I tell students and everybody else that the current gauges for measuring the quality in art by fashion and money are too ephemeral and shifting for me to accept. In everyday practice the modern artist often supports his/her art by *being poor, *finding an unconditional sponsor such as a family member, *working at one or more jobs.

Innovation

The obsession for novelty has become a prison. Harold Rosenberg talked about modern artists being a herd of individualists. While innovation is a characteristic of some technological discoveries, in art everything one does is automatically new because it happens in the now, even when it appears to be derivative. All art derives from previous art. I encourage students to proceed with no taboos in a self-generated expanding spiral of returns without any concern about their status as innovators. The very concept of innovation is now a pat academy.

Intentions

Students are often challenged by authoritarian teachers to avow their intentions. They are expected to be judged from a comparison between their goals and the results.

Meaning

Even Albert Einstein insisted that play is crucial to discovery. When you play you cannot predict the result. Meaning. The same applies to the meaning of a work of art. I tell students not to worry about knowing the meaning of their art: it is unfathomable and can be understood only over time. In *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, Erwin Panofsky wrote that the symbolic values of art "... are often unknown to the artist himself and may even emphatically differ from what he consciously intended to express..."

Completion

Students often lament that they don't know how to finish a work. For millennia in any culture of the world the arts were submitted to well-defined agreed-upon goals. Everybody knew when a work of art was completed. Now the goal of his/her doing instead resides in the individual choice of each artist, thus the gauge of finishedness is self-reflective, especially when painting or clay works are the result of individual crafting. Now, the artist ceases to add to the construction of a work of art by deciding with an intuitive leap. We all experience visitors who insist that a painting should be pushed further or stopped as is. After viewing the memorial exhibition of Cezanne a year after his death, Picasso mumbled to a friend: "From now on a painting is finished from the first brushstroke onwards."

The Pantry

Applying what we learned from the invention of collage, quantum mechanics, semiotics, language and the discontinuous society we live in, I suggest that the work of art be considered as a cocktail of ingredients and that the unfathomable quality we seek might be rooted in how more than which ingredients we combine. Quality is never captured in any definition. By pointing at the how, I inevitably bewilder every person who needs the reassurance of definable purpose in individual and social matters and in the teaching and studying of art. While knowing that one's doing cannot but be rooted in one's times, having the courage to risk again and again and forever the pulse of one's mind may be the curse and liberation of our artistic venture.

Critique as Unlearning | Sreshta Rit Premnath

I would like to consider what it might mean if we took Gayatri Spivak's call to *unlearn one's learning and unlearn one's privilege* as the aim of studio critique.

Given that it is no longer possible for us to agree on criteria for aesthetic valuation and judgement in an era when postcolonial and feminist critiques have put into question the historical foundations and master narratives on which valuation and judgement depend, it would be prudent to take the contingency of one's position as a given and use the framework of critique to reveal and examine the assumptions that underlie the creation and reception of artwork. A critique of this kind would arguably take on a meta-critical register in which critics and artists don't simply engage in a discussion of the artwork in question, but also address the structures of power and judgement that frame the discussion at hand.

In many art departments, critical theory seminars have come to serve this function. The function of critical theory—a philosophical approach to cultural analysis—has always been to denaturalize our assumptions about the world. At best, the kinds of fundamental questions raised in critical theory seminars seep into the psyche of students and help them ask the kinds of meta-critical questions we hope will inform the direction of their studio practices. At worst this approach results in a kind of theoretical jargon that students apply to the description of their artwork, which has resulted in the proliferation of stilted and at times impenetrable artist statements and gallery press releases. Andrea Liu's "Top Ten Words I am Sick of Seeing in Artist Statements"[1] is a hilarious send-up of this phenomenon.

I would like to consider how we might avoid this instrumentalization of critical theory and instead use the studio critique to model and exercise a skeptical and analytical mindset that probes and questions what it sees. This is a task that feels all the more urgent at a time when political populism and the echo chambers of social media have resulted in a culture that is being called "post-fact." In our field, which has historically been much more closely aligned with poetry and philosophy than the sciences, how do we couple the speculative enterprise of seeking truth, and giving voice to feelings, with the more pragmatic register of determining facts and formulating an active response to them? This desire to return to facts and analytical critique appears at first glance to contradict my initial assertion that uncertainty is at the core of the studio critique, given the absence of a stable or single ground for aesthetic judgement. However, we must remember that uncertainty is at the heart of the scientific method as well.

I would like to quote Gayatri Spivak from a 1993 interview:

> Sara Danius: *You speak of the necessity of unlearning one's learning and unlearning one's privileges, and you have also said that one must "learn to speak in such a way that the masses will not regard it as bullshit." Speaking from your own experience as teacher, professor, and intellectual, how do you suggest we approach this project?*
>
> Spivak: *[...] I understand all my work as being in a sort of stream of learning how to unlearn and what to unlearn, because my positions are growing and changing so much; since I don't really work from within an expertise, I have to really be on my feet learning new things all the time, and as I learn these new things, my positions*

change. It's a bit embarrassing, but they do. Initially, if I remember right, when I started talking about "unlearning one's learning," I was really thinking more about how to behave as a subject of knowledge within the institution of neocolonial learning. I also thought about how to behave as a woman subject of knowledge—I am not even saying feminist—obliquely placed within access to the subjectship of learning [...] I'm having to actually give a lot of time to just sort of hanging out with women who are as out of touch with what one normally thinks of as the possibility of ethics, as can be. And, you see, I can't imagine myself there as someone who is going to write anything, because if I do that, then my relationship to the entire situation changes. [...] Just as one doesn't romanticize, one also doesn't investigate, because one is trying to learn outside of the traditional instruments of learning, and also with the persistently asked question, "What is it to learn, what does it mean to learn?" In that situation, the suspension of learning [...][2]

I am drawn first of all to Spivak's humble acknowledgement that she "doesn't work from within an expertise" and that her ongoing learning results in a constantly shifting ground. Art educators in the age of the "post-medium condition," as Rosalind Krauss called it, find themselves in a similar position. To doubt one's own expertise and speak that doubt within the framework of a critique is to cleave a space for unlearning. Within the American education system, where students often rely on a teacher's authority, making oneself vulnerable or performing uncertainty perturbs students. If a teacher is not the authority, then why should the student be paying good money for an education? Within the art school, the absence of specialization is replaced with referential knowledge. We point students to art practices that have been validated by the capitalist institutions of power (galleries, collectors, and art fairs) and produce an aspirational logic for their motivations. Rather than orienting a student's desires towards an already available structure of power, how do we prolong the "suspension of learning" that Spivak speaks about, in the anticipation of something else, something *other*?

The monetization of the private university likewise creates a peculiar set of problems. Expensive private universities draw students who belong to a social class that is able to pay for such an education. While faculty are the dominant class within the university, their salaries—especially adjunct salaries—place them in a social class well below that of many of their students. This presents a set of contradictory power relations within the classroom. In order to unlearn privilege, we must create a space within the critique to articulate and recognize the power relations that structure the student-teacher relation. Making power and privilege visible is a step towards unlearning it.

Rancière provides Joseph Jacotot, his "ignorant schoolmaster," as an example of someone dismantling the explicative order that separates teacher and student. He says that "*One could learn by oneself and without a master explicator when one wanted to, propelled by one's own desire or by the constraint of the situation.*"[3] While reimagining the purpose of the critique as creating the conditions of possibility for learning—rather than teaching—Rancière doesn't go far enough. The first problem we encounter is that *possibility* has no ethical orientation and it falls upon someone—perhaps the teacher—to orient the possibilities of a student by providing the right information, by asking the right questions, by offering the kind of

productive resistance against which a student tests and shapes their thinking. The aim of critique would be to teach the student how to critique and act as a counter-resistance to the teacher. In *critique as unlearning* the teacher and student create a space of debate wherein both positions have the potential to change. The second problem is that Jacotot does not make visible the class relations, race, and gender relations that structure his position as a teacher. Withdrawing and allowing learning to take its own self-directed course is not a strategy that confronts this problem; rather, it must once again be articulated, made visible, and actively unlearned.

We must return to the student's valid question about the kind of *uncertain academy* that I'm imagining: "Why must I pay for unlearning?" Rather than asking what job or professional validation they will gain from their education, how do we help students focus on self-actualization–becoming better people who are able to explore the world with open curiosity, ask critical questions of their experiences, and seek answers beyond what is acceptable or prescribed? Certainly the cost of higher education in this country gets in the way of these core questions. How do we help art students unlearn a functionalist notion of education, in exchange for a critical and ethically oriented one that is capable of imagining and actively creating a society beyond the capitalist art world? In the absence of an autonomous sphere from which to speak, or towards which to direct production, teachers must take seriously Fred Moten's call to be *in* but not *of* the university.[4] We must not and cannot dissolve the academy, but we can use it as an "undercommons" that opens other spaces within, beneath, and beside it.

To conclude, I would suggest simply that in order for this reorientation to occur, teachers themselves must be focused on self-actualization rather than careerism. Teachers who themselves instrumentalize critical theory rather than asking the kinds of questions that might unground their own position perpetuate this problem. A reactive withdrawal from the questions posed by critical theory into the romantic non-position of art-for-art's-sake is not the answer either. This would be, to extrapolate from Spivak, a *suspension of unlearning* rather than her recommendation that we must *suspend learning*. We must, as teachers, internalize the kinds of questions raised by critical theory and use the studio critique as an occasion to perform its resultant ungrounding and create the conditions of possibility for unlearning.

Endnotes: [1]Andrea Liu, "Top Ten Words I Am Sick of Seeing on Artists Statements106," e-flux.com, October 24, 2012.

[2]Sara Danius, Stefan Jonsson, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "An Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak22," Boundary 2, vol 20, no. 2 (1993): 24.

[3]Jacques Rancière, The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), 1991.

[4]Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013).

Look at Studio Critique Stress and Mindfulness |
Rhonda Schaller

Introduction

I am curious how contemplative practices such as mindfulness, visualization and meditation can be used as a lens in critique. I am interested to see if a meditative lens as a form of contemplative inquiry can result in enhanced student success, providing deeper understanding, preparation, and synthesis in the classroom. As an artist who uses these practices in the studio, as well as an educator and student affairs administrator who implements programs utilizing contemplative inquiry, I wondered what would happen if I taught students to meditate and visualize as a preparation for critique.

I currently run the Meditation Incubator project at Pratt Institute, where faculty, students, alumni and staff learn to meditate and use visualization to deepen presence in creativity, enhance emotional intelligence, and articulate a success action plan that they define. Survey data of participants in the incubator over 4 semesters showed that 100% of participants feel less stressed, gained a greater clarity of mind, and feel more creative and able to set goals and take action steps due to the practices they learned. 94% reported the practices helped with their studio practice. I wanted to bring this line of inquiry directly to the studio classroom critique as part of my participation in the Pratt Faculty Learning Community " Crit the Crit".

Working with the Executive Director of Strategic Planning & Institutional Effectiveness, we designed a study to see if contemplative pedagogy affects the approach to the studio critique process both for the faculty member and the student, impacting stress levels, perception and learning. We utilized a pre and post self-report survey of 18 questions timed at midterm and final critiques. The study participants include 136 students, from 12 classes; 7 classes in the experimental group and 5 classes in the comparative group, including Freshmen Foundation, Sophomore, Junior, Senior and second year Graduate students. The make-up of the groups were as follows: Experimental group includes primarily School of Art (Foundation Art and Design, Fine Art Sculpture, Fine Art Printmaking, Fine Art MFA GR2) and Comparative group includes primarily School of Design (Foundation Art and Design, Sophomore and Junior Fashion, Senior Jewelry, Interior Design MFA GR2). The experimental group participated in 3-4 training sessions of 20 – 30 minutes in mindfulness, meditation and creative visualization followed by free writing. The experimental group was given an additional eight question self-report survey to report effects of the training either negative or positive. Audio files of the meditations and visualizations were made available to experimental group students and faculty to practice outside of class.

Both groups were told the goal of the survey was to measure their stress levels and perceptions of the critique process; and both were told that the experimental group would be trained and the comparative group would not be trained. Both groups understood the training would be meditation to manage stress and visualization to enhance understanding. At the time of the symposium the following was compiled from the midterm survey:

Pre-Test Survey

Stress Levels

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being total panic, the combined results of the experimental group and comparative group surveyed at midterm critiques reported an average 6.53 level of stress, however the comparative group cited critique as the third leading cause of stress, and experimental group cited critique as 6th. Both groups cited not enough time and workload as their top two stressors.

While 67% of the experimental group participants reported to work better under stress, only 42% of the comparative group agreed – a significant difference. Similar response was to the question whether stress helps or prevents the achievement; 62% of the comparative group responded that stress prevented them from achievement compared to 43% of the experimental group, also a striking difference. Both 64% of the comparative group and 63% of the experimental group felt they could discuss their work clearly with peers or instructor without feeling stress.

Critique Perceptions

98% of all the respondents believed they understood the purpose of the critique. 80% of both experimental and comparative group participants claimed they were motivated by the critique; however, while 89% of the experimental group believed they were engaged by the critique, only 80% of the comparative group did.

The Final Critique Surveys

The final experimental group survey of 8 questions results on mindfulness, meditation and visualization training indicated the following:

Meditation, mindfulness and visualization effects: On a scale of 1 (very beneficial) to 10 (not beneficial), students rated the effects of the meditation, visualization practices 4.7 and 85% would recommend the practices to their peers, while overall students found the training enabled them to relax and reflect better. 73% feel more relaxed, 50% are better able to reflect, 17% have learned more, 15% are better able to explain their process, 13% feel more prepared, 12% have a better understanding of critique, 8% can synthesize feedback, 6% can synthesis feedback better. However these practices are not for everyone, 6% reported getting confused, 4% felt more stressed, and 1 student (1.9%) have learned less.

Students added the following optional comments at the end of the training: "I think as an artist I spend most of my time making things, so dedicating even 15 minutes to think through ideas has been very helpful".

"It lowered my anxiety surrounding my piece. It helped me to view my work from a different point of view, and it help me to relax."

"It allowed me to discover new themes or considerations in my work that I maybe otherwise wouldn't have noticed."

"This was actually a decent way of eliminating mind chatter and getting to the core ideas".

"The exercises helped me relax and feel less pressure from the challenges that academics set in my everyday life."

"A safe space to hear my own thoughts on my work and motivation without being accountable to any other purpose."

"Taking breathing practices, calm and focused energy for use during critique to combat adrenaline."

The schedule of meditation, mindfulness and visualization training with

the experimental group was as follows:
• Week 1: Hand out and collect Pre-survey. Intro to meditation and mindfulness. Meditations: Image of Pebble, Rise and fall of the breath, orb of light, release the chatter.
• Week 2: meditation and critique visualizations. Meditations: Tibetan channel breath, rise and fall/orb, shimmering wall of creativity. Critique visualization/meditations: pre paring your introduction and intentionality.
• Week 3: meditation and critique visualizations. Meditations: rise and fall/ orb of light Critique visualizations/ meditations: becoming, beholding.
• Week 4: Distribute and collect the Post survey (and / or short meditation if there is time). Meditations: breath and sustained attention. Critique visualizations/meditations: the story I tell.

