FATE IN REVIEW FOUNDATIONS IN ART: THEORY AND EDUCATION
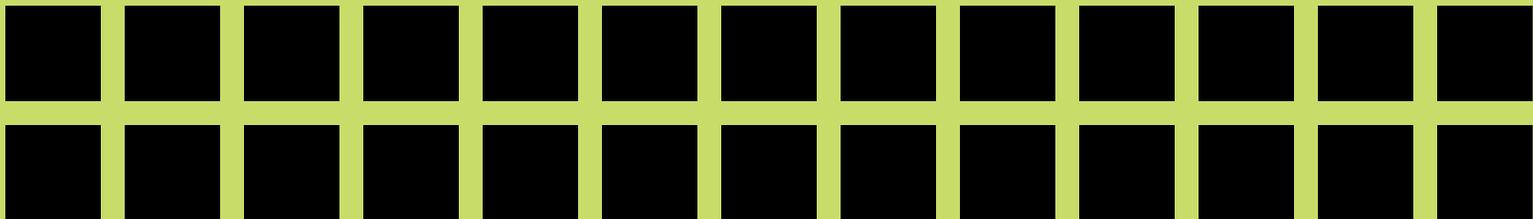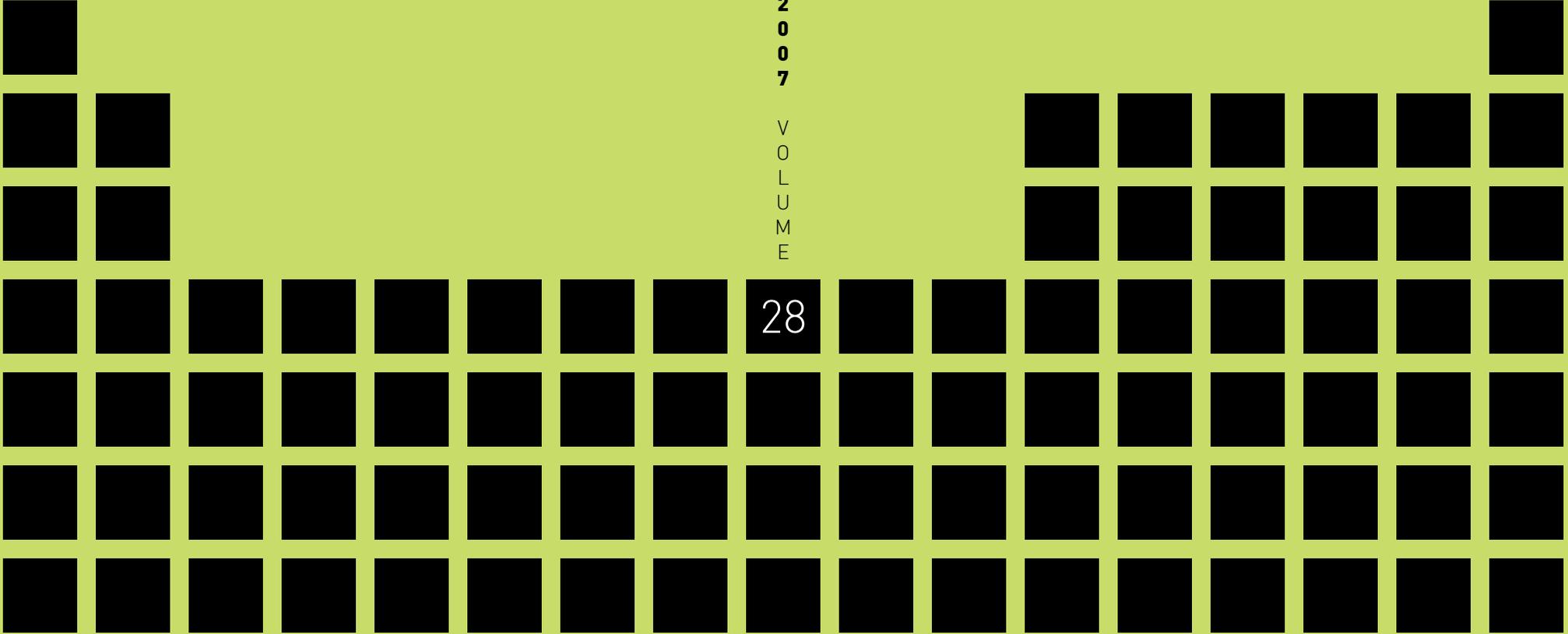
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Articles

Approaches to Postmodern Art-making

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This article is a straightforward and accessible introduction to major ideas, attitudes, and approaches influencing postmodernist artmaking.[1] The article introduces theory through art examples that can be found in a library and on the Internet. What follows can be used to motivate art-making and for analyzing recent art. The concepts overlap, and many of them are active in single works of art and artifacts of visual culture produced both by individuals and groups. In what follows, postmodernism is sometimes explained by contrasting it to modernism, but these two predominant ways of thinking about art co-exist today and influence one another, and what follows is not an attempt to reduce complex ideas of each to over-simplified either/or understandings.

Escaping the Confines of Museums
An integral part of the art world is the art museum. Robert Smithson made *Spiral Jetty* and other earthworks, in part, to circumvent museums and galleries. He wrote this skeptical view of museums:
"Museums, like asylums and jails, have wards and cells—in other words, neutral rooms called *galleries*. A work of art when placed in a gallery loses its charge, and becomes a portable object or surface disengaged from the outside world. A vacant white room with lights is still a submission to the neutral. Works of art seen in such spaces seem to be going through a kind of aesthetic convalescence. They are looked upon as so many inanimate invalids, waiting for critics to pronounce them curable or incurable. The function of the warden-curator is to separate art from the rest of society."[2]

Other artists, such as Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer, attempt to reach audiences beyond those that visit art galleries and museums by placing their works in public venues. Kruger has placed her pieces internationally, in different languages, on billboards, the outsides of buses, and on tee shirts, matchbooks, and handbags. Jenny Holzer first displayed her now famous *Truisms* on photocopies that she pasted to walls in the SoHo district of New York City. She continues to display work in public spaces.

Christo and Jean-Claude created *The Gates* in Central Park, New York City, in 2005, a project they began in 1979. Nine hundred financially compensated workers participated in the preparation, display, and removal of the project. As Christo and Jeanne-Claude have done for their previous projects, they maintained their creative independence from museums and galleries by financing the $21-million project by selling preparatory studies, drawings, collages, and scale models. They donated merchandising rights for *The Gates* to a charitable foundation for the park. They accepted no sponsorship or money from the city.

Collapsing Boundaries Between "High" and "Low"
Postmodern artists seek to collapse boundaries that are important to modernists. Modernist artists generally elevate art to a special, independent, and autonomous sphere

of its own, asserting that true art transcends ordinary life. They believe art is "high art" and above the things experienced in "low culture." For example, modernist theorists such as Clement Greenberg disdain "kitsch," a term derived from the German word meaning "trash." Modernists use "kitsch" to label what they consider cheap, tasteless, and tacky things often associated with middle- and lower-class visual preferences: Elvis paintings on velvet, lava lamps, and knick-knacks of all kinds. Beginning with Pop Art in the late 1950s, some artists began to erase the boundary between high and low art by using popular images in their work—comic book images, Campbell's soup cans, Spam, hamburgers and French fries, gas stations, celebrities, and so forth.

Currently, many artists are drawing upon popular culture as a source for their imagery and artistic ideas. Jeff Koons is known for making "kitschy art," a contradiction in terms for modernists. Koons is often associated with his monumental sculpture *Puppy*, made of live flowers, which has been installed worldwide, including Rockefeller Plaza in New York City. Koons's "Banality" series consists of enlarged reproductions of small popular objects such as statues of saints, cartoon animals, Hummel figurines, busty women, naked children, and a souvenir doll of pop singer Michael Jackson.

Takashi Murakami, a contemporary Japanese artist who splits his time between Tokyo and Brooklyn, combines Japanese *anime* images, *manga*, high *couture*, Japanese Nihon-ga paintings of the 19th century, and influences like Andy Warhol's Factory and Walt Disney animation. His work references religion, subcultures, and art history. An important "low-art" aspect of Murakami's work is its commercial nature: many of his pieces are sold as mass-produced consumer items.

Rejecting Originality

Modernists value and promote the notion of the artist as genius, which is reflected in the artist's originality of thought and expression. In pre-modern times, artists were anonymous contributors to their communities. In modern times, values shifted and the individual artist became honored as a champion of authentic and free personal expression. Postmodernists question the concept of originality in art, and they are suspect of the possibility of being original. They claim not to hold originality as an aesthetic value.

Rather than attributing the work of art to an individual artist, as modernists do, postmodernists think of artworks as "texts." A work is singular, speaking in one voice, that of the artist, which leads the viewer to look for the artist's (singular) meaning. A text, however, implies that any artwork is not the product of a free and unique individual, but rather a field of citations and correspondences. Postmodernists believe an artwork is a confluence of many voices that speak, blend, and clash, and that culture, more than the individual, influences the image.