Audio Files of all the meditations and visualizations were recorded and emailed to faculty and students. Students were encouraged to use free writing after the critique visualizations.

The Experimental group training started the same with each class from freshmen to graduate students. They were all taught the same mindfulness practice and beginning meditations in Session 1. These were concentration meditations on breath, light and image. Students were taught to follow their breath, witnessing the rise and fall of the chest. A concentration meditation of counting the breath was added, and a visualization using light and imagination to release any chatter in their minds. I asked them to see themselves as in a beautiful landscape, then as a pebble in water floating down to the riverbed to rest, becoming more and more relaxed with each breath. The remaining sessions started with a brief mindfulness meditation and breath concentration and then moved on to a visualization designed specifically for critique preparation, as indicated on the schedule. These included visualizations on embodied perception of the critique process, becoming their work, becoming their audience, and beholding the work through another's eyes as creative visualizations. Though the visualizations I used were basically the same for each class, I varied the content depending on what projects the students were working on and if the work was 2D, animation, painting, time based work, prints, sculpture, or graphic design.

Post-Test

The comparative group reported to be slightly more stressed overall than the experimental group (6.77 vs. 6.63) and the difference is not statistically significant; however, when asked about specific items of their campus life and studies, students reported different levels of stress. The most dramatic difference was in the groups' feeling of stress during the critiques – on a 10-point scale ("1" – no stress, "10" – maximum stress) the comparative group scored 6.53 versus 5.27 for the experimental group and in how groups react to the workload – 7.35 for the comparative group and 6.25 – for the experimental group. While experimental group felt more focused and energized at its level of stress during the survey administration, the comparative group believed it had many health issues related to stress: they were anxious, unusually emotional, panicked and nauseous. They also had loss of appetite, headache, upset stomach and insomnia at much higher level than the experimental group (Table 1).

Answer Options	Experimental Group	Comparison Group
Sport	1.88	2.45
Relationship (boyfriend/girlfriend) or marriage	3.04	3.09
Friends	3.12	3.39
Living away from home (if applicable)	3.65	3.06
Roommate	3.72	3.28
Family	3.81	3.53
Health	3.84	4.59
Faculty	3.96	4.39
Job (if applicable)	4.00	4.95
Tests	4.44	4.51
Not being happy	4.62	5.13
Exams	5.06	4.78
Studio Critiques	5.27	6.53
Papers	5.57	5.1
Grades	5.62	5.71
Money	5.65	5.2
Workload	6.25	7.35
Not enough time	6.94	7.6

Table 1: Sources of Stress for Experimental and Comparison Groups (1- no stress at all; 10 – maximum stress)

Dealing with Stress

The two groups dealt differently with stress: while experimental group would sleep, exercise, get involved in hobby activities or study, the comparative group would diet, smoke, use prescription drugs or meditate (Table 2).

Answer Options	Experimental Group	Comparison Group
Sleep	67.3%	57.1%
Listen to music	53.8%	55.1%
Talk to friends	51.9%	49.0%
Eat	40.4%	40.8%
Exercise	32.7%	28.6%
Hobby / Project (ex. play guitar)	28.8%	14.3%
Read	19.2%	14.3%
Study	15.4%	10.2%
Smoking (tobacco products or electronic cigarettes)	11.5%	14.3%
Other (please specify)	11.5%	18.4%
Not Eat / Diet	5.8%	8.2%
Use Herb / Home remedies (ex. Ginseng)	5.8%	6.1%
Meditate	3.8%	8.2%
Use over-the-counter drugs (ex. Advil, Tylenol, Aleve)	3.8%	0.0%
Use prescription drugs	3.8%	10.2%

Table 2: How experimental and comparative groups deal with stress

While both experimental and comparative groups felt they were OK dealing with the stress and preparing themselves for the exams and critiques, the experimental group felt more comfortable talking about their work to instructors and peers.

The comparative group was strongly interested in learning mindfulness, meditation or visualization next semester as a tool for stress and to deepen a skillful critique process while the experimental group believed that their need was moderate; the assumption is that experimental group has learned enough during one semester to cope with their stress issues.

Conclusion

As a result of participating in the training, two faculty members in the experimental group (Junior printmaking and Junior sculpture) used the visualization practices as course assignments for art making ideation and analysis and reported back an observed deepening in learning, perception and implementation in the classroom. Also 2 faculty members (sophomore photography and sophomore sculpture) have added the meditation and visualization practices to their syllabi for spring term, so we will continue to study the effects of contemplative pedagogy in critique.

More research is needed, but our preliminary findings of enhanced metrics for student success through the use of meditation, mindfulness and visualization is evident. Making the space for first person and third person learning and introspection in the critique classroom through embodied perception has great promise to encourage success in art and design education, and contribute to thriving and engagement in the art and design classroom.

An Exercise in Metacognition | Dan Serig

Judith Burton reminds us that critique is fundamentally an activity of the mind.[1] The term *mind* connotes a sense of self, an awareness or agency, while the word brain refers to an organ and structure necessary for the conception of mind. Within this understanding, I propose that what we understand about the brain, particularly about teaching and learning, may inform this particular activity of the mind: the critique. The Remixing Art Education symposium gathers a group of reflective professionals that leads to purposefully writing this paper using first person pronouns. We are making sense of our world together.

I propose that critique in its best form must foster a certain kind of mindfulness referred to as metacognition: thinking about one's thinking. It involves planning, monitoring, and assessing understanding and performance, including a critical awareness of one's thinking and learning as well as oneself as a thinker and learner.[2]

We understand cognition, the process of learning, as an embodied phenomenon brought to popular understanding by neuroscientist Antonio Damasio.[3] Our understanding of two processes linked to the brain help substantiate (and make more complex) this embodiment: First, neural pathways in the spinal cord respond to electrical impulses even after complete spinal paralysis. So even though the brain is an electro-chemical command center, complex motor control patterns, such as walking, may be formed in the spinal cord (think headless chicken running around).[4] Second, the trillions of cells (one-to-three pounds) of bacteria in our guts regulate how we think and feel. Researchers are learning that our microbiomes may be implicated in autism, anxiety, depression, and other brain disorders.[5]

Two theories of cognition also underlie my proposition. The theory of situated cognition informs the proposition for critique as a mindful engagement in the development of metacognition. Learning, the theory goes, occurs within experiences, contexts, and cultures that illuminate the impossibility of isolated knowledge. Learning is a social activity.[6] The relationship of situated cognition to critique should be evident. Similarly, the theory of distributed cognition further expands learning from a brain, to a brain in a body, to a body/brain in a context, to a body/brain/context filled with other bodies/brains/contexts, all contributing to the making of meaning and to learning. And of special note for our purposes: distributed cognition recognizes the role of objects in cognition.[7]

Let us now take our understanding of metacognition within our background of situated and distributed cognition and seat them at the table with my pedagogical pal, constructivism. Constructivist educators build their pedagogy on the understanding that we construct our knowledge; we learn by doing within an environment. As such, we may have similar but not the exactly the same experiences as another – or we may have vastly different experiences. This epistemological stance argues for understanding that is shared and arrived at collaboratively.[8] Often the teacher's roles in a constructivist educational setting are creating the appropriate environment to stimulate experiences and collaboration and to be lead framer of questions to deepen the expression of thinking, thus the construction of knowledge. Questions may extend thinking or challenge thinking, reflecting the complexity of the task at hand. Taking the critique as an opportunity for constructivism, a structure is required that can simultaneously remain flexible.

The structure for creating a metacognitive experience using a constructivist paradigm for critique must be characterized by dialogical and dialectical methods. Dialog is the overriding structure through which to construct meaning in the constructivist critique. I, and perhaps you, have experienced a very different form of critique that was more dogmatic with a good diatribe thrown in for good measure. Dialogic demands a certain amount of releasing of control on the part of the facilitator/teacher. Rather than imparting a specific understanding, the group develops an understanding in relationship to contexts, disciplines, prior knowledge, and goals. This engages the dialectic in that competing opinions must be placed into communion in efforts to discern the truth (with a lower-case 't'). The process of discernment must be open to both the logical and emotional if we are to be true to the underlying tenets of embodied, situated, and distributed cognition.

In this structure, the teacher becomes a model of metacognition. This kind of teaching is what I call transparent teaching: allowing students to understand your thinking and decision-making. In doing so, students can observe metacognitive strategies for learning including dealing with novelty and being adaptable. By 'thinking aloud' you process questions, seek deeper understandings, and guide the group in their dialogic discernment of the truth. Rather than separating metacognition in to some sort of reflection exercise or discrete unit on 'how to do metacognition,' the process must be embedded within other structures that use and develop metacognitive abilities, like the critique. But, the effort needs to be explicit and purposeful, in service ofthe goals of the critique, which I hope includes the further development of the students' voices (individual and collective).

To expand on the connection between goals for critique and metacognition, let me provide two examples of ongoing projects that hope to inform our understanding of this kind of thinking within art and design schools and about critique, specifically. First, eight institutions in the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) are collaborating on the development of shared language and understanding of common learning goals.[9] As you might expect, there is wide agreement on the need to learn technical skills, as well as historical and cultural contexts. In addition, the learning goals of these institutions directly or imply several dispositions, specifically personal qualities and creative and cognitive capacities. Personal qualities include resilience, tolerance for ambiguity, and a sense of purpose. Creative and cognitive capacities include curiosity, imagination, and metacognition. In the spring of 2017 a survey will be distributed to all AICAD members to determine if the similarities from the initial six institutions holds across a significant number of others. We are also interested in developing a culture in which assessment strategies such as critique for metacognition may be shared with respect to each institution's autonomy and unique missions.

While many in higher education shy away (or outright run away) from discussions of assessment, we must recognize that critique is a primary source of qualitative assessment in art and design. They are the hallmark of assessment. They are also the most time-consuming and least efficient forms. However, no other form of assessment compares to the depth of understanding derived from a critique held within the qualities described in this paper. More efficient forms of assessment exist, but they are more reductive quantitative measure-

ments. Measuring the parts does not equal the sum in art and design. That does not mean that instruction cannot focus on specific aspects of developing one's practice. However, it never occurs in a vacuum, and the best teachers are able to hold both the specific and the whole simultaneously when working the students.

The second project involves six AICAD institutions, some overlapping with the first project, which is specifically investigating learning through critique.[10] Led by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) with a grant from the Spencer Foundation, the following three questions guide the research:

1. What are the varieties of critique practiced at the six schools?

2. Is metacognition manifested and developed in and through critique?

3. What, if any, relationship exists among manifestations of metacognition and the types of critique used?

The premise for the research is that critique is virtually unique to art and design schools. Through critique, students learn to pause and reflect in a group of similarly focused classmates and teachers to seek the truth – whether that is aesthetically, technically, emotionally, and/or intellectually. Critique offers the chance to consider choices made, alternatives, goals and objectives.[11] As previously noted, students reflect on planning, monitoring, and assessing understanding and performance. They must bring a critical awareness of their thinking and learning as well as themselves as thinkers and learners. The researchers endeavor to determine if the evidence provides insight into the relationship between critique and metacognition in order to propose a more robust, longitudinal study of critique throughout the undergraduate experiences of a larger sample.

In conclusion, I turn to the introduction of the policy brief from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), *Assessment on Our Own Terms*.[12] Art and design professionals know how to do assessment. We spend our lives working to improve our practice. Our problem is not that we do not know how to assess; rather, "we are not as adept as we need to be in explaining to others what we do, how it works, and why it works."[13] In considering critique as an opportunity to develop and assess metacognitive abilities, I aim to contribute, with a host of colleagues, to a better understanding of what we do, how it works, and why it works.

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College of Art and Design, California College of the Arts.

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[13]ibid.

Artistic Critique, Pedagogy and Aesthetic Judgment after the Social (Down)Turn | Gregory Sholette

A significant and growing number of artists no longer exclusively produce singular objects or operate only within a studio-based practice. Instead they generate work in the areas of activism, collectivism, participatory practices and research-based art making. The material outcome of this activity is often 1.) ephemeral in form; 2.) transitory in nature; 3.) produced through collaborative participation – including sometimes by individuals not "professionally" trained in the fine arts; 4.) and such work is often "timely," as opposed to timeless, that is to say it tackles current political or social needs or concerns. This is a type of *citizen artist*, even if not all involved are technically "citizens".

Described by Joseph Beuys as social sculpture and by my colleague Claire Bishop as the "social turn," we could also define this tendency negatively, by seeing it as a rejection of traditional aesthetic values, a distancing or dismissal of medium specific art practices including problems of formal, plastic aesthetics, but also a repudiation of claims that art is an exceptional form of human labor which is autonomous from politics, economics, or other practical concerns.[1] By contrast, socially engaged art does not withdraw from the everyday world but plows gleefully into its warp and woof, often to the point where very little -if any- daylight can be seen between the work of art and phenomenal reality. To borrow a concept from theorist Stephen Wright: the artwork is scaled-up until it takes on a 1:1 ratio with the world, much as novelist Luis Borges ultra-precise cartographers produced a map

of their country so exact that it was exactly the same as the empire itself, kilometer for kilometer.[2]

Turning back to the problem of critique then it becomes clear that the rise of this engaged art phenomenon brings with it a new range of questions, problems and challenges regarding how to evaluate art made for, or made virtually identical with the social itself. Arguably this new range of cultural activity has not only displaced the practice known as institutional critique, but is also deeply problematizing the very notion of aesthetic judgment as bequeathed to us from centuries past. This raises tough questions for art teachers. Should we apply existing aesthetic standards whenever possible and ignore the shift of scale and temporality, or do we abandon existing and familiar analytical paradigms? Should we borrow critical tools from other disciplines such as sociology or anthropology or even political science and urban studies? Or should we instead seek to construct an entirely new set of critical standards from the bottom up? In other words, where in the world, or in academia, if anywhere, does this so-called social turn leave art school critique, whose practices of pedagogy and judgment have traditionally served as the bedrock of an artistic education?

But here is where I must shift from my prepared text to this modified version of the talk, including even re-writing that last sentence which now reads:

> *What do we do with the familiar techniques of art school critique, pedagogy and judgment, as we are poised to encounter* not *a new* social *turn, but a social* downturn, *or* downgrade, *or outright* debasement *of society?*

One thing is evident: if ever it was the case that teaching art should or could be quarantined from everyday life, that

Image: #SinMordaza Spanish street art action designed by Leónidas Martín to protest recently enacted gag laws criminalizing public protest including stiff fines for anyone tweeting support for such events. Image courtesy http://leodecerca.net.

possibility is no longer viable in light of the gestating political crisis we now face. And this urgency reaches beyond the usual art activist suspects, including myself and my comrades in *Gulf Labor Coalition, Decolonize This Place, Black Lives Matter*, or those in Spain pictured above who perform what is essentially an illegal street action designed by art-troublemaker Leonidas Martin in which he and his collaborators known as #SinMordaza protest recently enacted gag laws that harken back to the days of Franco's fascist regime.[3] Spain's so-called "public security law" allows police to fine people up to €600,000 for organizing an "unauthorized protest (and there are other fines against tweeting the location of demonstrations or taking photos of lawenforcement – one woman was fined for posting a photo of a police car parked in a space reserved for people with disabilities!).[4] I think you will agree that my reference requires no further elaboration in light of both the pre and post election comments made by members of the new executive branch administration of the United States. Notable too in this context is the felony charges that were brought against journalists who were reporting about mass protests denouncing the presidential inauguration in Washington DC on January, 20 2017.[5]

And the mood of distress is everywhere today, including amongst artists and within academic institutions. Which is appropriate. The danger emerges when the arts are seen as an escape from confronting social challenges. What we cannot allow is to permit the arts to serve merely as a salve for nervous souls. This would amount to complicity between culture and the imminent "Alt-White" political regime, an outcome that is especially troubling under conditions that I refer to as "bare art," in which culture's mystique, autonomy and romance have boiled away leaving behind a naked form of culture in which art becomes an investment instrument subjected *without irony* to the laws of supply and demand (i.e there are too many artists today and too many MFA programs, and there are too few resources, thus we must cut the supply side of the equation using cultural management tools and/or market mechanisms.) This condition of bare art is a blessing for neoliberal policy wonks who have basked in such *real*ART*politik* all the while extolling the clichéd vocabulary of public interest. As one senior manager of the global financial consulting firm Deloitte Limited explains: the complete monetization of art will actually serve the public interest because its

> *"Financial activities will have ripple effects on other sectors of the economy. This evolution should create a new era for the art markets and for the benefit of the society as a whole by fostering culture, knowledge and creativity."*[6]

But with the neoliberal model revealing deep structural cracks and autocratic and nationalist capitalist management spreading across the globe, the condition of bare art established a foundation for one of two outcomes: either submission to authority via self-censorship and perhaps also overt acts of repression, or the emergence of a bold aesthetics of resistance. Thus far we have thankfully seen a robust embrace of the latter alternative. Which is why the question of art school critique is paramount today. At this historical moment we must find the means and the courage to transform our programs and our pedagogy to match the velocity of ideas, actions and imaginative responses to current circumstances, while refusing to succumb to either resignation or complicity.

Therefore, can we envision art school critique as:

- a refusal to allow the normalization of racism, xenophobia and fear ?
- as the protection of sanctuary spaces?
- as the erasure of student debt now and forever.
- as the measure of an earth-positive aesthetic?
- as a rejection of the art market's *real*ART*politik* and conditions of bare art?

In other words, can we envision art school critique 2.0 *as invigorating the will to disobey*?

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[6]*Adriano Picinati di Torcello, Senior Manager, Deloitte Luxembourg, "Why should art be considered as an asset class?," a paper presented at the conference Art as an Investment, for the Musée d'Art Moderne, Luxembourg, 2010, 23: http://www2.deloitte.com/lu/en/pages/art-finance/articles/art-as-investment.html*

Art as Critique Reflection and Prayer: Memory of Sojourner Truth | Dimitry Tetin

In 1955 French filmmaker Alain Resnais directed *Night and Fog*, using the medium of film to examine the legacy of the Holocaust (1956). The film featured narration recited over footage shot in color after the concentration camps were shut down and black and white archival photographs that were taken while the camps still in operation (Figure 1). The narrator in *Night and Fog* is not a documentarian who merely describes what the camera is seeing. He speaks in an independent voice, with weight equal to the images and sound, the traditional storytelling tools of film.

Figure 1: One of the final scenes from Night and Fog. Source: Resnais, 1956.

Night and Fog belongs to a genre of films known as the film essay. They are similar to documentary and non-fiction film in that they are based in reality and use narration, images and sounds to convey a message. Essay films rely on verbal rather than visual intelligence. They draw on the history of film and incorporate the tradition of the essay genre, which according to critic Theodor Adorno is a continuous asking of questions andnot necessarily finding solutions (Ador-

no, 152). They are a "search to find out what one thinks about something." (Lopate, 244) The essay film is an open-ended form, existing somewhere between literature and film.

I followed in the steps of Resnais in making a body of work that is a meditation on the vast weighted silence that exists around representation of personal and national tragedy and the impossibility of communicating the act of suffering through language. *Reflection and Prayer: Memory of Sojourner Truth* is a first in a series of projects about the memory of Sojourner Truth and how it relates to places in the Hudson River Valley. It is a response to an historical marker in the secluded area by the Wallkill River in New Paltz, NY where Truth, an African American abolitionist who was born into slavery in NY State, would seek refuge for the "purposes of reflection and prayer." (Figure 2) The rectangle of the marker stands in for the historical event that took place: Sojourner Truth walking along the banks of the Wallkill River. It mentions that Truth was enslaved at the time and goes on to acknowledge her significance in American history.

Figure 2: A historical marker dedicated about Sojourner Truth on the banks of the Wallkill River in New Paltz, NY.

It is common practice to use similar narrative signs to acknowledge historically significant events. Figure 3 shows a historical marker by the Providence River in Providence, Rhode Iisland. The sign contains historical maps and artist renderings showing the the area as it "used to be."

Figure 3: Left: a historical marker on the banks of the Providence River in Providence, RI. Right: a close up of the top right corner of the marker showing a painting of Providence from 1819.

In the close up portion of the sign, a painting of Providence from 1819 shows cows grazing in the foreground and an idyllic New England town rising on the banks of the river. The text mentions the shipyards of Providence that were just adjacent to the meadow and the families involved in the ship-building business. The sign omits the fact that at the time, Rhode Island was the leader in North American Slave trade, handling as much as 70% of the total volume from Newport and Providence ports. The Truth marker in New Paltz is similar. Its purpose is to highlight the place's significance because Sojourner Truth was present there at some point in time. It communicates a narrative of someone in an undesirable condition coming to a quiet place for contemplation and ultimately overcoming her restrictions and becoming a national hero. My project exists in a reaction to the fact that the marker is inherently not capable of com-

municating the condition of Truth's life at this unbearably difficult point. The sign is allegorical in nature: a story with a larger message about starting from the bottom and overcoming adversity on Truth's way to freedom. By giving the scene a setting and describing it in language, despite the intentions, the marker fixes the meaning of the event: sanitizing, inscribing and burying the past similar to the painting depicting the "as it was" view of the banks of the Providence River. *Reflection and Prayer: Memory of Sojourner Truth* exists as a printed edition that combines several elements: an 18x24" fold out poster, a short piece of writing about getting to the marker, and a printed piece that directs viewers to the reflectionandprayer.com website that hosts two infinitely looping videos shot at the site (Figures 4-7).

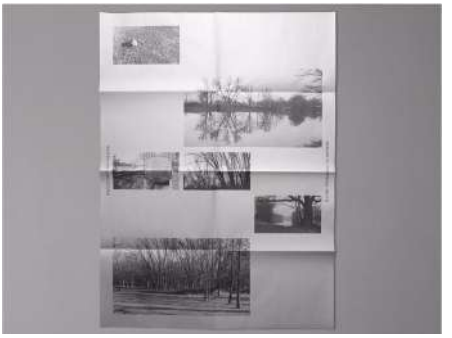

Figure 4: Poster included in Reflection and Prayer

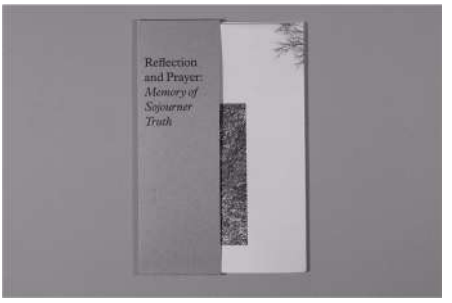

Figure 5: Reflection and Prayer assembled

Figure 6: All of the print components of Reflection and Prayer

Figure 7: Stills from two looping videos at reflectionandprayer.com

Reflection and Prayer is neither an act of erasure, nor a proposal for a better marker or new memorial. It is an essayistic work that seeks to insert itself in the blank space created by the passing of time, erasure, and forgetting. Critic Julia Bryan Wilson asserts in her essay "Building a Marker of Nuclear Warning," that memory needs a specific address in order "stick in the annals of collective history" and combat the incessant erosion brought about by time (199). I hope that this *Reflection and Prayer* and my subsequent work can contribute to the array of addresses protecting the memory of Sojourner Truth from decay.

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Night and Fog (Nuit Et Brouillard). Dir. Alain Resnais. Argos Films, 1956.

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Dynamic Mapping Performance, Body, Space and the Machine Making Connections |

Loukia Tsafoulia

What are the ethical challenges and dilemmas of design pedagogy, specifically the culture of critique as a vital part of the learning and creative process? Do the fields of art and design necessitate different approaches to critique and how can we question a tradition of critique that we take for granted? How do students experience critique?

These are a few of the questions that triggered this paper which serves as the summary of my presentation for the Pecha Kucha session at the Art School Critique 2.0 Symposium. The presentation was intended to give a brief overview of the different critique formats and high impact learning practices employed in three of the courses I teach and I used as my case studies. The pecha kucha format of the presentation was used to make fast, visual connections between various types of teaching methodologies applied in different yet interconnected courses emphasizing diverse teaching processes while showcasing students' work. The series of students' outcomes included in the presentation conceptually respond to the wider thematic of *mapping* the *body* in *space* as a design generative methodology. The goal is to explore studio-based pedagogy and student learning as practiced and experienced by faculty and students during the "crit". The main principle while designing these courses is that the critique format is never static, it is rather tailored to meet the specific pedagogical objectives at hand and therefore varies between disciplines and departments.

I am using as case studies three different courses I respectively teach at Pratt Institute, the Graduate School of Interior Design, at City College of New York, the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture (SSA) and at the New York City College of Technology, Department of Architectural Technology (Arch NYCCT). The core problem addressed by all three courses is designed as an interdisciplinary educational module between the humanities, the arts and the design fields aiming to open creative opportunities for collaboration for both the students and the faculty body. This problem is tackled as assignments of various lengths at the different departments, thus resulting in multiple scopes. In all three scenarios, the content is co-taught with other faculty with distinct research and focus.

The first case study course, taught at Pratt Institute, School of Interior Design is titled *Reflections: Mapping, Syntax & The Machine*; three thematics that explore the translation of human performance into space, the extraction of syntax protocols as a design strategy and the reciprocity between the body and the machine as a spatial medium.

Image 1. Course case study titled "Reflections:Mapping, Syntax & the Machine

I co-teach this course with Severino Alfonso, whose scholarly research lies on the Utopias of the Digital Space and it is open to a varied body of students from the Pratt Design School as a whole, including architecture, product design and fine arts and to both undergraduate and graduate levels. The course is a hybrid between a lab and a seminar; combining research, making and critiquing while focusing on the relationships between body, object and space. It is structured in three phases throughout the course of a semester each corresponding with a contemporary acclaimed design methodology. Each phase incorporates the lab component including workshops on representational and design digital tools, as well as desk-crits, peer reviews and silent critiques amongst other forms (image 1). Simultaneously, the seminar component, includes lectures and group discussions (peer and faculty driven) on the given topic aiming to familiarize students with the aesthetic and cultural shifts manifested in distinct historical periods and design styles in Europe and North America. The course is structured in assignments that build on both a final fabricated project, a performative installation of sorts, and a written paper as a comprehensive critique from one student to another student's work. The participatory character of this exchange is particularly rewarding and might be one of the ways to further engage students in theory based courses where drawing their focus is proven to be challenging, particularly in design schools

Image 2. 2nd course case study, graduate core design studio 1

The second case study is the first graduate core design studio course taught at the Spitzer School of Architecture, where

the theme is explored as a fast-paced, three weeks' problem. This course is co-coordinated with Bradley Horn, director of the program and we invite engineering cconsultants throughout the semester. The higher educational level of students provides with opportunities to further test peer oriented and participatory action crit formats (image 2). The last two case studies involve an online archive and recorded seminars, therefore creating a strong base for continuation past the courses' teaching period. Invited guests also participate via giving lectures or workshops on their fields of expertise. The integrated to the studio experts' consultancy is not only intended to offer vital educational support but also addresses the need to explore conceptual bridges between the design academia and the future of design practice. So, critique by specialized professionals is embedded as an integral part to the studio-based pedagogy.

The final design output of this problem is an architectural pavilion, and there are three main process phases involved: first, mapping operations of body actions performed by each student, second, physical explorations in the form of constructed study models and third, drawing and diagram representations. The exploration is based on a systematic series of actions directed to some unknown end thus rendering the process as vital and the final outcome as secondary. Emphasis is given in learning by making and iterating.

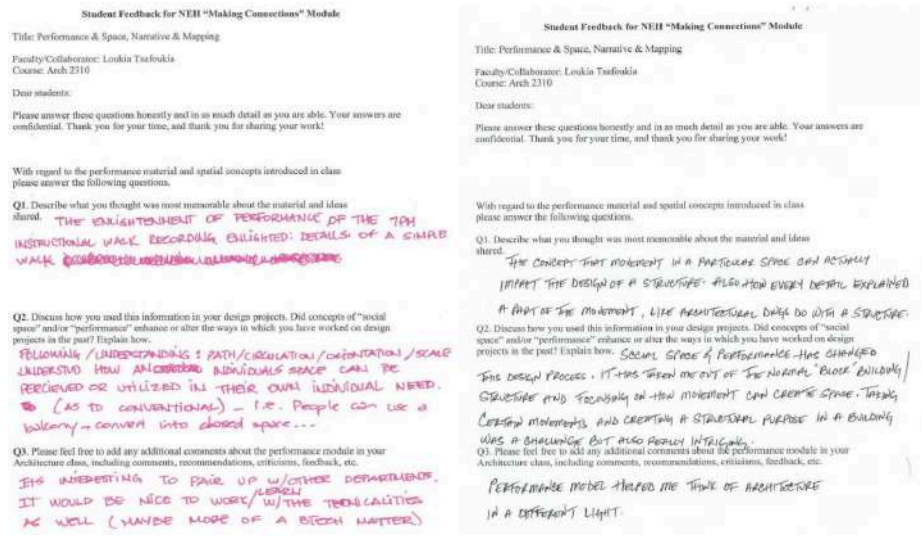
Image 3. 3rd course case study, undergraduate core design studio 3

For the third case study, we designed an educational module that involves interdisciplinary collaboration between the New York City College of Technology department of Humanities and Architecture Technology as part of the NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) grant. It is tested at the third undergraduate core design studio for the six weeks' design project of a dwelling and is co-taught with Severino Alfonso also from the Architecture Department and Christopher Swift from the Humanities Department.

The project, which is based on the research of performative theater, elaborates on a series of mapping protocols leading to a new understanding of a spatial environment and is tested on a scenario of domestication. For the beginning steps of this project students are introduced to the different performance categories of site-specific and immersive theater. *What does "bodied space" mean? What is the difference between abstraction and representation in graphic illustration? How can space be narrativized, or narrative be materialized?* These are a few of the questions addressed.

A questionnaire (image 4) inquiring the students' feedback on this cross pollination of fields informed as to the way the module was received which was very positive. In the beginning steps of this project, students stressed that they changed the way they think about the subject they were studying. They raised issues of authorship and an understanding of architecture from the user's perspective, as opposed to the planner's design.