Many current artists, including Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince, Haim Steinbach, Chapman brothers, Damien Hirst, and Nikki Lee, have replaced the notion of originality with the notion that all art is derived from other art and that everything new is influenced by things past and present. As artist Joyce Kozloff observes, "All artists lift from everything that interests them and always have—from earlier art, other work that's around, or sources outside art."[3] Such a realization liberates artists from the demand to be original and unique, and in their newfound freedom they can quote and borrow from other sources while adding their own imprints and insights.

Jouissance

Jouissance is a French word meaning pleasure and enjoyment, with sexual overtones. *Jouissance* can be considered a postmodernist equivalent to the modernist concept of aesthetic experience. *Jouissance*, in postmodern usage, refers to a viewer being so lost in a work of art through intense pleasurable involvement that self-awareness and objective distance are lost. Modernist "aesthetic experience," however, requires a *distanced* and *disinterested* view of an artwork. For Immanuel Kant, it is not even caring if the object exists. The two approaches to artworks differ, and the differences hinge on postmodernists' close personal engagement (*jouissance*) and modernists' distanced and disinterested aesthetic appreciation. Postmodernists question the possibility and desirability of disinterested engagement with art and life. Postmodernists' engagements with and through art include political and social engagements.

Working Collaboratively

In pre-modern times, artists often worked collectively. In modern times, individual contributions were honored. In postmodern times, some artists are returning to collaborative working methods. For example, six young Pakistani artists, trained in traditional miniature techniques, are making small works based on exquisite 16th century Indian illustrated books made for the emperor with hand-ground pigments on handmade paper, that depict age-old tales of love, war, religion and political power. The young artists also work in miniature with handmade paints and papers, but they add collaged photographic images, stencils, and rubber stamps. Rather than working in one collective studio, they work individually across the globe, and send their jointly made paintings back and forth to each other between Melbourne, Chicago, Lahore, and New York City. One artist begins an image on a sheet of paper and mails it to someone else who continues working on it before sending it to someone else. The contemporary group of artists has a spiritual purpose in their collective art making: they are responding peacefully and creatively, in contrast to the worldwide rise of political and religious aggressive violence following September 11th, 2001.[4]

Appropriating

Appropriation is a direct and clear challenge to modernist notions of originality. To

appropriate is to possess, borrow, steal, copy, quote, or excerpt images that already exist, made by other artists or available in the public domain and general culture. Precursors to appropriation art of the 1980s and after are informed by Marcel Duchamp's "readymades." Most famously, Duchamp's *Fountain*, a conceptual rather than an aesthetic gesture with a urinal, challenged the prevailing modernist definition of art.

Art critic Hal Foster writes that appropriation art reveals that "underneath each picture there is always another picture." Foster argues that the importance of appropriation is that it entails a shift in position: "the artist becomes a manipulator of signs more than a producer of art objects, and the viewer an active reader of messages rather than a passive contemplator of the aesthetic or consumer of the spectacle."[5]

The Metropolitan Museum of Art owns a work of appropriation made by artist Richard Prince of a cowboy on horseback. The artist took it from an image of a successful advertising campaign for Marlboro cigarettes. Prince selected a portion of the image and enlarged it so that its ben-day dots were apparent, thus deteriorating its original sleekness and exaggerating its mechanical means of production. The Metropolitan refers to Prince's piece as "a copy (the photograph) of a copy (the advertisement) of a myth (the cowboy)."

Simulating

To simulate is to imitate or copy. Simulacra are copies of things that no longer have an original or never had one to begin with. The concept of simulacra, developed especially by Jean Baudrillard, a French theorist of postmodernism, is a prominent theme explored by postmodernists. The 1990 movie "The Matrix" explores people and their simulacra. Neo, one of the film's main characters, has a hollowed out copy of Baudrillard's book *Simulacra and Simulation* that Neo uses as a secret hiding place. The idea of the simulacrum asserts that we no longer are able to distinguish between the real and the simulated "hyperreal" of television, advertising, video games, role playing games, and all kinds of spectacles in contemporary society. The distinction between the real and the representation collapses and dissolves away, leaving only the simulacra.

Betty Boop, a popular icon, serves as a clear example of a simulacrum. The cartoon figure of Betty Boop is based on a singer, Helen Cane. Cane herself rose to fame by imitating Annette Henshaw, a jazz singer in the 1920s. Betty Boop, a copy, survives both Cane and Henshaw, actual people—she is a copy without an original.[6]

Photography, a medium based on copying, has the property of realistic looking duplication. It especially lends itself to play with simulacra by contemporary artists. Gregory Crewdson, for example, uses conventions, techniques, and technicians of mainstream cinema to produce convincing looking simulacra in still photographs in a documentary

genre. Crewdson hires set designers, cinematographers, and professional actors. His final photographs are often composites of different shots: one central scan used for the overall scene and others for details. The Photoshop postproduction work on the images is elaborate. His photographic fictions are very believable as recorded natural occurrences.

Hybridizing

Hybridity is mixing diverse cultural influences in a single artwork. In postmodern terminology, hybridity refers to "the processes and products of cultural mixing which articulates two or more disparate elements to engender a new and distinct entity."[7] This meaning was shared by artists and theorists during the 1980s. They wanted to disrupt and make more complex the simplistic binary divisions of complex cultural generalities, such as Western/Non-Western, African/European, black/white, masculine/feminine, gay/straight, and so forth.

Jean-Michel Basquiat's paintings are hybrid. They are not hybrid because of his Haitian-Puerto Rican ethnicity, but because they include the consciously primitive styles of artists such as Cy Twombly and Jean Dubuffet, graffiti, and 1980s punk and funk musical influences. To say that an artist's work is hybrid because of the artist's mixed ethnicity implies the false notion that mixed-ethnic artists automatically produce mixed-ethnic art. Basquiat *chose* to construct hybrid works of art based on many different cultural influences.

Masami Teraoka is an artist from Japan who lives in the United States, and her art benefits from her experiences of both Eastern and Western cultures. Her watercolor *Vaccine Day Celebration*, for example, draws upon the tradition of Japanese *ukiyo-e* (woodblock prints) to show a modern couple picnicking on a beach in Hawaii. They have just received a fax that announces Vaccine Celebration Day. They dance, he plays a traditional Eastern musical instrument, and flies a kite that reads "Celebration." Faxes and condoms blow in the sea breeze along with cherry blossoms, which reflect the artist's hope for the development of a vaccine that will be effective in preventing AIDS. The painting is a pastiche of cultures and times, mixing the old with the new, including a contemporary epidemic that affects people around the globe.

Mixing Media

Many modernists uphold the ideal that any specific art medium should be used purely. That is, artists ought to discover and exploit the unique nature of any given materi-

al. An artwork made of wood should look like wood; plaster and concrete need not be disguised as something else because they are beautiful media in themselves. Some materials, such as glitter, day-glow paint, and synthetic fur are not the stuff of "art."

Robert Rauschenberg began defying such principles and attitudes with his "combines" that intentionally mix painting and sculpture. Jeff Koons hires highly skilled Hummel craftsmen to construct figures in wood that they then cover with paint, glass eyes, and gold. Chris Ofili utilizes oil and acrylic with beads, glitter, map pins, collaged bits of magazines, and his signature use of dried elephant dung. In her works, installation artist and photographer Sandy Skoglund has used strawberry jam, cheese doodles, stuffed artificial birds, raw meats, orange marmalade, bits of mirrors, eggshells, raisins, mannequins, live models, used chewing gum, plastic ferns, hand-cast paper, and clay.

Layering
Because of photomechanical reproduction, images are inexpensive, plentiful, and readily available. Some artists pile images on top of each other, thus changing the meanings of the images in their original uses. Barbara Kruger presents clear examples of the layering of images, texts, and sounds in her installations: the images and words she layers complicate each other through wrenching visual, verbal, audio, and conceptual contradictions.

Ah Xian, a Chinese artist who fled to Sydney for political reasons, aptly employs layering in a series of porcelain busts. The glazed white porcelain busts he makes are of anonymous men and women, young and old, heavy and slight. The busts are life-size, molded directly from the models. On the eyes of one of his female figures, the artist layered a glazed photographic image of a bright orange butterfly. He covered her lips with an image of flowers. He layered similar photographic images on her head and shoulders. The sources of the layered images are traditional Chinese patterns found on plates, bowls, and vases in the Ming (1364-1643) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. Through these busts and the images he layers onto them, Xian visually expresses the thought that Chinese culture is part of a Chinese person, no matter where he or she dwells.[8]

Mixing Codes
A code, in postmodern discourse, is a system of signs and a set of conventions as to how the signs are to be used. Signs within a culture are arbitrary, not natural. We communally agree, for example, that at a traffic intersection, green shall mean go and red shall mean stop. We use codes so effortlessly that they seem natural rather than constructed. Some postmodern artists make us consciously aware of codes in everyday life and how they shape our perceptions.

Michael Ray Charles, an African-American artist, effectively mixes codes to unmask racist biases we as viewers may hold. In *Cut and Paste*, for example, he appropriates a coded system from paper doll kits but uses a racist image of a black male as the doll, and provides various stereotypical props to be cut out and pasted onto the black male. The props use signifiers that are commonly used to denigrate African Americans: a football, a hair pick, a gun, a banana, a tie, a handbag, a chicken, and a knife. The football can be associated with racist notions of blacks' supposed superior athleticism and inferior mental capability; the gun with the imagined threat of violence posed by black males; the handbag with purse snatching, etc. The male figure itself is coded with oversized lips, braided hair, white minstrel gloves, and shorts like Mickey Mouse wears. (Mickey Mouse himself is a coded racist reference to a minstrel figure.) By employing the conventions of children's paper doll books, Charles emphasizes that at an early age, and often in the home, children learn to paste racist views on others.

Recontextualizing
Recontextualization is a means of constructing meaning by positioning a familiar image in a new and unexpected relationship to words, pictures, objects, sounds, and symbols. Fred Wilson is a contemporary master of recontextualization. Wilson forages through museum collections and rearranges objects to give them new significance. In his renowned exhibition *Mining the Museum* at the Maryland Historical Society, he placed a wooden post used for whipping slaves along with fine furniture of the period. Similarly, Wilson's juxtaposition of steel shackles and silver tea sets displayed the brutality that coexisted with the gentility in slave owners' lives.

Yolanda Lopez appropriates the common and sacred image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and recontextualizes it into political self-portraits. In *The Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe*, she is the virgin— in a short dress and running shoes. She says that her series is her way of questioning a very common and potent icon of the ideal woman in Chicano culture.
"At a time in our history when we were looking to our past historically and culturally I wanted the Guadalupes to prompt a reconsideration of what kinds of new role models Chicanas need, and also to caution against adopting carte blanche anything simply because it is Mexican. By doing portraits of ordinary women— my mother, grandmother, and myself—I wanted to draw attention and pay homage to working-class women, old women, middle-aged over-weight women, young, exuberant, self-assertive women."[9]

By placing an old image in a new context, she radically alters the image's originally intended meanings.

Confronting the Gaze

The concept of "the gaze" originated in film theory in the 1970s, and was first identified as "the male gaze," the tendency of Hollywood films to represent women in ways that heightened the sexual or erotic aspects of women's bodies. Further, such cinematic telling and showing usually entails the maker and viewer as the active subject and the woman as the passive object. Film theorist Laura Mulvey argues that the female body is often shown to connote a "to-be-looked-at-ness." The male gaze is readily apparent in many mass media productions.

Art critic John Berger asserts that many Western oil paintings of women in famous historical works of art are the result of male desire to legitimately eroticize and then stare at women. Worse yet, male painters and patrons sometimes cast the blame for male pleasure at the woman. Berger writes, "You painted a naked woman because you enjoyed looking at her, you put a mirror in her hand and you called the painting Vanity, thus morally condemning the woman whose nakedness you had depicted for your own pleasure."[10]

Since the late 1970s, further theorizing has resulted in work on "the female gaze," whereby the female is in the position of a subject who actively desires. Some female artists, such as Tracy Emin, make work based on their personal sexual lives. Emin's appliquéd tent, *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1985*, is an example. Later, she made *My Bed*, an installation that includes a mattress with white rumpled sheets and pillows, pantyhose, and a towel. Heaped at the bottom of the bed are vodka bottles, slippers, underwear, cigarette packs, condoms, Polaroid self-portraits, and a fluffy white toy. Her works are both confessional and confrontational concerning her own sexuality as an *active* subject.

Facing the Abject

"The abject" refers to supposed unsavory aspects of life, especially concerning functions of the body. French theorist Julia Kristeva refers to the abject as "loathing an item of food, a piece of filth, waste, or dung. The spasms and vomiting that protect me. The repugnance, the retching that thrusts me to the side and turns me away from defilement, sewage, and muck. The shame of compromise, of being in the middle of treachery. The fascinated start that leads me toward and separates me from them."[11]

The concept of the abject accounts for many "ugly" representations in recent art, such as Cindy Sherman's vomit-strewn images and intentionally nasty and repulsive sexual images. These works challenge the male gaze with abject images of the female body and feminine sexuality. In recorded and live performances, and in large sculptural installations, Paul McCarthy creates scatological abject images of characters including Pinocchio and Heidi. A curator interprets his art this way:

"Many of McCarthy's works of the last decade have restaged childhood myths within built environments to explore the vast gap between the saccharine Disneyfied view of the world promoted by a consumerist society, and the inner turmoil that is an unfortunate reality for a great many people."[12]

Kiki Smith, however, uses the abject in positive and empowering ways in prints, sculptures, and installations. She finds grace in what many consider the less pleasant aspects of our bodies. For *Pee Body*, she sculpted a naked woman squatting to relieve herself, passing elegant strings of pearls rather than urine. Smith says: "My work accepts the reality of those bodily functions. They define our being here on this planet."[13]

Constructing Identities

"Identity politics" refers to the idea that people tend to form their opinions of others based on ideas and attitudes about race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Artists working with identity politics make art based on these issues rather than on art that strives only for aesthetic appeal.

ACT UP and Gran Fury (1988-1994), two activist collectives, visually assert their identities as gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual men and women in confrontational graphic images and slogans such as "We're here, we're queer, get used to it." They organized and mobilized government support of research and policies to end the AIDS epidemic. They also launched a graphic campaign with a bus poster showing three couples kissing one another: a man and a woman, two men, and two women, with the slogan "Kissing doesn't kill: Greed and indifference do." The posters refer to the greed and indifference of government and corporate agencies that are doing less than they could be doing to end homophobia and the health crisis.

Melissa Shiff is a contemporary artist working with social issues in the context of her Jewish heritage. She constructed *Elijah's Chair* out of an antique rocking chair into the back of which she embedded a video monitor showing a continuously playing video. It shows doors opening into various homes, rich, poor and in between. She intends the chair to serve as "a meditation on unconditional hospitality and the unequal distribution of wealth in urban America." Shiff's sculpture draws upon Jewish customs related to the prophet Elijah: the opening of the door for Elijah and the setting aside of a chair for him. The artist created the chair to employ the prophet in the service of social action. For Shiff, the piece "documents the staggering divide of wealth in this city of extremes in an effort to show that Elijah signifies the hospitality and openness to the Other that must occur."[14]

Using Narratives

The telling of stories is an old practice in the history of art, dating to the ancient Egyptians or earlier. History painting, the depiction of an event from biblical or classical history, achieved high status during the Renaissance. Nineteenth-century painters and sculptors reveled in making dramatic history stories and sometimes in sentimental family dramas. However, modernist painters turned away from story telling in painting and sculpture, believing narratives were better suited for writers than visual artists. By the 1960s, self-referential abstract art dominated mainstream art, and narrative art became taboo. Postmodern artists rebel against such strictures on their creative practices and are reintroducing narratives into their artworks.

Some art forms, such as film and video, can narrate whole stories. Others, such as painting and sculpture, can tell parts of stories or show a key moment and allow the viewer to fill in the before and after. Each of Eric Fischl's paintings presents key elements in a potential story that the viewer has to construct. His paintings are often based on autobiographical material from a childhood in a dysfunctional, sexualized, and alcoholic environment. Fischl's narrative paintings are like stills from a dramatic film: They encourage us to build on a story that is only implied.

Creating Metaphors

To create a metaphor is to attribute the qualities of one thing to another, as in "All the world's a stage." In a general sense, all images are metaphors because the qualities of the image are attributed to the thing being depicted. A Frida Kahlo self-portrait, for example, is a metaphor for an aspect of Kahlo's persona, a selection of details that shapes our interpretation of her self-image. Many modernist artworks minimize metaphoric meaning in favor of aesthetic form that tends to be self-referential or to refer to other works of art. Postmodernists, however, often refer directly to events outside of art in explicit metaphors.

Do-Ho Suh's sculpture *Public Figures* is overtly metaphoric. It depicts hundreds of tiny human figures holding up an outsized pedestal, of the type that typically supports a monumental public sculpture. Significantly, Suh placed no figure atop the pedestal; the figures are supporting it. Suh's sculpture is a metaphor for many unrecognized individuals who support societies' heroes. He explains:
"I just want to recognize them. Let's say if there's one statue at the plaza of a hero who helped or protected our country, there are hundreds of thousands of individuals who helped him and worked with him, and there's no recognition for them. So in my sculpture, *Public Figures*, I had around six hundred small figures, twelve inches high, six different shapes, both male and female, of different ethnicities."[15]

Irony, Parody, and Dissonance

Irony, parody, and dissonance are interrelated. Irony is the use of words and images to convey the opposite of what they say and show. Parody is a form of satire that imitates another artifact in order to ridicule or poke fun at either the work itself or the subject of the work. Dissonance refers to lack of harmony or agreement among elements in a work.