For this course, together with the most common forms of critique practiced, we also explored the potential of initiating cogenerative dialogues, a reciprocal and dialogical system of assessment in which the



Student Feedback for NEH "Making Connections" Module

Title: Performance & Space, Narrative & Mapping

Faculty/Collaborator: Loukia Tsafoukia
Course: Arch 2310

Dear students:

Please answer these questions honestly and in as much detail as you are able. Your answers are confidential. Thank you for your time, and thank you for sharing your work!

With regard to the performance material and spatial concepts introduced in class please answer the following questions.

Q1. Describe what you thought was most memorable about the material and ideas shared. THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF PERFORMANCE OF THE 7PM INSTRUCTIONAL WALK. RECORDING ENLIGHTED DETAILS OF A SIMPLE WALK

Q2. Discuss how you used this information in your design projects. Did concepts of "social space" and/or "performance" enhance or alter the ways in which you have worked on design projects in the past? Explain how. FOLLOWING / UNDERSTANDING : PATH/CIRCULATION/ORIENTATION/SCALE UNDERSTOD HOW AN INDIVIDUALS SPACE CAN BE PERCEIVED OR UTILIZED IN THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL NEED. TO (AS TO CONVENTIONAL) – I.E. People can use a balcony → convert into closed space...

Q3. Please feel free to add any additional comments about the performance module in your Architecture class, including comments, recommendations, criticisms, feedback, etc. ITS INTERESTING TO PAIR UP W/OTHER DEPARTMENTS. IT WOULD BE NICE TO WORK/LEARN W/THE TECHNICALITIES AS WELL (MAYBE MORE OF A BITCH MATTER)

Student Feedback for NEH "Making Connections" Module

Title: Performance & Space, Narrative & Mapping

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Dear students:

Please answer these questions honestly and in as much detail as you are able. Your answers are confidential. Thank you for your time, and thank you for sharing your work!

With regard to the performance material and spatial concepts introduced in class please answer the following questions.

Q1. Describe what you thought was most memorable about the material and ideas shared. THE CONCEPT THAT MOVEMENT IN A PARTICULAR SPACE CAN ACTUALLY IMPACT THE DESIGN OF A STRUCTURE. ALSO HOW EVERY DETAIL EXPLAINED A PART OF THE MOVEMENT, LIKE ARCHITECTURAL DRAG DO WITH A STRUCTURE.

Q2. Discuss how you used this information in your design projects. Did concepts of "social space" and/or "performance" enhance or alter the ways in which you have worked on design projects in the past? Explain how. SOCIAL SPACE & PERFORMANCE HAS CHANGED THE DESIGN PROCESS. IT HAS TAKEN ME OUT OF THE NORMAL "BLOCK" BUILDING/STRUCTURE AND FOCUSING ON HOW MOVEMENT CAN CREATE SPACE. TAKING CERTAIN MOVEMENTS AND CREATING A STRUCTURAL PURPOSE IN A BUILDING WAS A CHALLENGE BUT ALSO REALLY INTRIGUING.

Q3. Please feel free to add any additional comments about the performance module in your Architecture class, including comments, recommendations, criticisms, feedback, etc. PERFORMANCE MODEL HELPED ME THINK OF ARCHITECTURE IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT.

Image 4. Examples of students' responses to the feedback questionnaire

instructors together with the students, we all actively engaged in collaboration having as an objective to identify and apply positive changes in the studio and the principal learning practices used.

In all three case study courses analyzed, all actors involved have a special interest in shaping design methodologies that respond to emergent design processes while addressing pedagogical concerns. According to DeLa Harpe's analysis of the research on studio assessment, the central element is a focus on the process and the student (2009). Drawing from this idea, this paper touches upon three aspects central to the culture of art and design critique. First, the interconnectedness of different disciplines to create productive hybridizations and an integrated educational community. Second, focusing on the process and third considering issues of authorship. All three of them are vital ingredients in the design of the above-mentioned course case studies (image 5).

Focus is placed on the cross-pollination of different disciplines, faculty and students from various design departments and levels to create an *integrated community*. The theme that generated the basic methodology for all these course case studies cannot be processed under the auspices of a singular discipline. This process seeks to take advantage of a community of designers and collaborators. Accordingly, the interconnectedness of this experience necessitates the participation of many characters.

The notion of process in architecture and design fields is vital and necessary towards the final design product both in the domains of academia and even further within professional practice. The architectural process is meant to be an iterative and incremental approach and it is in the very center of the course case studies presented. While testing scenarios, requirements, constraints, quality and quantity attributes and more, the creator progressively

refines the design and further expands key scenarios in regards to contemporary issues. *"Iteration", "Constraint", "Input", "Methodology", "Systematic", "Objective", "Scenario"* and *"Narrative"* are just a few of the terms inherent to the design disciplines and directly related to the notion of process.

Considering the classroom as a micrography of the society is important to rethink the model of the instructor as the sole *author* of criticism and feedback. Our current students and future professionals, would apply similar models as the ones encountered in the academic design studio in a real client-designer situation, for basic communication of ideas. Rethinking the authoritarian figure of the designer and opening the design disciplines to scenarios of active user participation, design process democratization and user's empowerment is key. Therefore, to achieve these more reciprocal and conversational models of critique in the studio is vital for all of the analyzed courses. One of the central issues of what has primarily prevailed in the "studio culture", should be how to go beyond personal egos and the teacher positioned as retaining all the power. A "critique" should include discussion about the making, looking and thinking, it is thus time to consider alternatives to current models and put a lot of thinking on dipoles such as authority and reciprocity.

I am currently a member of the faculty learning community themed "crit the crit" at Pratt Institute and focused on mapping the ecosystem of critique, its types, formats and processes. This is only a part of a larger personal ongoing research conducted in collaboration with Severino Alfonso.

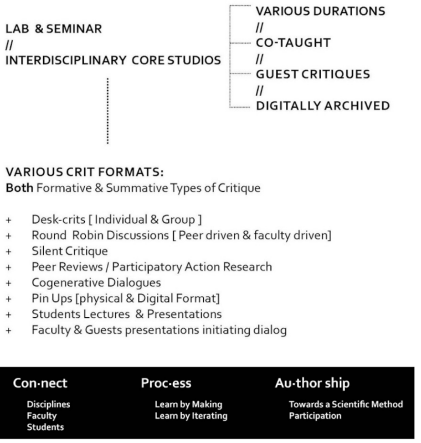

Image 5. Conclusions

We investigate the projectual commonalities that exist in the architectural academia of the northeast megalopolis of the United States; a world design theory "mine" and the most attractive architectural academia "mecca" of the present time. We are looking at the ways in which design is generated today and the ways it is taught. *How do we define a design project today? What is the importance of teaching a project? Is there a common, catholic aim or somewhat fragmented multiple visions intersecting each other?* These are a few of the questions driving this research.

Concluding, this paper aims to share experiences gained, in order to move beyond and further explore hybrid types for both formative and summative assessment. The goal would be to amplify future explorations on faculty conceptions of quality that inform the crit, the pedagogical approach in different art and design fields and students' experiences during the crit amongst others.

Student Voices

Response to Art School Critique 2.0 | Nina Bellisio

The Critique is one of the defining activities of the art school experience. The act of critiquing is an extension of pedagogy, reinforcing the skills of collaboration, critical assessment and cultural context that are at the cornerstone of an arts education. While many perspectives were shared during the Critique 2.0 Symposium, the overlapping issues concerned communication, authority and method – that is, making visible the skills students will need and the skills they will be acquiring during their participation in the activity, acknowledging the underlying power structure of the critique and using it to empower students and preparing students for the breadth and rigor of the endeavor.

Communication

Judith Leemann, in her talk Pragmatics of Studio Critique, (a reference to Paul Watzlawick's *Pragmatics of Human Communication*) discussed the relationship between digital and analog communication and its effect on the critique process. She suggests the critique should begin as a digital communication, providing information and specifics about the work of art: what the surface is like, how color is used, details of scale and format. Once that observational platform has been built, analog communication provides the context through which concept is discerned and content is read.

These two levels of communication can also provide entryway for students with different skill and comfort levels with the process of critique. Students still developing their critical eye can begin by describing the visual elements of the piece being discussed. They can describe without judgment, their words helping other students to fully absorb the artifact that are assessing. Once that is established, the analog level of questioning asks what the piece is saying, doing or changing within the space it occupies. We must constantly thread this meta-information back to the physicality of the art, with the assumption that the work being critiqued is exactly the way the artist wanted it to be.

Authority

In his keynote, Luis Camnitzer spoke of the push and pull between "vertical and horizontal classroom practices": the relationships between student and professor, student and student, student and artwork. The critique, by definition, is a place of critical dialogue but it must be approached with empathy or the authoritarian nature of the traditional classroom will skew the proceedings. As the facilitator, we need to be cognizant of how the critique can further marginalize students that already feel their outsider status. It is also dangerous to share assumptions of common experiences.

Critique for students in this sense can been seen both as a free space for expression and as an opportunity to move beyond their original prejudices about education in general. Conversations occurring within the critique should allowed to be expansive, even if they occasionally stray off-topic, to allow students to become deeply engaged with the process of their own artistic growth. The instructor, after outlining the common criteria for assessment, recedes into a role as facilitator, allowing students to take responsibility for the their critique. Students should be taught to move through the three

phases of observation, exchange and analysis until all involved fully understand the intentionality of the work.

As a tool of self-assessment and a nudge toward improved design through iteration, critique can also be used in an interventionist way with struggling students. The art classroom is one of the few venues in which a student can argue the validity of their ideas. This malleability of "success" can be used to forward an understanding of the growth of their intelligence in general. Recent research in interventionist classroom practices has shown this to be true. Teachers who told students that they believed in the validity of an idea, even while critiquing its merits saw improvement in the overall quality of that students work.[1] This technique uses the critique not only as a way to improve the quality of a specific body of work but to use constructive critical feedback to instill trust between the student and teacher.

Method

1. Start by describing the reaction to artifact or action
2. Make space for emotional responses but guide conversation if it moves away from the work at hand
3. Let students lead (a nod to the power the facilitator implicitly has)
4. Make the structure of the critique obvious- what are you looking to accomplish- is that physically verifiable
5. Give space for self-reflection

While the structure of the critique needs to be visible, the desired outcomes need to be a well. Stuart Bailey, a professor at Parsons School of Design, outlines some of these outcomes in his reader *Towards a Critical Faculty*. Some of his goals for critique are to "educated students primarily towards becoming informed thinkers, ...(to) develop the skill of coherent articulation and to...(push them) towards an observable level of critical sophistication."[2] These goals, to foster a student that can look and think critically, one that can ground those observations in the history of art and can articulate a measured response to what they are seeing and assessing, are the ultimate outcomes of successful critique. These are also the skills that are transferable beyond the art classroom and which add a larger validity to the exercise of critique.

An ideal group of students have the desire, the attention span and the understanding to fully commit to the rigors of an exhaustive critique. But outside of elite art and design programs those students are the minority at best. The broader question becomes, how can you provide and support the acquisition of the skills needed to critique in a population lacking some (or all) of the basic skills of critical assessment? Furthermore, how can you create a neutral space for that critique to exist, shielded from the race, gender and class-based power structure underlying most educational environments? Independent of its import as a venue to assess artwork with the intention of conceptual or formal improvement, the critique is fertile ground to introduce skills of critical thinking and discussion.

According to both research done at Texas State University and Stanford University, students in the 21st century classroom, that is to say Millennials, approach their education with a unique understanding of their own abilities. Many have been sheltered and protected by closely watching parents, giving them a strong sense of confidence in their abilities coupled with an inability to learn from failure. Fixed-mindset theory suggests

that many of them view their intelligence as stable rather than fluid, preventing them from trying things they assume they are "not good at" while navigating towards skills and activities they are comfortable performing.[3,4] These characteristics become a barrier to authentic and rigorous critique and must be addressed concretely in introductory art curriculum then be built upon and utilized in upper-level courses.

Some techniques presented both at the colloquium and in the supporting literature provide scaffolding for the discussion and assessment of artwork. Alternating small group, individual or written feedback and full-class critique allows for students with learning styles or preparation to participate in different arenas. More self-conscious exercises such as assigning roles (the "critic", the "supporter, the "observer") allow students to depersonalize the experience. "Sandwiching" negative feedback between positive allows the student critiquing the opportunity to provide assessment along with support. Technology can also be utilized to support the critique beyond the walls of the classroom. Blogging is a technique frequently used as a pre or post-critique, with students adding their responses to work posted on a website. These techniques become the stepping-stones for more robust critiques in future classes and provide students with some skills to look and think more closely about the artwork by alleviating some of the pressure of speaking in a group. Many students also believe they are the only ones feeling pressure or discomfort at their level of preparedness, and these exercises give an alternate structure to the critique in which the strongest or most confident student receives the majority of the attention.

Critique in the 21st Century, Critique 2.0, can and is used to forward many of the skills necessary to succeed in art school and the larger art community. It can also be used an agent of change to bolster the skills of struggling students while leveling the power dynamics of the classroom. It promotes protracted engagement with artworks and supports iterative making practices. It forces students to put work into a larger cultural context and to critically assess its success within that context. Through the panels and presentations at the Symposium a greater understanding of the power and problems associated with critique was outlined. In myself and, hopefully others, it generated a richer understanding of the practice of critique and all its implications for art students.

Endnotes: [1]Kirp, David L. Nudges That Help Struggling Students Succeed. New York Times, Oct. 29, 2016.

[2]Bailey, Stuart Towards a Critical Faculty; On the Future of Art School Symposium, USC Roski School of Fine Arts, 2007.

[3]Newton, Roselynn M. Critique 2.0: Embracing the Technological Shift to Reach Out to the Immediacy Generation; Design Principles And Practices: An International Journal, 2010.

[4]Dweck, Carol S. Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. Random House. 2006.

Reflections on the Art School Critique 2.0 Symposium I Dahye Kim

The Art School Critique 2.0 symposium helped me to look back at my teaching and educational experience and think of an effective teaching curriculum along with a critique—one that corresponds to current art culture as well as students' needs today.

Many contemporary artists often consider *thinking* as a part of art, more important than creating a work of art in physical form. And critique becomes an effective tool to strengthen a concept by looking at a work from different perspectives, by questioning and answering about visual elements but also about the issue of identity, gender, environment, politics, everyday life, and the artist's personal emotion. In this way, critique helps art students reflect their own thinking, encompassing the area between one's philosophy and the visual presentation.

Experience I

One of my students, Chloe, who went to art school in Korea, is currently preparing to apply to an MFA program in the U.S. She started studying art in middle school and took art history, art theory, and studio classes in Korea, yet she has mainly focused on visual presentation. Her work shows a professionalism in its technique, yet she feels that thinking of concepts is challenging for her. She asked me, "what would be the process of constructing the concept?"; "in what way can I put together a concept for the work?" I replied, "First, think deeply about what you really want to express and what you want to deliver to others through your work, and then think of a way to connect your idea to the presentation." I understand that it wouldn't be easy to apply this simple logic, especially to one focused only on creating art visually. It would be difficult for her to switch that thinking process. Through the use of Q&A, I am trying to get her to connect her interest to the work, considering many other approaches. Yet I feel that what she needs now is experiencing more group discussions or critiques to build up a stronger concept. And I told her, "You will get an intensive training in an MFA program to think deeply through the discussion and critique. But try to spend more time thinking than creating for a while." Chloe is now looking for a way to improve her work both visually and conceptually through the MFA program.