Although these strategies are not new, contemporary artists are re-employing them to engage viewers in questioning what they have received as knowledge. Knowing whether something is ironic or not is essential to understanding works of art. For example, some people fear that Charles's images will be misunderstood and be taken as straightforward *reinforcements* of racist views that encourage what they are meant to resist. Artists who use irony have the challenge of letting the viewer know what their artwork is for and against without being didactic and preachy. Sometimes parodies are affectionate: For example, some of Cindy Sherman's photographs of herself imply the joy of the childhood activity of dress-up.

Performance artist James Luna attempts to communicate his political views by performing parodies. In *Take a Picture with a Real Indian*, Luna, a Luiseno Indian, invites passers-by on the street to have their picture taken with a life-size image of Luna wearing one of three native costumes: contemporary, basic breech cloth, or a fictitious "Wardance" outfit. The work explores the fascination that the public has for "their" Indians, a fascination that often ignores the reality of the Indian in America today. Luna explains the motivation behind the irony of his work:
"One of the primary reasons I make art is to inform others about Native peoples from our point of view—a view which because of history is rich in native cultural tradition, and both influenced by and influential in contemporary American society. I truly believe that Native Tribal peoples are the least known and most incorrectly portrayed people in history, media, and the arts. I want to change those perceptions."[16]

To realize the meanings and impact of an ironic work of art, it is important to know its referents and how the art works challenge them.

Conclusion

This list of postmodern concepts, attitudes, and approaches to artmaking is introductory and does not exhaust the subject. You can add to the list, clarify its concepts, and add complexity to what is provided here. This introduction encourages more knowledge of theory, some of it dense, some of it readily accessible, that supports and is embedded in the material offered here. The concepts are useful as means of making art, and also as ideas with which to interpret art already made. The ideas apply to all of visual culture and are not limited to "Art."

Notes

1   This article is inspired by a treatment of similar ideas for younger learners by Elizabeth Gude,
    "Postmodern Principles: In Search of a 21 Century Art Education," *Art Education*, January 2004,
    6-13, in which she explores layering; juxtaposition; recontextualization, reinterpretation;
    metaphor; low/high blur; space, installation; found objects; authentic located voices; reality
    and representation; (mixed messages) text/image hybridity; advertising strategies;
    appropriation; and mixing codes of styles.

2   Paul Fabozzi, ed., *Artists, Critics, Context: Readings in and Around American Art Since 1945*.
    (Upper Saddle River, NJ: 2002), 248-249.

3   Judy Seigel, ed., *Mutiny and the Mainstream: Talk That Changed Art, 1975-1990*,
    (New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 1992), 7.

4   Holland Cotter, "Great Meaning in Asian Small Works," *The New York Times*, December 2, 2005,
    on-line, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/02/arts/design/02mini.html,
    (retrieved 9 December 2005).

5   Hal Foster, *Recordings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1985).

6   "Simulacrum," *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simulacra, (retrieved 12 July 2007).

7   Kobena Mercer, "What Did Hybridity Do?," Handwerker Gallery Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 4,
    Winter 1999, http://www.ithaca.edu/hs/handwerker/g/publications/ news/200001/hybridy1.htm,
    (retrieved 4 December 2005).

8   Roni Feinstein, "A Journey to China," *Art in America*, February 2002, 108-113.

9   Susan Cahan and Zoya Kocur, eds, *Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education*,
    (New York: Routledge, 1996), 80.

10 John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, (London: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 51.

11 Julia Kristeva, Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, trans. Leon S. Roudiez,
    (New York: Columbia UP, 1982), 2.

12 Dam Cameron, "Paul McCarthy," New Museum, 2001,
    http://www. newmuseum.org/more_exh_p_mccarthy.php, 10 December 2005.

13 Howard Halle, "Body Language," *Oprah* magazine, July 2006, 40.

14 "Art, Culture & Information," The Jewish Museum, January 8, 2004.

15 *Art: 21, 2*, (New York: Abrams, 2003), 49.

16 Cahan and Kocur, 138.

100 Interesting Things:
A Foundations-Level Search for Content and Meaning

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Style, truths, values and methodologies shift beneath us as we teach contemporary art. One of the most important teaching skills is the ability to foster content development. Here, I examine a studio exploration focused on idea generation, association and struggles for meaning.

For several years, I have tested an inventory-making assignment, *100 Interesting Things*, designed to help beginning art students understand where their ideas come from and what they value as potential content. Early in foundations-level classes, before they are assigned any original imagery, students must write a list of one hundred interesting things.

"Interesting" is an ambiguous prompt to something like free association of proto-concepts. It causes students to closely examine their own worlds, and their lists become inventories of values and everyday activities.

The Context of Inventory
The act of listing is thinking: art making has historically required thinking skills. For example, multidisciplinary learning, including rhetoric, was part of the education of the Renaissance artist.[1] Academy-trained artists left with a cognitive awareness of cultural values and style.

The system endured for over 300 years, until fading into Modernism and its manifestos, inventories of directives and beliefs. Contemporary contexts, often labeled as postmodern, perpetuate a tradition of thinking in art making. Pluralism manifests itself in multiple aesthetics, motivations, and contexts for production demands self-awareness and reflection.

An Internet inventory of required foundations-level coursework at recognized schools revealed that older, inherited methods are still valued. Drawing remains fundamental. Two-dimensional and three dimensional design-type courses echo early Modernist schools.

But new epistemologies and technologies have been added to the pool of artistic practices. Science fiction-sounding course titles, such as four-dimensional design, have appeared. One can infer new possibilities. In the early 21st century, many art schools are biased toward Neoconceptual art; the object is secondary to the idea. In the past few decades, art making has shifted from arts-for-arts-sake to a "concern for art's meaning *vis-à-vis* a larger society". [2] Paul McCarthy, speaking from the perspective of teaching artist, recently reflected, "I think we teach students to think better." [3] Similarly, Plagens noted, "it's all about intellectual strategies."[4] The visual art field has shifted towards thinking to a degree never before possible.

The Design of the Inventory Exercise

My concerns are specific: How can fluency of concept development be encouraged? How can students develop meta-cognitive abilities to sort through their repertoire of ideas?

In designing *100 Interesting Things*, I focused on developmental concerns of the students, integration of creativity theory, the symbolism and rationale behind the number 100, the ambiguity of the prompt "interesting" and an acknowledgment of the degree to which we live in a verbal society.

Beginning students struggle more with what to paint than how to paint. Because they begin college with a basic, required skill level, the ability to create lifelike representations with a repertoire of media processes tends to be valued. This may mimic previous instructors' pedagogical intentions. A recent national survey of secondary teachers places "technical skill" and "elements and principles" as "very effective" strategies for art creation, revealing clear biases at the high school level. [5]

It is more difficult to teach for meaning-making and interpretations of culture. My rationale for the list-making is the necessary opening up of difficult questions, such as *Where does art come from?* Our own experience in the world is part of the creative fuel of art making. This involves self-exploration and risk taking. The assigned inventory invites students to question their basic beliefs about art.

Creativity theory is alive and well in the areas of cognitive, experiential, and psycho-analytic contributions to the field of art. [6] Within the past thirty years, educators in many domains have benefited from increased understanding of the brain and its functions. The integration of creativity theory into the art classroom in meaningful ways was a design consideration in *100 Things*.

Creativity specialists Gruber and Wallace summarize one of many ways to think about creative processes: a "systems approach," which includes *recognizing*. Attitudes they identify [7] as important to creativity align with attitudes that the 100-item inventory promote: pluralistic, developmental, culturally interactive, constructionist, and experientially sensitive. The inventory reinforces these attitudes, particularly the last one, by calling on what is understood through experience.

100 Interesting Things fosters fluency and combinatory thinking. These two specific abilities, in one form or another, are noted in many texts on creativity. Fluency is the generation of many ideas. Michalko recommends the act of listing, with variations on speed or focus.[8] Elaboration on the ideas generated may follow; in our classes' case, this would take the form of a studio assignment. He identifies fluency practices as: deferring judgment, generating as many ideas a possible, listing ideas when they occur

and keeping a written record, elaborating and improving on ideas, and allowing for a period of idea incubation. These processes, traced through case studies, are associated with genius.

Combinatory thinking is also thought to separate the genius from the talented. The history of invention tells us that the ability to see novel combinations, to put together existing information and unrelated objects or to combine problems, words, ideas and domains is of value in both the sciences and arts. The *100...Things* list eventually sifts into combinations of ideas for art making. A large set of possibilities is an advantageous place to begin. The task of listing 100 things is a creative marathon.

The number 100 was purposely chosen as a point of inventory exhaustion. I weighed it as an appropriate scale for the assignment. Numbers are perceived as relative to what is being counted: A million dollars, a 26.21875 mile run, the last three ounces in the canteen. Situations change when numbers change. Philosophers often use numbers or counting for epistemological purposes. For example, the understanding of monism, dualism or pluralism requires thinking in one, twos and threes. Hegel spoke of the *one absolute* and Catholicism professes the trinity. The number 100 helps students to begin to understand that observations, associations and preferences can seem limitless. So much can be extracted from their memories and perceptions.