Experience II

I came from a science background originally and started my art major in the U.S. I took foundation, advanced, and theory classes here. So I have considered the concept very important for creating art. However, the foundation courses that I took usually focused on learning only about visual elements—such as balance, symmetry, shape, form, perspective, and light. In fact, the *thought process* was not focused on much at all in my foundational classes. Although I studied art in the U.S., my experience in the beginning was actually very similar to Chloe's; my learning in college started with visual forms, so it was not easy for me to think about the idea before putting together a work at first. I tried to use my own thinking for my work, yet the concept was not strong during my undergraduate years, and I experienced somewhat harsh critiques in the advanced classes. And I was confused for a while, considering how to connect my idea to a visual presentation. I questioned myself what art was.

After I entered an MFA program, which combined fine art and criticism, I experienced intensive group and individual critiques. Not only did I discuss my work with my colleagues during the group critique, I had to meet all 25 faculty members at least once every semester for an individual meeting critique. It was such an overwhelming experience, yet it helped me shape my thinking with the opinions and feedback from many different perspectives. I remembered the first question I was given by a professor during the individual critique, "how is your work connected to the history of art and our current time?" I couldn't answer him clearly at that time and I was embarrassed. Another professor asked me, "how can viewers understand your idea through your presentation?" It was actually a hard question for me because I had never done my work to consider the viewer's viewpoint until that time, and it shifted my view towards my work for the first time. Later, I wanted to open up a discussion in class by asking, "in what way can we balance creating a work with interesting visual elements and communicate with viewers more clearly?" I posed this because a lot of artwork today is very abstract, and viewers don't understand what they are looking at. As an artist, this is still my ongoing question, and I feel many current MFA students would ask the same thing. My 3-year MFA program was, in fact, all about questioning and answering, shifting my position this way and that, and I learned a lot through harsh discussion and critique. At this point I think that a good artist is a good reflective thinker, not a maker. And I appreciate my recent precious experience to become a better thinker.

One of the speakers, James Moyer, talked about the relationship between art and philosophy [thinking]: "philosophy attracts fine art and fine art has become a form of philosophy." I deeply resonated with this line of reasoning because I've been thinking myself that art and philosophy have become parallel today. I think that philosophy could be an act of trying to solve an abstract puzzle about a part of the universe; logically, through reflective thinking. Similarly, art would be an act of trying to code an abstract idea to visual language, through its own logical system. Recently, I took a philosophy class by Prof. Jochum at Teachers College, and it helped me immensely to deeply ponder theoretical concepts to understand art education as well as to create my own work, considering different perspectives by many historical and current philosophers. I believe creative art making requires critical thinking skills. This is because students need to analyze their ideas or concepts to develop their work. They need to interpret the significant parts of the work and use them to convey the meaning of the work to others. Therefore, I think that it would be better for students if philosophy [the teaching of thinking skills] could be incorporated into the art curriculum on all levels to enhance students' critical thinking skills.

Another speaker, Liselot van der Heijden, demonstrated a strong relationship between critical thinking and contemporary art making in the classroom. Heijden spoke of critique as the most valuable learning method for art students, showing her students projects which have influenced a critique of the environment. Although her students were undergraduates, their work was very advanced in various interdisciplinary forms, including sculpture, performance, and design. The professional component involved each presentation representing

their critical ideas expanding the limitations of art making. It seemed that Heijden's students were able to improve their creativity, reflecting on their own thinking by sharing viewpoints with others during critique. I thought Heijden's presentation with her students' work was a good example of effective learning through the development of intellectual abilities and skills, also found in *The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*; creating ("*producing new or original work*") being the top value in the process of learning, closely related to levels of analyzing ("*drawing connections among ideas*") and evaluating ("*judging and critiquing on the value of materials and methods of the work*").[1]

Figure 1. Updated Bloom's Taxonomy

Contemporary art is inclusive of various art forms, from traditional drawings, paintings, and sculpture to more recently developed interdisciplinary approaches and multi-media using technology. I think, therefore, that the role of art educators, especially in the studio setting, is very important today. Art educators have a responsibility to deal with "critical, creative, and self-reflective thinking"[2] through discussion and critique, allowing students to connect visual elements and ideas more cohesively. This is because contemporary art is getting more abstract, departing from a logical concept. Of course, art doesn't necessarily need to be a logical thing, but it's necessary that students think more critically to prepare for professional art fields that are in constant flux.

During the symposium, I was thinking what would be a good teaching plan to help students become better artists/thinkers in the 21st century. In what way can we help them build their own thought processes to nurture creative ideas, as well as avoid work having too much priority visually? Some upper division art courses in undergraduate and MFA programs include critique and discussion in the curriculum. Yet, there are still not many foundation courses employing critique that help students improve their critical thinking and creativity through the discussion. Foundational art courses should also be developed with a stronger curriculum towards critiquing skills, so that they provide students with a better environment to start "thinking" in the early stages of learning about art.

I came up with several ideas for an effective critique process for the classroom, even in the foundational courses:

1. Educators need to let students know why they are doing a critique. And students need to understand that the main objective of a critique is to improve the work by shaping it into a more concrete idea, not to point out the weaknesses of others with only negative opinions.
2. Educators need to help students find a conversational flow with a proper context for the development of the work.
3. For undergraduate classes (including the foundation course), students may not have much experience in critiquing; therefore, it would be helpful if educators could provide guidelines with an ordered list so that students.

4. Discussions should be guided to improve on students' aesthetic sense, analyzing many visual elements and content through their own logical thinking.
5. It would be important to allow students to analyze works, comparing and contrasting with other approaches or concepts so that they can think of the visual presentation from different perspectives.
6. Critique should be placed encouraging students' creativity by commenting based on their need to solve the visual problem more critically, yet avoiding delivery of too many subjective opinions.
7. It is most important to allow students to discover their own motivations, and to understand their strengths and weaknesses from constructive feedback.

Thinking II

As I was deeply immersed in this symposium, I felt like this was an ongoing large piece of art, shaping the thinking of all of us. It was similar to the scene from the video called, "*Subject of Study*" by Ulrike Grossarth, which Barbara Putz-Plecko showed at the beginning of the symposium. All participants of the symposium were actually re-arranging elements of critical thinking for a creative art classroom in the 21 st century. And this work allowed me to develop a better understanding of the roles of the critique and to think of a way to build an effective art curriculum. I also enjoyed sharing my observations and thoughts about the relationship between creating work in the art classroom, philosophy, and thinking through critique with educators, artists, and other students at the end of the symposium. Nowadays, the boundaries between art and other majors are being blurred, and many lines move towards the interdisciplinary approach. In turn, I think these conversations are much more valuable today, not only suggesting a better direction in the art world but also affecting other disciplines through the thinking of art. I appreciate that I was part of this collaborative piece of the larger puzzle, and I think that this will be another chapter in the history of critique for future generations.

Endnotes: [1]https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy

[2]Lipman, M. (2003). Thinking in Education (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Art School Critique Symposium | Catherine Lan

The Art School Critique Symposium at Teachers College in Fall 2016 focused on the question of whether critiques, which are a significant learning model where students present their work to a group for discussion and assessment, are still necessary due to recent changes in the learning landscape, that include collaboration, online classrooms, and student-oriented teaching practices. The short presentations, panels, and workshops comprised were divided into three sessions: Art as Critique, Critique as Collaboration, and Critique as Pedagogy. I was particularly drawn to discussions about self-reflection, awareness, unlearning, deactivating the teacher's authoritarian role, the completeness of an artwork, and dematerializing our assumptions and values. As an artist and a teacher who has studied at art institutions in China, France, and the United States, I will also recapitulate various aspects of critiques from personal experience.

Self-Awareness and Self-Reflection

Critique is a form of constant reflection and self-reflection that requires analytical awareness of one's thought process in order to gain critical understanding of one's work. A good critique is an ongoing back-and-forth, natural, and horizontal dialogue that continuously examines and reexamines the process of creativity and re-creation, and identifies potentials and problems between the maker and the maker's self, teachers, and students, as well as the larger audience and the work itself. As Camnitzer (2016) noted, "Critique should not become a ritual, but the natural dialogue that satisfies the needs of the same educational process." Critique should not be in a vertical form, where the teacher takes an authoritative position. Critique is also the bare openness of confronting and reassessing banal, naïve or unimaginative works and concepts. The identification, reflection, re-examination, and self-destruction stages of the work process allow artists to experiment with strategies of making and presenting, enhance critical thinking, and reconstruct and revive self-awareness in order to achieve an elevated level of creativity and complexity.

Through an inquiry-based method, students can be trained to become familiar with self-inquiry, brainstorming of ideas and meta-thinking, and thinking about one's own "critical or creative thinking" (Kent, 2001, p. 19). Premnath (2016, cited in Spivak) discussed "unlearning one's leaning and unlearn one's privilege" (p. 29). To unlearn also means to eliminate the maker's judgments, pre-assumptions, and aesthetic values; this require training in awareness and reflection. A group critique is thus a space for constructive conversations, continuous exchange, and experiments of new possibilities and concepts.

In my previous graduate schools, I experienced both vertical and horizontal forms of critique. Although vertical critique may impede creative learning, it can be useful for the acquisition of art foundations and techniques, such as observational drawing/painting, anatomy, printmaking, calligraphy, and photography. In these cases, the modes of creating, learning, and teaching rely heavily on learning specific techniques especially from previous masters before actually creating a work. The most valuable form, however, is between horizontal and vertical forms of critique to introduce

students to various resources and techniques that will help them develop their thinking of how to work creatively. Essentially, not knowing how to hold a steady camera results in shaky pictures; not knowing how to mix colors or use precise vocabulary hinders the ability to think conceptually and explore a medium experimentally. While it is possible to simply give students all the resources they need, proper guidance, demonstration, and training would greatly help them develop as they age with efficiency and improvement. Although many artists collaborate with other disciplines or hire others to carry out their work, students lack the opportunity to collaborate or hire. Thus, learning the nature of a medium and its specific techniques, concepts, and foundation provide them with a solid foundation that will enable them to develop future collaborative efforts.

Critique is also a form of communication to help others understand the artist's message. Self-reflection during the creative process pushes students to probe their own actions and choices in a continuous inquiry: How does the work correspond to what I want to say? When do I consider an artwork finished? Critical thinking even happens at the point when a student decides to stop working on a project. Student-centered learning and exploration are forms of critiques that push students to consider whether their meaning, concept, and presentation of the work are unclear, too simple, too poetic, too banal, and so on. Self-reflection stimulates and sharpens a student's awareness and thought process, allowing them to articulate ambiguity and arbitrariness. They can repeatedly learn to ask themselves the most fundamental questions: *what, how,* and *why*.

Elimination of Student/Teacher Roles

I am struck by Camnitzer's (2016) stark observations on how elite schools tend to focus more on potential stars, thus creating a negative culture when artists becomes famous. The narrow stance that "everything we do is art" only fosters an authoritarian stance in education and undermines a more balanced approach. It is thus important for art teachers to be constantly aware of their own. Not surprisingly, the innovative works of many established artists were created before they became famous; after their celebrity, their works often became repetitive, mechanical, or uncreative. Nevertheless, artists become teachers not only because they are passionate about art, but also because they are talented in teaching about art. Art teachers must situate themselves carefully in a balanced way between their dedication to others' development and professional self-expression. Because what art can be is open to many interpretations, the nature of the teaching profession today can easily make teachers commit increasingly to the administrative aspects of their job, thus losing their connection to the art world and numbing their critical attention to their own art work, much less the work of their students.

In a critique, teachers need to be honest, supportive, and trustworthy for the students to form a sense of community, given that the school is a space to nurture and build friendships. Clear communication should be built between teachers and students and encouragement should be provided to orient students to find their own voice. Given the unsettling shifts that can occur in determining criteria for aesthetics and value, teachers should not be judgmental about their students or their work. The

goal is not to impose ideas and tell them what to do; rather, it is to guide them to find their own directions, strengthen their capacity, sharpen their critical thinking, and maximize their potentials. Teachers should eliminate assumptions, judgments, and authoritativeness, while students should be presented with opportunities to be their own teachers of each other in a classroom. As teachers nurture an independent space in which students can discover their unique directions, they can give students a path to train together with their own peers while building their individual resources.

Critique as Pedagogy

Students should be immersed in a multi-discipline, free, and safe learning environment. Such a critique as pedagogy emphasizes a greater awareness on minds, thoughts, and bodies by fusing diverse sensory exercises involving theater, dance, sound, touch, and experimentation with varied materials. Dewey's (2005) proposition of learning through experience and learning through projects can help students understand and deepen their knowledge. It is crucial to include hands-on projects that are coupled with critiques, in conjunction with lectures that are linked to class discussions and writings in order to create a platform for conversation. Given the prevalence of interdisciplinary art and sensory exploration in contemporary art, schools would benefit from inviting experts from various fields, namely artists, curators, musicians, designers, architects, even perfume makers, to collaboratively work with the students for one-week workshops that culminate in a public presentations at least twice a year.

Rhonda (2016) talked about the idea of becoming another identity as a creative force, such as asking students to "become" a computer screen. The theme of becoming is a very direct way of interpreting various lines and movements of our bodies. Incorporating the body into art also includes teacher demonstrations, which are direct and efficient ways to show students how to learn techniques and methods; demonstration can also generate motivation and positively influence students' actions and attitudes.

Together, these three forms of critiques (art as critique, critique as collaboration, and critique as pedagogy) involve various aspects of form and methods that require awareness and self-reflection. These are the elimination of self-centered release of emotions, the teacher's role, celebrity/authority stance, and imagination of becoming another being. An awareness of self-critique helps to build community and ameliorates the quality of group critiques. The switching and balancing of teaching methods and identities will benefit both parties, and finally the larger public.

Conclusion

The Symposium helped me to think more critically as an artist, a teacher, and a student. Self-cultivation is one important component of an artist in order to increase awareness of self-reflection and self-critique, and transforming the teaching/learning pedagogy and artist/teacher/student role into a more horizontal form that will generate trust, honesty, and togetherness. Madoff (2016) spoke about the ethics of critique and asked how we can be together as beings to form a cultural community. The horizontal form also generates a balance of experimentation, exploration, and imagination in all foundations and techniques. These tools can be used imaginatively and reinvented through

critical thinking. Without consistent and constant self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-cultivation, an art teacher's mind and work can regress and become less productive, provocative or powerful. One solution is for art teachers to incorporate their art expertise into education (and even vice versa), motivating students to ask probing questions during critiques. As Camnitzer stated, "Once the moral land between discourse and non-discourse was blurred, the notion of systemization had to be revised. Maybe art now could be taught, and if it couldn't, neither could anything else." Art education is continually facing overwhelming challenges from economic, societal, and global arenas, it is important that teachers be firm in their own commitment to art and education. When they practice and demonstrate creative thinking, selfless teaching, and charismatic being,-students become positively influenced, properly guided, and truly inspired in their learning.