"Interesting" was chosen because of its ambiguity. Art critics often use the label as non-communication or to shroud harsh judgments. Humans strive to be interesting if it is taken for intelligent or complex, but if it is more synonymous with "eccentric" we are less likely to desire the label.

For this classroom exercise, the term carries little moral weight. It can, however, conjure complexity, sublimity, value, emotion, and focus. Students ask what interesting means at the beginning of the assignment, but get no direction except advice to form a subjective definition through their own process of listing.

A final design consideration is to what degree writing should be integrated into the studio classroom. *100...Things* is part of a series of ten written reflections. I work with the students' naiveté. They do not protest that they should be making art instead of writing because most have not yet been indoctrinated into traditional studio education practices.

Verbal intelligence is one of many. We teach products of educational systems that are just now integrating circa 1980s theories of Multiples Intelligences and more individual-ized learning strategies into the curriculum. Therefore, art students have had to come to terms with their ability to express themselves in various modalities.[9] Verbal expression

may not be a favored skill of some art students. Listing, however, is a non-threatening form of writing, even for the less confident. Formal rules of composition and grammar do not apply.

Products of the *100...Things*
Some students dissented from the assignment, but in the end even dissenting students completed the task. Some submitted neatly typed and numbered lists. Others scribbled over several pages of a sketchbook. Some began with the number 100, others with one. One student composed a running horizontal list across lined notebook paper.

The lists, in a way, are self-portraits on micro and macro scales. They reveal a distinct personality portrait of person, the degrees of literacy, imagination, complexity of thought and interests.

The lists compiled into a whole reveal the culture of a school and its location. "Yoga," "hiking" and "skiing" were common entries at the University of Colorado. New Jersey, in contrast, is home to students who repeat "boardwalk," "diners" and "pizza". A composite view of popular culture and its influence on college students can be inferred from the lists: "scary movies," "game boys," "Velcro," and "the Internet." In America, to different degrees, we are what we own, do, covet and value.

The exercise reveals literacy levels that may not be visible in a studio production-only class. Fundamental writing problems, such as misspellings, clouded some lists. In addition to literacy, evidence of imagination and complexity can be read into the lists. Students who composed short sentences often communicated more information than those with one-word per number entries. Of course, this depends on the one word. Words could be weighed against each other. "Greed" seems more conceptually fertile than "candles." "2010" is more puzzling than "chocolate." One student listed "gangrenous toes that mutter in the dark." His list continued with "tree bark fingers," "Igor," and "sodomy."

Word choices revealed potential for meaningful concept-development. Individual words or short phrases carried poetic weight—"cold steel rails," "the joy in the back of my throat," "the New York skyline"—that beg for graphic elaboration. Conversely, some words seemed trite as presented. "Army," "weapons," "food," and "travel" could be made rich, but embellishment was needed. The word "food" becomes interesting with a single descriptor: rotten, Thai, or blue, for instance.

Some lists seemed to be products of minimal effort. When I read what seemed to be a description of immediate surroundings: "cup, plate, sunflower vase" and "TV," the list pointed to apathy or laziness. A list produced by looking a short distance, such as at the

immediate domestic environment, probably could not withstand philosophical inquiries concerning the nature of "interesting" as expressed through common household objects.

Word associations are an inevitable byproduct of listing. Numbers 76 through 79, "Circles," "friendship," "love" and "romance" were natural progressions of terms. One student listed "coffee or tea" as one number implying that hot beverages are indiscernible. "2Pac," "Wilco," "Beck," "Eminem," followed by "apples" signaled a journey through music with an abrupt jump in thought category. Some students used terms from the immediate class: "painting, drawing, clay, sculpture, art" perhaps as a result of thinking about the class culture.

I could take personal joy in lists that suggest a younger, more carefree way of being: "road trips, clothes, a suntan, raspberries, weather" may be observations of persons less aware of any intellectual implications of each word. Sometimes, I envied students' keen senses of observation and realized that I had neglected to notice some sublime thing in the world.

Each list is a very subjective product. The particulars of "my dog, perfume making, and Aunt Cena" may be the personal ingredients that transcend subjectivity to address the universal concerns of humans, as in the playwright Lorraine Hansberry definition of art making as *finding the universal in the particular*.[10] In addition, the personal act of listing of things is "making special," an attribute of art making identified by Dissanayake. She writes that art making requires "deliberateness," "intent" and embellishing.[11]

The Process of Identifying *100...Things*
I tried *100 Things* before assigning it. I anguished over the hierarchy as I worked from the bottom—number 100, the least interesting—to the number one most interesting thing in the world to me. The task became increasingly difficult, as I perceived growing significance. People close to me wanted to know where they fell on the list. Perhaps that is why, unlike my students, I never finished my own assignment.

Student list-making took different forms. Some began with number one, as the most interesting thing. Others did not. This is particularly evident in one list, which started with number one as "cheese" and six as "girls with big butts" and number eleven as "family." When I asked for reflections on process, more students than not reported that writing the list was difficult at first, then it started "flowing." Some could have surpassed 100. I am not sure what the upper limit of the number of items could be. An exhaustive list might become art itself with precedents in 1970s Conceptual, language-based art.

Listing invites participation. One student told me that her family wanted to help with her

list. They told her what should be included and wanted to direct her content. Similarly, the assignment engaged students with each other. The students themselves discovered many of the observations I have made about the underlying meanings to be interpreted from the list. In particular, they reminded one another what is interesting among their age group.

The Uses of *100 Interesting Things*

Is *100 Interesting Things* a meaningful assignment? There was value in reflection on process and content as noted above. There was raised self-awareness in some instances. Ultimately, students became conscious that the process was a means toward conceptual development in their art making.

To follow up the assignment, I borrowed a method of gathering ideas for art making developed by teacher/artist Lucio Pozzi. For many years he has used the analogy of the "pantry" as a way to explain that art is made from disparate ingredients. He uses small diagrams in which "ingredients" of art are placed on metaphorical shelves. "Parallel, tactility" and "moving" can be in Pozzi's pantry. "Color-on-surface," "paper" and "free hands" also appear in Pozzi's pantry diagram (also called the "Inventory Game").[12] The students distill their lists into a manageable size; some use the empty pantry-like selves, modeled on Pozzi's.

Reflection on *100 Interesting Things*

Additional fieldwork might show the degree to which the inventory of 100 things appears literally in students' subsequent artwork. For now, the conversations, reflections and critique the exploration raises justify the assignment.

Designed with an awareness of creativity theory, human development, multiple learning styles and pedagogical engagement, *100 Interesting Things* has grown into a means for my art students to discover subjective content possibilities for art. In addition, the important question of to what degree their own understanding of the world shapes creative endeavors becomes clearer through directly addressing content development. The list assignment is as exhaustive as the imaginations of those who inventory small, often profound and very personal worlds.

Notes

1 Carl Goldstein, *Teaching Art: Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and Anthony Hughes, "'An Academy for Doing' II: Academies, Status, and Power in Early Modern Europe." *The Oxford Art Journal 9* (1986)

2 Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel, "Resuscitating Painting." *Art Journal 58:1* (spring 1999)

3 Deborah Solomon,"How to Succeed in Art," New York Times, 27 June 1999, pp.39-40.

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5 David Burton, "How Do We Teach? Results of a Survey of Instruction on Secondary Art Education," *Studies in Art Education 42:2* (2001) pp. 131-45.

6 Mark Freeman, "What Aesthetic Development is Not: An Inquiry into the Pathologies of Postmodern Creation," *Development and the Arts: A Critical Perspective*, Eds. Margery Franklin and Bernard Kaplan, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.

7 Howard Gruber and Doris Wallace, *Creative People at Work: Twelve Cognitive Case Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) 3.

8 Michael Michalko, *Thinkertoys* (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 1991)

9 Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, (New York, Basic Books, 1992)

10 Patricia Hill-Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*, (New York: Routledge, 1999)

11 Ellen Dissanayake, *What is Art For?* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988) 92.

12 Lori Kent, *Lucio Pozzi: Diagrams* (Fara d' Adda: Edizioni Bacacay Press, 2003) 8.

The Artist's Book as a Tool of Change
in the Liberal Arts Curriculum:
An Interdisciplinary Approach

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With the advent of digital instructional and entertainment technologies, it has become incumbent on educators to meet student expectations in the use of digital technology in the classroom wherever possible. This poses significant challenges in studio art courses, where the products of learning are physical artifacts. When the study of the history of illustrated books is the subject, discrepancies between the subject and delivery of course content are especially challenging. Striking a balance between the hands-on examination and teaching of early book production methods and the technology afforded in a wired classroom is crucial for efficiency and efficacy for desired learning outcomes. In the current rush among students and administration to adopt new information technologies, extra attention is called for in order to remind us of the uniqueness of books in terms of their functional capabilities and their unique position in the development of our culture.