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Agency and Critique: Choosing Critical Dialog | Doran Massey

Throughout this symposium I was looking for ideas that related to my own research interest of balancing scaffolding and learner agency in education. While trying to listen to all of the points raised in the conference talks, presentations and discussions, my thoughts focused most on issues relating to educational environmental structure and its interaction with learner agency. In art education, learners are constantly making choices in their works. Much of the information delivered at the conference contained ideas for different types of art critique, their various goals, and strategies and techniques to arrive at those goals.

Freire (1984) said that there is no education without dialog and that those who share a limit situation must liberate themselves from their limit situation. They cannot be liberated by the charitable actions or giving of those who do not share in their limit situation. In my experience there are often more similarities among art students than between those students and their professors. According to Freire (1984), teachers (and professors) must share in the student's limit situations in order to help them liberate themselves. Some ideas for doing this in critiques, through dialog and sharing of experiences, are described in the following quotes, starting with this from Robert Armstrong (National College of Art and Design):

> *My greatest worry in crits is when I realize that most of the conversation has been from the tutors. I have, on occasion, heard myself and colleagues holding court on hobby-horse topics, and I know it is surely a delusion to think that students do not also recognize this when this is happening. Student engagement*

in the process is essential, and tutors must listen to what is being said by them (as cited in Rowles, 2013).

That last sentence is especially salient. It shows students and tutors engaged in a two-way conversation. It also reminds me that student agency, or the ability of the student to choose within the course, is an important component in "student engagement", as I have noticed in my own teaching and in readings on the topic of agency in education.

The following quote from Seán Cummins (Nottingham Trent University) carries the idea of conversation and agency into one of greater equality:

As a staff team, we have had quite complex conversations about what we think ought to go on in those sessions and how best to facilitate discussion, which means that the staff try not to speak a great deal or lead the conversation. Quite consciously we are trying to say that all of us are equally present in the room and that what each person has to say is relevant (as cited in Rowles, 2013).

The idea is for the teacher to abandon the role of the expert. In a similar vein, but with more vibrant language, Jessica Wexler referred to this Gloria Steinem quote during her presentation:

What I've learned is that unless it's an emergency, like a fire or brain surgery, hierarchy is not necessary and may be damaging. If you have a hierarchy, you're repeating the strengths and weaknesses of one person without allowing for the accumulative strength of a group (Steinem, 2016).

The accumulative strength of the group that comes from the separate and various input and processing of information by the individuals of the group. Then brought together, networking their ideas back and forth around the group potentially creating new hybrid ideas and perhaps even new ideas with no obvious roots in previous inputs or processing.

Going even farther from hierarchy, Baseera Khan encourages students to disobey. But I hope not so much as to disrupt the accumulative strength of a group which can include the distributed knowledge of that group. That knowledge is shared and grown through conversations that occur both within the group and with people outside the group. These conversations can become problematic if there is too much rancor and tensions run too high. From Peter Day (University of Wolverhampton) in the readings:

Peer-to-peer sharing of information and support is incredibly important. An aspiration of the crit is to engender and improve that and build a community that eventually becomes self-supporting. By year three the lecturer becomes less important because the group is developing its own ideas and its own personality (as cited in Rowles, 2013).

As one symposium participant put it, this is thinking through dialog, thinking with you, and thinking through my body. Dan Serig in his neuroscience related presentation, stated that our brains are influenced by our bodies, emotions, the bacteria in our bodies, etc. Our physical cells change when we learn and teach. These influence our thoughts. Thus group critiques increase the complexity of feedback loops with both external (social interactions), and internal (physiological, inertia and influence of past experience, learning and assumptions). Which at least theoretically, would increase the richness and fullness of the learning experience.

The goal is to help students' self-actualization, to become better learners in the world by becoming skilled at dealing with complex feedback loops. What I was surprised that did not get attention was the influence of the

institutions to which the groups belong. I did not hear anything about the diminishing importance of the academy's physical structures (buildings) and geography (place). The readings did include some discussion of place and surroundings on critiques. In my own teaching, I am usually limited to a few choices or sometimes only one choice of place to hold critiques. Perhaps others at the symposium share this limit situation with me and it did not get discussion time because it is a problem that is much easier to adapt to or work around than it is to try to change.

Jessica Wexler's comments about form being a concrete vehicle for understanding the metastructure of process and agency made me think. I'm not entirely clear on the relationship between process and agency, but I believe it is worth researching literature on it. Then Jessica Wexler said that the student's art is agency and that her job is to help them navigate to agency. They may want to talk about fluff, topics that may not be germane to the class or assignment. Even so, she engages with them on that, letting the students lead the conversation. She said that she helps them contextualize the fluff. My understanding of Jessica's statements was that the fluff becomes learning material. This material is used to engage the student in a way of their choosing to help them learn techniques, processes and critical thinking. This idea could be included in the following quote by Miraj Ahmed (Architectural Association/ Cambridge University): "A good crit is actually a conversation. It's talking around something, through something, with something" (as cited in Rowles, 2013).

Sohee Koo and Laura Scherling, in their co-presentation titled "Studio Critiques: Tactile and Digital Inquiries", said that they also think of critique as a conversation. They benefited from their experience co-teaching a course by sharing ideas and enriching each other's teaching. I really liked when a high school teacher at the symposium said that if you give students the power to ask their own questions then they organize themselves.

However, Jim Hamlyn (Gray's School of Art) seems to have a different idea of critique discussions:

> *Crits are discussions around an artwork, usually produced by a student. They are an opportunity to discuss a whole range of issues, meanings, associations, references, metaphors, problems, processes and principals of fine art practice. They can range into all sorts of different areas: politics, psychology, history – you name it really! That is why they are so fascinating. But they are predominantly guided by the work that is made and brought in (as cited in Rowles, 2013).*

This relates to some of the discussion at the symposium about the need to try to model the Creative process. For critique, the critics make observations regarding the work without input from the artist who takes notes then comes back next week with that artist's' thoughts and original intentions for their work. Then the artist compares that with their notes from the critique.

The readings also contained related ideas to deal with the question of when and how much the artist should discuss their work during the critique process. One such idea that came up during the symposium is art as problem based learning, art work as a problem. Any scaffolding being reduced as soon as possible.

Joyce Yu-Jean Lee talked of artists figuring things out through art creation and critique. With both art creation and critique part of a cycle, bringing up images of the feedback loop discussed earlier. Jean-Paul

Pecqueur referred to a similar idea as commentary that births the art work. He likes to have the people doing the critique make a cold reading, with no input from the artist until one third of the way into the critique. Loukia Tsafoulia mentioned critiques as performative installations with the emphasis on participation. Ideally this promotes the student's' intuitional capacities to rewrite their thoughts and remake forms The question of how to evaluate student work in such a collaborative environment, where critique and art works inspire and drive each other, was talked about by Hanny Ahern. She suggested that we ask students why do we do critique? These ideas are reflected in this quote from Stuart MacKenzie (Glasgow School of Art):

> *Actually listening to and hearing what is said in a crit is really important. That allows them to stand back from whatever it is that they have done and equips them with the powers of critical awareness (as cited in Rowles, 2013).*

Listening is important to Christoph Kaltenbrunner's idea that critique is interplay - back and forth. In order to listen, there must be speaking to hear, especially speaking from students.

In order to encourage students to speak and share their ideas, how do you make them comfortable during critique? How do you help students take responsibility for their own learning and critique? These are a couple of the questions raised in Saturday's panel discussion as well as the readings. One answer is that an honest and truthful critique is kind. We can learn as much, if not more, from those who disagree. Though that disagreement should be presented gently with kindness. It can be helpful to show love for a person and develop some connections with them before telling them something that they may not want to hear. Hopefully at the end of the critique all participants will be stimulated to want to make work.

My biggest impression of this critique symposium was the focus on critique as dialog and the importance of careful listening to that dialog. I heard many ideas for ways to balance scaffolding and student agency. It was useful to hear such a wide range of ideas and processes for critiques. There is certainly a lot that deserves greater reflection. Especially the highlight comment of the symposium for me: critique involves speculation. I think of speculation as a creative activity that involves both reflection within and dialog with others.

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Towards a Critique Culture in New Media Art Education | Zhenzhen Qi

The Critique 2.0 Symposium serves as an urgent reminder that in today's world, critique remains a rare forum to discuss a whole range of issues, representations, meanings, associations, references, metaphors, problems, and processes. Starting from artistic experiences shared within educational environments, it naturally ventures into a wide array of areas: politics, culture, society, psychology, history, and science. With more students from non-art backgrounds actively seeking chances to participate in art critique, it poses new opportunities as well as challenges to academically trained art teachers. It calls for art educators to be more aware of each student's unique background, modes of learning, power dynamics, and to choose from a variety of formats of critiques: inside or outside of the curriculum; acknowledgement of knowing and unknowing; private or public; vertical or horizontal; broadening imagination or reducing boundaries; aggressive nurturing or constructive resistance. For students coming from studio fine art backgrounds, their needs for critique are also expanding above and beyond how to create a great piece of art into being effective thinkers and collaborators, building communities, and straddling divides. We also start to see that through critical dialogues happening in various new media art classrooms, technology is being exposed to matters of representation, aesthetics, and style. Through perpetual questioning and answering, art and technology are joining forces to enable an ongoing movement of "un-securing," "revealing," "unleashing," and "dismantling," creating an opening for new, exciting dialogues and exchanges. Inspired by the rich and diverse perspectives and practices shared during the Critique 2.0 Symposium, I would like to reflect upon my own background and experience and propose some ideas for nurturing critique culture in new media and computational art education environments.

Integration

In today's new media art classrooms, practices of art, design, and technology are naturally involved in every stage of students' learning and practice. What used to be perceived as independent issues, such as teaching and learning, art and design, ideation and execution, are becoming increasingly intertwined. While design is mostly motivated by the best visual solution to specific problems, art is more concerned with continuous formation of self through exchanges of experiences. In order for critique to be truly informative in an integrated arts learning environment, it's important to reveal the process of deconstruction and reconfiguration of an idea through granular levels of interconnected forms, and to be very explicit about the criteria applied to each specific aspect. The teacher can help the student focus on one specific aspect of their creative workflow at a time and make sure assumptions made about ideation, design, and execution have all been thoroughly considered in isolation before moving on to the integration phase of the project.

In today's education environments, use of technology is primarily driven by a heightened sense of vocationalism (Kay, 2003). In a Digital Interactivity class I teach, I ask all students how they first heard of the

class and what they want to learn in the class. One honest but troubling answer is, "I can get a better job if I know how to program." Technologies have been used to shop online and manage production, but they are also starting to enable platforms that facilitate interaction, participation, and collaborative intelligence. The field of computation is urgently awaiting for a tipping moment, upon which teachers, parents, and students will no longer see it as a tool, but an artistic medium (McLuhan, 1964). Just as how every historical moment of scientific breakthrough owes to new audacity of imagination (Dewey, 1938), art educators possess unique creative strength to reinvent the future of computation as an art medium, and art critique could be a powerful forum for brainstorming how art and technology can jointly provide disalienating experiences for societies that are desperately in need of healing (Perini, 2010).

Establishing a critical culture between art and technology sometimes requires a sense of openness towards the process of negotiating various positions which may not seem intuitive upon first look. Coding, to a large extent, is about hacking– exploring possibilities of alternative modes of collaboration through the intervention of digital norms and conventions. Through repeatedly making and breaking without anticipating specific outcomes, each student establishes a unique creative process, which systematically disrupts and results in an unexpected outcome. These new practices result in new experiences that surprise us upon first look. They inspire us to question assumptions, speculate reality, and make us more aware of the medium, structure, and dynamics within which we create and relate to one another.

Perception

In digital art classes, an increasing amount of artwork is not presented in the form of a self-contained object. It tends to take on the form of participatory driven, collaborative interplay, with the creator and audience distributed equally at either end of an artistic exchange, rather than a monologic exhibition setting (Rodenbeck, 2011). Instead of audiences contemplating objects by themselves, digital, interactive, and networked objects can often be presented as part of a collective performative gesture. Instead of sole creators, artists are increasingly playing the role of facilitator, orchestrating intellectual exchanges through artistic experiences executed procedurally by digital computational devices. In new media art classrooms, to think about presentation is to think about this new permeable, dynamic relationship between artist and audience, and help students adapt to this new decentralized mindset. My colleague Catherine Behar teaches a capstone class where all the students spend an entire semester producing individual artwork, jury, and curate their own exhibition at the end of the semester. Besides making and discussing work they produce individually, students also collectively write calls for submissions, make promotional flyers and materials, and are given feedback on ideation, execution, presentation, and final documentation of their works. The final exhibition takes place inside the library building and is spread out on four floors. Students are responsible for deciding a sub-theme for each floor and a unified theme for the final exhibition. Students who have gone through this process have described it as transformative. They experience a shift into a collective, new-situationist-oriented (Rodenbeck,

2011) mindset that breaks away from over-determined boundaries.

We live in a time and space where complex artistic experiences could no longer be represented by a single set of standards of evaluation. However, after undergoing rigorously structured tactical education in high school, it can be very challenging for undergraduate students to ease into the lack of authority in digital art classrooms, where intervention and disruption are not only encouraged, but remain important modes of practices for clarifying assumptions and making new connections. Being confronted with ambiguity will help students become aware of the strengths and limitations of one's own voice, which ultimately makes it possible to acknowledge and appreciate a multitude of perspectives and develop the intellectual strength to reject divisions between over-determined boundaries, such as art and technology, high and low culture, creator and audience. Instead of evaluation about static objects, the focus is on revealing a larger system at play, which includes objects, experiences, encounters, exchanges, and ultimately helps students to "develop the capacity to see more and appreciate more" (Tyson, P4, 2006) in every encounter. Art Education, therefore, stops being a preparation, but a process of living (Dewey, 1938).

Voice

When students work individually on a piece, they often zoom in and try very hard to recreate a singular image inside their heads of what they want to express, and can easily lose sight of what another pair of eyes might see. When a group of peers regularly spends time and attention on each other's work, talk about each work from different perspectives, and bridge the gap between various positions and approaches, eventually students become capable of identifying issues in their own work, with or without hearing these different voices. Critique helps students get into the habit of deconstructing and questioning granular aspects of their own practices and remind themselves of both the value and the limitations of every method of viewing the world (Tyson, 2006). However, sometimes it could also be helpful for teachers to lend students the creative strength to resist the urge to overly rely on external feedback. Even though constructive feedback can be informative for future ideation, the things most deeply close to our hearts are rarely products of conscious explanations. As much as critique is helpful, it should not be mistaken as the ultimate drive to make art.

Motivation

Relationships built over time based on trust and support, rather than fixed standards of evaluation, allow for an atmosphere of free exploration and risk taking. The ability for the teacher to clearly identify beliefs and be flexible about breaking some standards to expand on ideas initiated by students can motivate students to claim ownership of learning experiences. During the beginning of the semester, jointly critiquing course structure and learning objectives can encourage students to challenge assumptions, negotiate beliefs, and engage with evaluating their own work upon a set of expectations that's jointly determined by teachers and students. In both my own studies and classes that I teach, I noticed that Pass/Fail, instead of letter grade assessment, helps students feel safe to incorporate new materials such as electronics and coding, which can be very scary to work with for the

first time. When letter grades are given, so much attention is focused on deadline and grades, and students are much more likely to make something that they already know will invite positive feedback. Today's digital and computational art classrooms often exhibit a wide range of confidence levels among the students coupled with a range of motivations to work with new materials. It's important that critique in new media art classes takes into account the unique background and training each student has had in the past and acknowledges the personal growth over the course of the class, independent from how other students in the same class perform.