In the traditional college liberal arts curriculum, books have permeated all subject areas and have always delivered all types of knowledge, serving a variety of functions that outnumber any other form of media. To quote a favorite colleague of mine, books form the "connective tissue" that bind together the extremities of human knowledge. But there are signs that this connective tissue is wearing thin.

On many campuses today, books have lost their privileged role as the primary resource of information, and are now being forced to compete with faculty and student preferences for more vivacious digital media. Such media are increasingly accessible wired, "smart classrooms," campus wireless zones and dorm room Ethernet connections. In our own campus library, shelves lined with videos and CDs, rows of networked online catalogue stations and rooms that are dedicated computer labs dominate the building. Students in carrels actively use their laptops, whisper into their cell phones and tune in to their iPods®. In this setting, the books appear to be dowdy wallflowers positioned to be chosen last in the dance of learning. With their spines modestly whispering a small glimmer of their complex personalities and lineage, they sit around like old furniture compared with the beckoning interfaces of more complex information technology. It appears that, on the modern college campus, books are becoming less relevant to students. To paraphrase Joanna Drucker in her excellent *The Century of Artists' Books*, "Familiarity with the basic conventions of books tends to make them banal... The structures by which books present information, ideas or diversions, become habitual so that they erase, rather than foreground their identity. One can, in other words, forget about a book in the course of reading it."[1]

As champions of the book, how can we change student attitudes in the face of such glamorous alternatives? How can we familiarize them with the aspects of bookmaking that encompass so much of the rich and varied history of our civilization art and culture?

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I would like to present here some approaches being used by myself and three of my colleagues in art history, studio art and creative writing to foster in our students a new appreciation for the history, diversity and potential of books. I will focus mostly on a new course art course developed this year and taught for the first time this semester under our Honors program.

As a way to begin piquing interest, I developed the exhibit "Books Evolve," which was featured for one month in the UNCW art building's gallery last fall. The subject was an overview of the evolution of book production technology, and concluded with several cases containing fine printing and artists books. Books were borrowed from local collections and galleries and supplemented by loans from our own library's special collections. Several classes of both creative writing and art students were led through the exhibition and the cases were opened, allowing for closer study, pointed discussion and interaction. For many students, this was their first exposure to the idea of books as an art form. My objective in researching, curating and designing this exhibition was to spark interest by art and English students in the history and making of books. It also acted as prelude to introducing our honors course into both the general and art curriculum.

The UNCW's Honors program offers faculty the space and support with which to collaborate across disciplines in ways that can incubate interesting new courses. *The Illustrated Book: History & Production* course that I currently teach with Dr. Vibeke Olson, my medievalist colleague in art history, has afforded us the means to teach an elective course about bookmaking to motivated general studies students with little to no art background. We developed this course to offer an exchange between historical tradition and the modern studio in order to synthesize the normally isolated realms of studio production and art history: Medieval art history looks to manuscripts and scriptoria as centers of artistic and commercial production and, more importantly, the beginnings of visual and verbal literacy. By incorporating these historic contexts and techniques, it affords students a deeper understanding of the evolution of traditional book-making processes and their potential for contemporary discourse as designed objects.

The required course texts are Christopher DeHamel's *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* [2] and Michelle Brown's *Understanding Illuminated Manuscripts: A Guide to Technical Terms* [3]. The course meets for 75 minutes twice weekly, and within each week we alternate between lectures and hands-on projects, some of which are to be completed outside of class, depending on the level of complexity. Whenever possible, we demonstrate traditional materials and processes but also supply students with modern tools to save time and minimize frustration. During the lecture component, students are shown exemplary works using a traditional slide-type lecture format, supplemented by actual

examples borrowed mostly from the library's special collections. The images from these lectures are made available from our secure class Web site just as they are presented during the lecture and supported by assigned reading from their course text as well as additional selected texts each week.

Our students are given the opportunity to experiment with the materials and processes of book building and to handle antique books from special collections as a means to synthesize their understanding of the course content. The short, graded projects are intended to expose them to a variety of techniques, some of which are subsequently incorporated into an original handmade book to be completed as a final project. One midterm exam is designed to generate critical and analytical thinking on the complexities of book production and the relationships between text and images. In the second half of the semester, they define and produce their own final project.

Dr. Olson and I plan to offer a refined version of this course within our own department for both our studio and art history majors. Due to the short meeting times and various types of activities, the historic component has been compressed. However, as complementary courses within our department, a more in-depth study of the history of the book can be achieved as well more in-depth technical explanations and richer studio projects.

We opened the course with the origin of written languages generally and quickly focused on Sumerian cuneiform. The hands-on activity involved experimentation with early writing tools and letterforms. Using wet clay from the ceramics studio and carved inexpensive chopsticks, students explored the reasons why cuneiform writing evolved into its distinctive wedge-shape characters. They then tried out reed, feather quill and metal nib pens on papyrus, paper and parchment, discovering how substrates and writing tools directly influence the evolution of letterforms. In the associated lectures, we discussed how the development of writing dramatically transformed society. We looked at the various types of documents that were created both texts and examples of early visual narrative. We also looked at image/text relationships in Egyptian Books of the Dead.

In their first graded hands-on project on manuscript writing, felt-tipped calligraphy pens were used to expedite projects and allow focus on the letter structures. Basic lettering further reinforces the formal relationship between tool and letterforms and allows students to experience how difficult it was for a scribe to learn a script and then to apply it consistently. The graded results were practice sheets and a perfected word inscribed with their own hand.

An exercise in manuscript illumination techniques followed calligraphy. In lecture examples, historiated initials constitute some of the earliest merging of text and image relationships. In this section, we began our discussion of both the formal organization of text and image on the page, as well as the propensity for complex ideological relationships between unrelated text and image, beyond the simple narrative. For example, the Sinope gospels, the text is from the Old Testament prophecies and the unrelated images refer to the New Testament.

Edward Irvine
Vibeke Olson

Building on precedent, the lectures and readings associated with these projects described the evolving social and religious functions of exemplary works, and how these are reflected in the books themselves. One of the themes for discussion was patronage, in particular the various ways in which books advertised the institutions or individuals that commissioned them. Discussion of the various means and methods by which manuscripts were produced, such as divisions of labor, copying, and gilding, enhanced the hands-on component of the course by contextualizing it within a historical framework. Connections were also made between the laborious, extravagant nature of early books and their specific iconography as well as the limited use and context of their readership.

As a way to examine early printing technology, the next project allowed them to try out simple block printing. Students clearly made the connection between the amount of labor expended in a single handmade manuscript of text versus the rapidity and consistency of printmaking. They also made the connection between early printed page layouts and their contemporary manuscript pages. As printing technology expanded the quantity and range of book titles, the corresponding lecture examined the ways in which early printed books mimicked their handmade predecessors then gradually developed their own aesthetic, which celebrated the tonal nuances achievable with printing along with the advantages of mass-production.

Simple pamphlet-stitch binding techniques were demonstrated using numbered, Xeroxed pages and waxed binding thread sewn into single signatures with homemade, marbleized end papers. These signatures were then pasted into hard covers. Marbling techniques were demonstrated using commercially available kits and rubber cement was employed as the adhesive, while polyvinyl acetate was demonstrated and used with their final projects.

After this point in the course, as we discuss the changes in mass production, print reproduction technology and machine binding, we are be able to interact directly with a much larger range of examples from our special collections to examine the differences in quality between 18th and 19th century production methods. We rely less on hands-on technical learning. As book production migrated from the small press to the factory,

the fluctuation in quality is clearly evident. To illustrate this point, hand-made mid-18th century French printed books are compared to mass-produced mid-19th century ones.

To begin our consideration of artist books, we invited two guest speakers. Martha Scotford, a professor of graphic design history from North Carolina State University's College of Design, showed examples and facsimiles and spoke about the Arts & Crafts movement, experimental typography from the Constructivist and Futurist movement, and concluded with the revival of fine printing in the U.S. and U.K. Our second speaker was Virginia Wright-Frierson, a successful children's book artist. She discussed the process of writing, designing, illustrating and bringing a book from idea to publication.

In the final lectures, we will familiarize our students with some of the issues surrounding artists' books, with readings from Johanna Drucker's *The Century of Artists Books* and artist Keith Smith's *Structure of the Visual Book*. Smith is a renowned book artist and writer based in Rochester, NY. Drucker has published extensively on topics related to the history of typography, artists' books, and visual art. She teaches at the University of Virginia. Additionally we will look at some examples gathered from several local collections and at slide images.

In the eleventh week of the course, we ask our students for a written proposal for their final projects. They can choose any type of book or a specific book that interests them and then create a book of their own that communicates their interest, using a process and form appropriate to their subject. This project will include the book they make, an informal presentation, and a 7-10 page paper. It is worth 45% of their total grade. The students will work with us individually to address art historical research, design and technical questions. The project is designed to synthesize the students' learning experience in the course by integrating all aspects of the course into a single, hand-made object. The hope is that our students will not only have a new appreciation for the book, both as a designed object and as a vehicle for the dissemination of information, but will also approach book forms and content more critically and analytically.

Other members of our faculty engage their students in bookmaking. In a Studio Art course concerned with making and studying collage technique, artist and studio faculty member Pam Toll has assigned her students to create an altered book or book assemblage. In her project brief, the student is encouraged to find an existing book and alter it through collage techniques. The successful projects become a formal dialogue with the author's content and format, making a cohesive visual experience that stresses the importance of the artist's and viewer's role in interpreting texts.

Dr. Barbara Brannon runs UNCW's publishing lab through the creative writing department. Brannon offers "book-building" courses. In her courses, writing students learn

to give form to their words through designing printed pages, which in turn affects how they see their writing as the world might see it. The courses also aim to prepare them for working as professional writers with relationships to editors, proofreaders and cover designers. Students in these courses gain the experience of making decisions regarding voice, the format of their work and an awareness of the issues that will affect the form their words will take out into the publishing world. The products from her courses include prototypes that are printed works of student fiction bound in the lab.

A quotation over the entry way in Brooks Hall's imposing rotunda at the College of Design at NC State University greatly influenced me as a graduate student years ago and as an educator now at UNC Wilmington: "To Make is to Know."

These words express simply what Benjamin Bloom theorized nearly fifty years ago in his famous *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*,[4] that synthesis can achieve the highest levels of learning. Books, because of their comprehensive nature and protean form, offer some of the most comprehensive opportunities for creative learning about both the content and form of ideas. These are but a few examples.

In conclusion, I'd like to offer the following observation from Stephen Heller, the well-known editor and graphic designer, who has stated:

When history is recorded with verve and presented with passion, it enlightens and nourishes. What is history if not a collection of narratives that comprise a legacy? What is a legacy if not a foundation on which to build and transform? Given the legacy of graphic design, it is clear that the intersection of applied and fine arts has enriched this field as well as the broader culture. During this formative period in the digital age, when new media is altering traditional notions of graphic design practice, it is even more important that designers have the grounding provided by historical knowledge.[5]

I couldn't agree more. While the artist book becomes democratized and deprived of its exclusive roots through desktop publishing technology and downloadable formats, its audience will perhaps find more value and appreciation for books if we continue our efforts to find ways to move it beyond the studio and into places of greater exposure, such as the liberal arts curriculum, where learning occurs. By reintroducing the book form as an object of study to a wider audience, we can strengthen this fragile connective tissue.

Notes

[1]   Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books*
     (New York: Granary Books, 1994) p. 161

[2]   Christopher De Hamel, A History of Illuminated Manuscripts
     (New York: Phaidon Press, 1986)

[3]   Michelle P. Brown, *Understanding Illuminated Manuscripts: A Guide to Technical Terms*
     (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 1994)

[4]   Benjamin Bloom (ed.) (1956) *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, The Classification of*
     Educational Goals–Handbook I: Cognitive Domain (New York: McKay, 1956), p.162

[5]   Stephen Heller (ed), "Introduction: The Beginning of History" in *Graphic Design*
     History, Stephen Heller & Georgette Balance, eds. (New York: Allworth Press, 2001),
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Writing in the Art and Design Curriculum

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Imbued with ever increasing economic, political, and cultural power, visual and material artifacts have arisen today as some of the primary currencies of global cultural exchange. In response, those of us involved in art and design education have sought new ways to develop student competence in the processing of new information, in critical reflections upon their profession, and in explorations of the broader social, cultural, economic, and political implications of their work. As we continue to seek ways to nurture artists and designers with skills necessary to emerge as leaders, an important area of consideration is writing.

How important is writing to an artist or designer? What role should writing play in a progressive art and design education? Where in the curriculum should it be located? What genres of writing should be taught and practiced?

I hope to clarify some of our existing practices, identify implications of those practices, and lay the groundwork for new ways to integrate writing within our programs, in hopes that we might move forward with greater resolve and focus in this area.

Disciplinary education, general education and the isolation of writing:
Our views on where and how writing manifests in a curriculum are integrally tied to our views on the conceptual divide between general education and disciplinary education. I suggest that our views on this wider topic have had a significant impact on our expectations of writing and have limited the role that writing plays within our programs. Let us begin our discussion, therefore, by undertaking a brief review of the relationship between general education and disciplinary education and of ways our institutions have traditionally interpreted the National Association of School of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation standards in this area.

The NASAD Handbook, outlining current accreditation standards for degree-granting institutions, divides a student's course of study into two areas: "Studies in Art and Design" and "General Studies." In this model, Studies in Art and Design, comprising at least 65% of the BFA curriculum and 35% of the BA curriculum, offers specialized study. General Studies, comprising the remainder of the credits, offers general education outside of art and design. This dual view of an art and design education finds its historical roots in the early twentieth century, when art and design training was becoming institutionalized in the United States.

The disciplinary focus was part of a growing movement within the last century to bring pragmatic professional training in all fields into the institutional boundaries of the university. In the case of art and design, it was to formalize and bestow the legitimacy of university status to training formerly carried out in academies, apprenticeships, and guilds. The general studies component derives from educational traditions of the

cultivation of a liberal mind. In the Western tradition, it traces to the classically inspired liberal arts *trivium*[1] and *quadrivium*.[2] The Eastern parallel is the Confucian scholar gentleman, who developed the mind in preparation for service to society.

The co-existing professional and liberal arts ancestry has produced an almost uniquely U.S. phenomenon in which responsibility for general education extends beyond secondary schools into baccalaureate programs. College students essentially participate in two educations—one to develop them as professionals, another to develop them as liberal-minded citizens. Although these two goals are not necessarily mutually exclusive, it is helpful to identify them as two forces that vie for our attention. Let us observe where writing sits within this landscape.

In a review of schools of art and design, I have found conventional practice to have institutionalized some fairly pronounced distinctions between the two categories in ways not dictated by the NASAD guidelines.

Most of the schools offer between 30 and 42 required general studies credits through a separate liberal arts department in courses that tend to be academic in nature. They employ methods associated with traditional study, such as reading, research, writing, knowledge coverage, etc.

Art and design studies tend to be interpreted as studio courses and courses covering topics directly supporting applied practices, such as materials, production, and professional practice. Only art history courses, and on occasion design history or theory courses, have emerged as academic courses. When they do, they are usually shifted across the divide and managed by a liberal arts department as liberal arts courses. As a result, students, and sometimes educators, have come to equate studio instruction with Art and Design Studies and academic study with general education.

Because writing is so integral to academic study, it is not surprising that writing occurs predominantly in the general liberal arts category. NASAD guidelines do not dictate this distinction. The guidelines explicitly describe art and design studies as including both academic and studio courses. The relegation and isolation of most academic practices to liberal arts promotes distinctions in terms of:

1) professional application vs. academic inquiry,
2) making vs. thinking,
3) visual and material products vs. ideas,
4) craft vs. theory,
5) intuitive expression vs. rational cognitive inquiry.

Although there are many exceptions, I suspect that this description of our educational practices resonates with the experience of most educators in art and design. This split engenders a number of problems: 1) It artificially creates for the student a thinking vs. doing distinction, as if our process of making could be separated from understanding its historical circumstances within the extended lineage of human meaning making. 2) It deprives our students of intellectual tools that have traditionally been associated with academic subjects. 3) It encourages our students to limit the view of their profession to the making of objects, rather than to grasping the full significance of those objects within society. 4) And it narrows the scope and potential of our fields both internally and externally.

As a result, art and design become implicitly coded as less intellectually rigorous than the subjects in general studies. Let us consider some ways to overcome this situation.

Step one: Crossing the curricular divide
We need to shift our understanding of the art and design curriculum so that general liberal studies is not the only location for academic inquiry. Instead, we must create intellectual space in our institutions for the comprehensive study of art and design within the context of culture and society.

A NASAD accreditation survey from 1971 contained only the categories professional, general, and art historical studies. The assumption a quarter of a century ago was that art history would be the only course to occupy such an intellectual space.[3] Today, an increasingly defined body of discourse devoted to art, design and visual culture holds that the conception, design, production, and use of visual and material artifacts are components of a core humanistic activity with its own knowledge base, intellectual rigor, and methods, as asserted by Ellen Lupton, Victor Margolin, Katherine McCoy, Nigel Cross, and others.[4] If no academic intellectual space is created within our field for housing this discourse, then the artifacts we produce will only be interpreted through peripheral fields,[5] a situation unmatched by almost any other core humanistic enterprise. In such a scenario, art and design would remain knowledge collected, interpreted and maintained by other fields only.