Conclusion

Critique has its own strengths as well as limitations. It is great for clarifying faulty interpretations, but not so great for improving lack of general understanding. It calls for teachers to be patient, which oftentimes means meeting the students at their level of understanding. It's important that a structure is in place to help students develop critique skills gradually throughout the entire semester. Effective critique begins with an objective description of the student artwork and carefully scaffolds layers of connection, builds relations, and makes meaning. Effective critique should be guided by the work that is made and brought in, with teacher and student engaging in the art of observation before entering verbal exchange. Critique is analytical and generative, individual and collective. It allows for reflective experimentation with "new ways of seeing, being, and relating" in societies that are "desperately in need of healing" (Perini, 2010). It has great potential to contribute towards multidisciplinary learning environments above and beyond art and art education, and remains an effective tool to reflect upon other disciplines such as design, science, and technology.

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Biographies

Hanny Ahern

Hanny Ahern is an interdisciplinary and media agnostic artist and educator based in New York. Both her artwork and pedagogical approach seek to connect viewers or students back to themselves toward an empowered experience while seeking loopholes and dodging pigeon holes. She has worked with various audiences on collaborative projects in India, Kenya, UK, New York City high schools and the Hudson Valley. Most recently Hanny has been co-founding Powrplnt, a teen run free art and computer lab in Bushwick as well as initiating a teen education program at Dia Art Foundation. She has exhibited work globally and was recently featured in the Guardian for developing an emotional growth app in the name of art. She holds a B.A. from Bennington College and a Masters degree from NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program.

Beatriz Alburquerque

Beatriz Alburquerque received her Master of Fine Arts from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is completing her Doctoral of Art & Art Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. Awards include the Breakthrough Award for the 17th Biennial Cerveira; Myers Art Prize Award from Teachers College and the Ambient Performance Series from PAC / edge Performance Festival, Chicago. She is the author of Video Games + Glitch = Learning: Video Games Vs. Teachers.

Joseph Basile

Joseph Basile is Associate Dean of Liberal Arts at the Maryland Institute College of Art. He has a BA from Boston University, and an AM and PhD from Brown University. As an archaeologist Basile has excavated in the US, Greece, and Italy, and was Associate Director of the Brown University excavations at the Great Temple in Petra, Jordan. As an art historian, his research focuses on "hybrid" art in antiquity, the reception of Classical sculpture, and the intersection of archaeology and art practice. In 2013 he co-edited, with Susan Waters-Eller, Beyond Critique, dealing with the multiplicity of approaches in art college critique.

Nina Bellisio

Nina Bellisio is an Associate Professor of Visual Communication at St Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, NY. She holds a BFA from Cornell University and an MFA from the University of California, Berkeley, both with a concentration in photography. She joined the faculty at St. Thomas Aquinas College in 2011 after teaching art and design for 10 years at the Art Institute of California-San Francisco where she won the Dean's Award for Excellence in the Area of Teaching.

Judith M. Burton

Judith M. Burton is Professor of Art and Art Education and Director of the Art and Art Education Program, Columbia University Teachers College. Her research focuses on the artistic-aesthetic development of children and adolescents and the implications it has for teaching and learning. Dr. Judith Burton co-founded the Center for Research in Arts Education at Teachers College, and she founded the Heritage School, a comprehensive high school located in Harlem, New York. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts in Great Britain, a Distinguished Fellow of the Na-

tional Art Education Association, and serves as Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Central Academy of Fine Arts Beijing, China. Judith Burton is a trustee of the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. She received her EdD from Harvard University.

Cristina Cammarano

Cristina Cammarano is assistant professor in the Philosophy Department at Salisbury University, where she teaches courses in philosophy of education and social and applied philosophy. She received her PhD in philosophy and education from Teachers College, Columbia University, in 2012. Her research interests concern the practice of philosophical thinking both in K-12 settings and as a part of the education of teachers; liberal education in view of cosmopolitan theories; philosophies of dialogue and of translation; and the role of the aesthetic experience in education.

Luis Camnitzer

Luis Camnitzer is a Uruguayan artist who lives in U.S.A. since 1964. He is a Professor Emeritus of Art, State University of New York, College at Old Westbury. He received Guggenheim fellowships in 1961 and 1982. In 2011 he received the Frank Jewitt Mather Award of the College Art Association. In 2012 he was awarded the Skowhegan Medal and the USA Ford Fellow award. He represented Uruguay in the Venice Biennial 1988. In 1999 he was one of the coordinators of the exhibition Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin. In 2007 he was the Pedagogical Curator of the 6th Bienal de Mercosur. His work is in the collections of over forty museums. He is the author of: New Art of Cuba, University of Texas Press, 1994/2004; Arte y Enseñanza: La ética del poder, Casa de América, Madrid, 2000, Didactics of Liberation: Conceptualist Art in Latin America, University of Texas Press, 2007, and On Art, Artists, Latin America and Other Utopias, University of Texas Press, 2010.

Maureen Connor

Maureen Connor's work combines installation, video, interior design, ethnography, human resources, feminism, and radical pedagogy. Current projects include Discon-tent, a series of community events in NYC that considers the human story behind certain medical advances, particularly how they impact the poor, people of color and women and Labor Relations, a collaboration with Wroclaw Contemporary Museum, Poland which continues the work of Personnel, her ongoing project about democracy in the workplace (since 2000), and the Institute for Wishful Thinking (IWT) the collective she co-founded in 2008. She is Emerita Professor of Art at Queens College, CUNY where she co-founded Social Practice Queens (SPQ) in 2010 in partnership with the Queens Museum.

Eduardo Benamor Duarte

Eduardo Benamor Duarte received his Masters in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University and his PhD in Architecture from IST – Universidade de Lisboa. He is an Associate Professor at the Rhode Island School of Design where he teaches design studios and seminars with an emphasis on the creative process for making in full scale. In 2009 he founded his studio working on the design and production of objects, and spatial environments at large. Eduardo Benamor Duarte was awarded by numerous institutions including the Ministério da Cultura, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and FCT Fundação Ciência e Tecnologia.

Severino Alfonso Dunn

Severino Alfonso is a New York-based architect, educator and researcher. He received his MS in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University and holds an MS in Urban Design from ETSA Madrid where he is currently a PhD candidate. He is the co-founder of PLB Studio based in New York. He has lectured at the GSAPP, the Environmental Health Clinic at NYU, the Pratt Institute and at the NYCCT. He coordinates design studio courses at Parsons, at Barnard College and at Pratt Institute. He also teaches Building Technology and Advanced Digital Fabrication seminars at Pratt Institute, at NYCCT and at NYIT.

Michelle Fornabai

Michelle Fornabai is a conceptual artist, sometimes mistaken as an architect, whose medium is architecture. Trained as an architect, her work explores "malpractices," translated literally from the German kunstfehler as "art mistakes," in conjunction with architectural "standards of practice," de lege artis in Latin, "according to the rules of the art." Her malpractices seek to elicit poetry and paradox from pragmatics by making mistakes.

Tara Geer

Tara Geer is a drawer. She has a BA and MFA from Columbia University. Her drawings are in the collections of the Morgan Museum, the Parrish Museum and the Harlem Children's Art Fund. She's had solo shows in LA and in NY, and exhibited at Jason McCoy, Tibor de Nagy, Glenn Horowitz, Steven Harvey, Aran Cravey, Flowers, the Four Seasons, and The Drawing Center registry. There are 2 books about her work; Carrying Silence: The Drawings of Tara Geer; and New York Studio Conversations. She has been teaching drawing for 3 decades –recently to poets at the Homeschool, doctors at Yale Humanities in Medicine, and at Teachers College. She is a co-principal investigator on Harnessing the Power of Drawing for the Enhancement of Learning funded by the National Science Foundation. She received the Loius Sudler Prize and the Joan Sovern prize.

Erol Gündüz

Erol Gündüz is a New York City based artist and educator who works with 3D printing technology to transform virtual designs into real world sculptures. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) from Syracuse University with a focus on 3D design and sculpture, his Master of Science (MS) in Digital Imaging and Design from New York University Center for Advanced Digital Applications, and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Art and Art Education (EdDCT) with an emphasis on studio teaching from Columbia University. As an educator, Erol Gündüz teaches studio art courses that focus on the intersection between 3D design, digital fabrication, drawing and additive clay sculpting.

Liselot van der Heijden

Liselot van der Heijden is a member at *The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts* and has gallery representation in Chelsea, in addition to being a tenured associate professor in the department of Art and Art History at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), an "ivy" of state colleges. Liselot teaches BFA degrees to Visual Art majors in Fine Art, Lens Based Art and Graphic Design and BA degrees to Art Education majors. Before teaching at TCNJ, Liselot was an adjunct assistant professor at *The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art* and at Pratt Institute.

Jesse Jagtiani

Jesse Jagtiani is a German artist and educator based in New York City. Currently she is a doctoral candidate and studio art instructor in the Art and Art Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University. She received her diploma from the University of Arts Berlin (UDK), and her MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (SMFA). Jagtiani is a co-founder of the media production company Rundblick.tv based in Berlin, Germany. Presently she is the director of the Myers Media Art Studio at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her artwork has been exhibited nationally and internationally. — Students: Zhenzhen Qi, Juan Carlos Santos Andrade, and Evy Yiran Li.

Richard Jochum

Richard Jochum is an Associate Professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, in the Art and Art Education Program and a studio member at the Elizabeth Foundation of the Arts in New York. He has worked as a media artist since the late 1990s with close to 200 international exhibitions and screenings. Richard received his PhD from the University of Vienna in 1997 and his MFA in sculpture and media art from the University of Applied Arts in Vienna in 2001. He recently was a Creative Resident at the Harvestworks Technology, Engineering, Art and Music Lab. His art practice is accompanied by research into college art teaching and learning, creative technologies, and art as a social practice.

Baseera Khan

Baseera Khan is a New York based artist. Her visual and written work focuses on performing patterns of emigration and exile that are shaped by economic, social, and political changes throughout the world with a special interest in decolonization processes. Khan is preparing for her first solo exhibition at Participant Inc., New York City (2017). She is currently in the BRIC Biennial, Brooklyn, NY (2016) at The Weeksville Heritage Center. She was an International Fellow in Israel/Palestine through Apexart, New York City (2015), and an artist in residence at Process Space LMCC (2015). Khan is currently an Artist in Residence at Abrons Art Center, NYC and part-time faculty at Parsons, The New School for Design. She received her M.F.A. at Cornell University (2012) and B.F.A from the University of North Texas (2005). More info: www.baseerakhan.com.

Dahye Kim

Dahye Kim is an interdisciplinary artist and educator based in New York City. She is currently a doctoral student in the Art and Art Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University. She earned her MFA in Graduate Fine Art at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, California. Her pedagogical interests include new ways of teaching with the collaboration of art, design, and technology in the foundational art curriculum.

Joshua Korenblat

Joshua Korenblat is an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at SUNY New Paltz, where he teaches information design and illustration. Joshua has an MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Art from the Maryland Institute College of Art, an MA in Teaching from Brown University, an MA in Writing from Johns Hopkins University, and a dual-degree BFA and BA from Washington University in St. Louis. Professionally, Joshua has seven years

of experience at National Geographic Magazine and Science News. Joshua is also a co-founder and Art Director at Graphicacy, an information graphics and data visualization firm, based in Washington, DC.

Catherine Lan

Catherine Lan (b. 1980, Taipei, Taiwan) is currently a first year doctoral student at Teachers College, Columbia University. She obtained MFA from Yale University School of Art (2009), Artist Diploma and Post-Diploma from National Higher School of Art in Paris, (2006, 2007), and Bachelors from Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing (2003). Since 2010, she has been working as a teaching artist at the Center for Arts Education in New York.

Dorothea Lasky

Dorothea Lasky is the author of four books of poetry, most recently ROME (W.W. Norton/Liveright, 2014), as well as Thunderbird, Black Life, AWE, all out from Wave Books. She is the co-editor of Open the Door: How to Excite Young People About Poetry (McSweeney's, 2013) and several chapbooks, including Poetry is Not a Project (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2010). Currently, she is an Assistant Professor of Poetry at Columbia University's School of the Arts, co-directs Columbia Artist/Teachers, and lives in New York City.

Eunji Lee

Eunji Lee is a doctoral student and 2D Studio Fellow in the Art & Art Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University. She earned her B.F.A and M.F.A in Painting & Printmaking at Ewha Woman's University, Seoul, Korea, and M.A. in Arts Politics, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. She is interested in infusing artistic experiences to diverse public audiences. She is currently teaching youth groups at New York City public libraries, incarcerated young adults at Rikers Island, and a material-based studio course to future certified art teachers at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her research focuses on artist-led contemporary art practices that promote interactive learning with the audience.

Joyce Yu-Jean Lee

Joyce Yu-Jean Lee is an artist working with video, installation, and performance in New York City. Lee is the recipient of a 2016 Creative Engagement grant from Lower Manhattan Cultural Council; a 2013 Franklin Furnace Fund grant; and a 2013 Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award. Lee holds a M.F.A. from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania. She currently teaches at the Fashion Institute of Technology and New Jersey City University, and serves as a trustee for The Contemporary museum in Baltimore.

Judith Leemann

Judith Leemann is an artist, educator, and writer living in Boston. She holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is Associate Professor in Fine Arts 3D/ Fibers at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Translating ideas and methodologies through and across distinct arenas of professional practice, she looks for ways to move studio teaching methodologies into other contexts and to interrupt classroom habits by bringing in carefully curated noise.

Ellen K. Levy

Ellen K. Levy, PhD, is currently Special Advisor on the Arts and Sciences at IDSVA, and she was President of the College Art Association (2004-2006) before earning her doctorate from the University of Plymouth. She received her diploma from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston following a B.A. from Mount Holyoke College in Zoology. Levy has had numerous group and solo exhibitions, in the US and abroad, including the New York and the National Academy of Sciences. Her honors include an arts commission from NASA (1985) and AICA award (1995-1996), and she was Distinguished Visiting Fellow of Arts and Sciences at Skidmore College (1999), a position funded by the Luce Foundation. She has published extensively on complex systems.

Pooneh Maghazehe

Pooneh Maghazehe has exhibited works and collaborative performances at ZKM Center for Art , Beijing 798 Biennale, Newark Penn Station, DePaul University Museum, ICA Philadelphia, and ICA Portland. Select publications include Flaunt Magazine, The New York Times, Art Asia Pacific Magazine, Art Map Magazine, and Contemporary Practices. She holds an MFA from Columbia University and MS in Interior Architecture from Pratt Institute. Maghazehe has worked in the field of architectural design for the past 11 years. She owns and operates the interior design firm LM // PM Productions LLC and teaches at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore.

Eric Mason

When Eric Mason picked up a camera for the first time in sixth grade, he sparked a passion. Although his fascination with photography was new, his creative edge was not. He has always had a knack for making things. In the vein of his favorite photographer, Thomas Struth, Mason prefers urban landscapes over human subjects. He enjoys finding the beauty in seemingly mundane objects. Mason has come a long way from using a Canon AV-1 35mm to snap photos in middle school. He has since earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in photography and a master's in printmaking. He served for several years as an art school administrator before enrolling at Columbia Teacher's College. He's now a second-year art education doctoral student.

Ashley Mask

Ashley Mask is a doctoral student in Art and Art Education at Columbia University, Teachers College. She also works as a museum educator in several NYC museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum. Previously, Ashley was the Manager of Visitor Experience and Access Programs at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York City and the Education Director at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art in Colorado. She received an MFA in Photography from the University of Delaware and has taught fine art and arts for social change on the collegiate level since 2003. She also holds an MSEd in Leadership in Museum Education from Bank Street College and a BFA in Sculpture and Photography from the University of Montevallo.

Doran Massey

Doran Massey is an adjunct professor at Kean University and an EdD student at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is a media artist with a background as an engineer and researcher in interactive television, software and media technology.

Ruth Mateus-Berr

Ruth Mateus-Berr is an artist, researcher, designer, and professor at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Her conceptual artwork engages with contemporary challenges such as environmental, social and political issues. Recent works focus on environment, dementia, ageism, health, urban change, democracy, racism, right-wing populism, migration, postcolonial criticism and strategies for interdisciplinary collaboration. Presently, she is Professor at the Institute of Art Sciences and Art Education, Institute of Art & Society, at the Department of Social Design and Head of the Department for Didactics in Art, Textile, and Design. She is an active member of the Design Research Society, The International Society of Education through Art (INSEA) and the research committee of Sensory Studies. Recently, she has served as an external evaluator for the EU Program P7, Marie Curie Multi-ITN project 'TRADERS'

Rachel McCain

Rachel McCain is a lecturer at SUNY Purchase College in Westchester, NY. She currently teaches a variety of writing courses as well as a senior capstone course, and is also the Visual Arts Coordinator of the Summer Youth Program at Purchase College. Rachel holds an MFA in Writing and is an Ed.M candidate in English Education at Teachers College.

Sean McCarthy

Sean McCarthy (b. 1976 in San Antonio, TX) received his BFA in Studio Art from the University of Texas at Austin and his MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale University. His paintings, drawings and artist's books have been exhibited internationally. He has given lectures and critiques at Yale, RISD, MassArt, and Pratt. He is currently Associate Professor and Chair of the Art Department at Lehman College/CUNY (on Fellowship Leave 2016–17).

Janet L. Miller

Janet L. Miller is Professor, Department of Arts & Humanities–English, Teachers College, Columbia University. Honors: elected (2010) a "Fellow" of American Educational Research Association for "sustained achievement in education research;" AERA's Division B (Curriculum Studies) Lifetime Achievement Award (2008); Society of Professors of Education Award (2015) for "outstanding contributions to the study of education." Elected offices: AERA Vice President, Division B (1997-1999); President, American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (2001-2007); Founding Managing Editor, JCT: Journal of Curriculum Theorizing (1978-1998). Forthcoming books: Curriculum Collaborations: Communities without Consensus; Maxine Greene and Education (both Routledge). Other single-authored books: Sounds of Silence Breaking: Women, Autobiography, Curriculum (2005); Creating Spaces and Finding Voices: Teachers Collaborating for Empowerment (1990). Co-editor, with Bill Ayers, A Light in Dark Times: Maxine Greene and the Unfinished Conversation (1998).

Curtis Mitchell

Curtis Mitchell lives and works in New York. He received his MFA in Sculpture from Yale University School of Art. Mitchell has shown in New York, Los Angeles, Germany, France, Italy, London, Seville, Budapest, and China, among others. His work is included in several important collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New

York, the Walker Art Museum, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Mattress Factory, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. He is the recipient of many prestigious awards including the Foundation for Contemporary Art, Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation Grant, and the Pollack Krasner Foundation. Mitchell is known for his manipulated and distressed photographs. His recent exhibitions Personas, have been an ongoing series of video installations consisting of looped video clips from canonical films like The Godfather, A Clockwork Orange, and Pulp Fiction. Mitchell is represented by Martos Gallery in New York.

James Moyer

James Moyer received a PhD in English from Princeton and an MA in philosophy from the New School for Social Research. He has published on film theory and the poetry and art of William Blake. He teaches literature and philosophy at Moore College of Art and Design and The Curtis Institute of Music, both in Philadelphia.

Zahra Nazari

Zahra Nazari (b. 1985, Hamedan, Iran) lives and works in New York City. Her large-scale abstracted and architectonic paintings and installations are based on the ruins of historical sites in Iran in conjunction with modern architectural forms. Nazari was a recipient of The AIM Fellowship from the Bronx Museum; Mentoring Program from New York Foundation for the Arts; Artist Residency Fellowship from Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art and Visiting Artist Fellowship from the Cooper Union School of Art in New York City. She has exhibited both nationally and internationally in galleries and museums such as China Millennium Monument and Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art.

Amanda Newman-Godfrey

Amanda Newman-Godfrey received her B.A. from Bryn Mawr College, and her M.A. with Certification in Art and Art Education at Teachers College Columbia University, where she is currently an ABD Doctoral Candidate. Over the past 21 years, Amanda has worked as an art teacher, school arts supervisor, not-for-profit arts education administrator, and full-time faculty member in art education. In 2014, she joined Moore College of Art and Design as full-time Assistant Professor in Art Education, and oversees the undergraduate and post-baccalaureate programs with certification. She is a landscape photographer and jewelry designer.

Saul Ostrow

Saul Ostrow is an independent critic, curator and Art Editor at Lodge, Bomb Magazine and founded in 2010, the all-volunteer non-profit organization Critical Practices Inc. Prof. Ostrow was Chair of VisualArts and Technologies at the Cleveland Institute of Art (2002-12). His writings have appeared in numerous art magazines, journals, catalogues, and books in the USA and Europe. Since 1987, he has curated over 70 exhibitions in the US and abroad. He was Co-Editor of Lusitania Press (1996-2004) as well as the Editor of the book series Critical Voices in Art, Theory and Culture (1996- 2006) published by Routledge. Ostrow has also been engaged in two collaborative projects. From 2008- 12 he worked with the artist, Charles Tucker theorizing a quantifiable "systems-network" by which to analyze art-works. From 2010-14 he worked with the Miami based artist Lidija Slavkovic, on a project which consists of an a series of catalog and exhibition projects and unfinished text under the collective titled, An Ambition.

Lynn Palewicz

Lynn Palewicz joined Moore in 2012 as Assistant Professor and Chair of Foundation. She received her BFA and MAT from the Maryland Institute, College of Art and her MFA from Yale School of Art. Additionally, she attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2002. Palewicz makes photographs based on models she makes of her family living room. Using conventions of photography she re-presents this familiar space as something both real and artificial, evoking the uncanny. Her work has been exhibited widely, nationally and internationally. As an academic, Palewicz has presented in and chaired numerous panels across the US.

John Peacock

John Peacock (Harvard B.A., anthropology; Columbia PhD, comparative literature) has been an Andrew W. Mellon Fellow, Senior Fulbright Lecturer, and grantee of the American Philosophical Society. He's taught at MICA since 1986, in the Rinehart School of Sculpture (where he is critic in residence), the Hoffberger School of Painting, the Post-Baccalaureate Fine-Art Certificate Program, and the Department of Humanistic Studies, where he teaches Native American Studies. Enrolled in North Dakota's Spirit Lake Dakota Nation, his writing in Dakota has appeared in "American Indian Quarterly" and "Studies in American Indian Literature." His writing in English has appeared in over forty publications.

Patricia C. Phillips

Patricia C. Phillips is author of Mierle Laderman Ukeles: Maintenance Art (New York: Prestel, 2016), Ursula von Rydingsvard: Working (New York: Prestel, 2011), It is Difficult, a survey of the work of Alfredo Jaar (Barcelona: Actar Press, 1998), and editor of City Speculations (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996). From 2002-07, she was Editor-in-Chief of Art Journal, a quarterly published by the College Art Association. Her curatorial projects include Disney Animators and Animation (Whitney Museum of Art, 1981), The POP Project (Institute for Contemporary Art/P.S. 1, 1988), Making Sense: Five Installations on Sensation (Katonah Museum of Art, 1996), and City Speculations (Queens Museum, 1995- 96). She is co-curator of Mierle Laderman Ukeles: Maintenance Art (Queens Museum, 2016-17). She has held academic appointments at Parsons School of Design, SUNY New Paltz, Cornell University, and Rhode Island School of Design. She is Chief Academic Officer at Moore College of Art & Design in Philadelphia.

Lucio Pozzi

Lucio Pozzi was born in 1935 in Milan, Italy. After living a few years in Rome where he studied architecture, Pozzi came to the United States in 1962, as a guest of the Harvard International Summer Seminar. He then settled in New York and became a US citizen. He now shares his time between his Hudson (NY) and Valeggio s/M (VR, Italy) studios. Pozzi, a "secretly subversive artist," is a pioneer in working across different media and approaches which often coexist in the same show. In 1978, Pozzi's early videotapes were exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in one of the first single-artist exhibitions of the Projects:Video series. In the same year Pozzi exhibited landscape watercolors in the "temple of Conceptualism," the John Weber Gallery in New York, the same space where a few months before he had presented a

giant installation of walls and photographs. He has continued setting up his Provocation Shows in public museums and private galleries, such as a three-gallery show in New York (Leo Castelli, John Weber, Susan Caldwell) in 1984, followed by exhibitions at University of Massachusetts, in Bielefeld, Karlsruhe, and at Studio Carlo Grossetti (Milan). In today's art world many artists have embraced a multiplicity of media and genres in their practice. Considering this, Pozzi's transdisiplinary practice which consists of abstract and representational painting, constructing photographic entities, producing performances, building installations and making videotapes has made his work more relevant than ever. His work has been presented at Documenta 6 (1977) and at the Venice Biennale (U.S. Pavilion) in 1980. He occasionally writes and has taught at the Cooper Union, Yale Graduate Sculpture Program, Princeton University and the Maryland Institute College of Art, and other art schools in the US and Europe. His art is represented in many collections of international museums and private institutions.

Sreshta Rit Premnath

Sreshta Rit Premnath (born 1979, Bangalore, India) works across multiple media, investigating systems of representation and reflecting on the process by which images become icons and events become history. Premnath is the founder and co-editor of the publication Shifter and has had solo exhibitions at venues including The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis; Galerie Nordenhake, Berlin and Art Statements, Art Basel. He completed his MFA at Bard College, and has attended the Whitney Independent Study Program, Skowhegan and Smack Mellon. He has received grants from Art Matters and the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, and was awarded the Arthur Levitt Fellowship from Williams College.

Barbara Putz-Plecko

Barbara Putz-Plecko is an artist and professor at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Since 2007 she has been Vice Rector of the University, responsible for research in the sciences and the arts. She is head of the Institute of Studies in Art,Theory and Art Education and also heads the Department of Art and Communication Practices and the Textile Department. One of the focuses of both departments is the development of contextual, transdisciplinary and transcultural art practices and work, dealing with artistic strategies in communities and systems. Artistic Critique, Pedagogy & Judgement AFTER the Social Turn.

Zhenzhen Qi

Zhenzhen Qi is a new media artist and educator. As an art educator, she believes in the importance of building a trusting relationship, that enables students to challenge assumptions, question believes, imagine and invent a voice that's authentic and creative.

Rhonda Schaller

Rhonda Schaller is an artist, author, educator. Author of Create Your Art Career (2013/Allworth Press) and Called or Not, Spirits are Present (2009/Blue Pearl Press), and Mindful Eye: Transformative Pedagogies in the Visual Domain (chapter 10, expected late 2016). A Visiting Associate Professor and Director, Center for Career & Professional Development at Pratt Institute, founder of the Meditation Incubator project; Director, Schaller + Jaquish Art Projects; Founder, Create Meditate. Cofounder of

Ceres Gallery, NYC and was a board member/faculty of the New York Feminist Art Institute. Permanent collections include Memorial Art Gallery University of Rochester & Dartmouth University Medical School.

Dan Serig

Dan Serig is Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Massachusetts College of Art and Design where he was previously Dean, Chair and an Associate Professor. He presently spends most of his time writing the MassArt self-study for reaccreditation. Research interests include curriculum design, assessment, metaphor, material culture, and artistic research. Published works are in several art and design education journals. He is an editorial board member of "Visual Inquiry: Teaching and Learning in Art." Serig received his doctorate from Teachers College – Columbia University in 2005. He has also taught Pre-K – adults visual arts and design in public and private schools in the U.S. and China.

Gregory Sholette

Gregory Sholette is a New York-based artist, writer, activist and founding member of Political Art Documentation/Distribution (PAD/D), REPOhistory, and Gulf Labor Coalition. His publications include Delirium & Resistance: Art Activism & the Crisis of Capitalism (forthcoming Pluto Press, 2007 with a preface by Lucy R. Lippard), It's The Political Economy, Stupid co-edited with Oliver Ressler (2014), Dark Matter: Art and Politics in an Age of Enterprise Culture (2010). Along with an upcoming solo exhibition at Station Independent Projects opening January 7th, 2017 his recent installations include Imaginary Archive at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania and Zeppelin University, Germany, as well as the Precarious Workers Pageant performance procession in Venice, Italy, 2015. Sholette is a PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam in the History and Memory Studies Program, a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program in Critical Theory, an Associate of the Art, Design and the Public Domain program at the Graduate School of Design Harvard University, and a recent Andrew W. Mellon Fellow at the Center for the Humanities at the Graduate Center, CUNY, as well as Associate Professor in the Queens College Art Department, CUNY, where he helped establish the new MFA Concentration SPQ (Social Practice Queens).

Dimitry Tetin

Dimitry Tetin is a teacher, artist, designer based in the Hudson River Valley. He is an Assistant Professor at SUNY, New Paltz. In his professional design practice, he works on publication, web, identity, motion and environmental design projects for clients in the commercial and non-for-profit sectors. In his multimedia publishing practice he engages public and personal archives to create narratives that examine how interaction between space and language shapes conceptualization of places and histories. Majority of his publications exist across several print, video and web formats.

Loukia Tsafoulia

Loukia Tsafoulia is an architect, educator and researcher. She received her MS in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University with a fellowship from the Gerondelis Foundation. She obtained her professional degree and 1st Masters in Architecture from the NTU Athens where she

is currently a PhD candidate. She is the co-founder of PLB studio in NY and teaches and coordinates courses as an adjunct Assistant Professor at Pratt Institute, Parsons, City College SSA, and NYCCT. She coordinates the yearly student publication series, serves as a member on students admissions committee and is a scholar of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

Susan Waters-Eller

On MICA's faculty since 1978, Susan Waters-Eller has won the Trustees Award for Excellence in Teaching three times and the Unity Award in 2009. She has lectured on the relationship of art to emotions in diverse venues ranging from an International Art and Technology Conference to a group of prisoners at Maryland House of Corrections. Her paintings are included in Contemporary American Oil Painting, published by Jilin Fine Arts, People's Republic of China. Her writing can be found on her blog, http://seeingmeaning.blogspot.com.


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