In calling for a tripartite model of general studies, applied art and design studies, and academic art and design studies, I am not proposing that the new academic study necessarily overshadow applied practices to result in isolated abstract theory. (Scholars such as Andrew Blauvet have cautioned against this.[6]) The relative size of each portion of the tripartite structure can be altered according to circumstances. My point is merely that acknowledging the third component within the curriculum is critical, however small or large that component is.

It is possible that adoption of such a model would lead to a reinterpretation of the credit balances described in the NASAD standards, for some courses in art and design studies of this sort would certainly be viable contributions to a liberal education, as argued by scholars such as Richard Buchanan[7] and Gunnar Swanson.[8] This phenomenon, in fact, is already acknowledged to some extent in Appendix II.D in the NASAD guidelines, on the role of art and design in general education.[9] Precedent exists in other fields for counting courses that are both liberal and disciplinary in nature in dual categories, to avoid an overabundance of material needing coverage.

Step two: Moving writing from academics into practice:
The clear identification of the art and design segment of the curriculum as academic study would reduce the isolation of writing from art and design. However, the full potential of writing will not be realized until writing breaks through the divide between academics and practice and emerges fully and naturally integrated within our specialized disciplines. The "Writing Across the Curriculum" (WAC) model, implemented in the U.S. starting in the 1970's, provides a good starting place for thinking about this subject.[10] Goals and methods of WAC programs can be understood in relation to two main principles.

First, WAC programs arose from a desire to combat what was perceived to be declining literacy among college students. This was fueled in part by discussions in popular media, such as "Why Johnny Can't Write"[11], the oft-cited 1975 Newsweek article by Sheils Merrill. It continues to be driven by new reports, such as the recent ACT (American College Testing) finding that only 51% of high school graduates have language skills appropriate for college.[12] The idea is that since writing instruction is a gargantuan task, all the disciplines should share the burden. The theory, largely confirmed by empirical data, is that writing will improve by increasing the frequency of writing in a student's academic career and by building greater interest in it through the use of materials from the student's own selected field of study.

 A second principle of "Writing Across the Curriculum" rises from the assertion that not only will writing improve through this practice, learning in the discipline will also improve. The thought is that writing helps students to actively understand and retain course content and to learn discipline specific material such as specialized terminology. The phrase "writing to learn" has often been used to describe this emphasis. Educators and scholars such as Janet Emig,[13] Christine Farris, Raymond Smith[14] and Nancy Sommers have argued that writing helps students comprehend material in ways that the traditional lecture and test format do not. Sommers describes a Harvard survey, conducted from 1996 to 2001, of over 400 undergraduates. It showed that students experience greater commitment to and success with content when writing is assigned in a course.[15]

I make the case that, in addition to these two goals, the "Writing Across the Curriculum" model has the unique potential to evolve further in the concomitant thinking/doing process of art and design. Certainly, improved writing and knowledge acquisition are useful. Writing can also serve the artist and designer as an indispensable tool for engaging in intellectual processes that at times must be made through language, even if the final product is not linguistic in nature.

I do not intend to refute the valuable scholarly work establishing visual artifacts as a linguistic code in its own right, independent of text and writing. I will note, though, that language often continues to exist in a visual-art setting as the medium for meta-discourse. Writing serves to manifest, to organize, and to contest ideas exercised in the act of making. In this way, writing goes beyond supporting knowledge that exists a *priori* and engages in an open-ended discursive intellectual process.

I term such an approach "Writing *From* the Curriculum," because writing is not artificially foisted upon a subject, but is a process that emerges and proceeds naturally from within it. Just as different forms of drawing are all fully and fluidly incorporated into design and art, writing should be, too. This approach is not about adding another pedagogical burden to the studio setting, but rather about acknowledging and augment-ing the intellectual dimension already inherent in the process of creation. It derives from an understanding that:

1. Writing serves as a unique and ideal tool for processing certain types of information and knowledge.

2. Without writing, some ideas remain inchoate and unstable. Writing can stabilize those ideas.

3. Because visual languages and written languages serve unique purposes, integrat-ing them allows students to access and handle a broader range of information and knowledge.

Step three: Rethinking writing genres
If writing is going to enter fully and seamlessly into studio practices, then we will need to develop new forms and modes of writing to accommodate writing's new role. Traditional forms of writing designed for purely academic discourse are not appropriate.

Today, about the only existing genres of writing commonly associated with art and design practice are the project brief and the artist's or designer's statement. Although writing in both of these genres should be encouraged, these are not the types of

writing of which I speak. The project brief, as a document written before commencement of a project, and the artist's statement, written after the completion of a work, are both exercised chronologically outside of the processes of art and design. In some respects, they are antithetical to the aim of open-ended exploration and discovery.

We need to introduce discursive modes of writing that occur within the process, such as *investigative writing*, which aids in brainstorming, research and concept development; *annotated sketching*, which combines explorations in image and words; and *production journaling*, which supports the production process. The common characteristics of these types of writing include a de-emphasis of finished writing, a use of writing during the art and design act, and the establishment of times for reflecting upon the completed writing so ideas can in turn inform art and design acts. These are the types of writing Ellen Lupton speaks about when she states, "Casual writing experiences encourage students to use writing as a device for 'prototyping,' to be employed alongside sketching, diagramming and other forms of conceptualization."[16]

This is not a time for retreating, for narrowing the role of designers and artists to those with limited understanding and control over the social, political, economic, and cultural forces impacting the visual and material world. We must assure that those engaged in visual and material culture are full players in the core discourse of contemporary society, not just as mimetic reflectors, or worse yet hired mercenaries, but as authors and leaders. In order to do this, we cannot allow our fields to permanently separate themselves from fundamental tools and practices of academic study such as reading, critical methodologies, research, and particularly writing, the primary medium of communication of these elements. Furthermore, we must mold these tools so they serve the purposes of our fields.

1 Grammar, rhetoric, and logic.

2 Arithmetic, geometry, music and theory, astronomy and cosmology.

3 "NASAD Self –Study Guidelines," revised October 1971, published by National Association of Schools of Art and Design.

4 For example, see Ellen Lupton, "The Designer as Producer," in *The Education of a Graphic Designer* edited by Stephen Heller (New York: Allworth Press, 1998), pp 159-162; Victor Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 244-259; Katherine McCoy, "Education in an Adolescent Profession," in *The Education of a Graphic Designer* edited by Stephen Heller (New York: Allworth Press, 1998), pp 3-12; and Nigel Cross, "Discovering Design Ability," *Discovering Design*, edited by Richard Buchanan and Victor Margolin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 105-120.

5 This, of course, has already begun with studies of art and design in broader context occurring in cultural studies, media studies, sociology, advertising, anthropology, etc. Without academic space for this type of research and study within our own field, our work and products will continue to be interpreted by others.

6 Andrew Blauvet, "Remaking Theory, Rethinking Practice," in *The Education of a Graphic Designer* edited by Stephen Heller (New York: Allworth Press, 1998), pp 71-77.

7 See Richard Buchanan ,"The Problem of Character in Design Education: Liberal Arts and Professional Specialization," *The International Journal of Technology and Design Education*, Volume 11, No. 1 (2001) and Richard Buchanan, "Design as a New Liberal Art," Education Committee of the Industrial Designers Society of America, Papers: *1990 Conference on Design Education* (Pasadena: August 1990).

8 See Gunnar Swanson, "Graphic Design as a Liberal Art: Design and Knowledge in the University and in the 'Real World', " *The Education of A Graphic Designer* edited by Steven Heller (New York: Alworth Press, 1998), p. 13-23.

9 *NASAD Handbook 2005-2006* (National Association of Schools of Art and Design, 2005), pp. 149-150.

10 Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is also termed Writing in the Curriculum (WIC) in some circles. For an overview of the history of Writing Across the Curriculum see Susan H. McLeod and Margot Iris Sven, eds., *Composing a Community: A History of Writing Across the Curriculum* (West Lafayette: Parlor Press, 2005).

11 Sheils Merrill, "Why Johnny Can't Write," *Newsweek*, vol. 92 (December 8, 1975), pp 58-65.

12 American College Testing (ACT), National Data Release, August 17, 2005.

13 Janet Emig, "Writing as a Mode of Learning," *College Composition and Communication 28* (February 1977), pp. 122-127.

14 Christine Farris and Raymond Smith, "Writing Intensive Courses: Tools for Curricular Change," *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs*, edited by Susan Mcleod and Margot Soven, (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1992).

15 Nancy Sommers, "The Undergraduate Writing Experience: A Longitudinal Perspective," an overview of a Mellon grant study presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2003.

16 Ellen Lupton, "The Designer as Producer," in The Education of a Graphic Designer edited by Stephen Heller (New York: Allworth Press, 1998).

Finding Balance in Contemporary Foundations Programs

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ABSTRACT

Art departments in colleges, universities and art schools all share a common curriculum for preparing their beginning art students for study in the visual arts. The courses that comprise this curriculum are sometimes formalized into a program referred to as a foundations or first year program. This article was generated from an opportunity to reexamine a foundations program and offer suggestions in terms of curriculum structure and function. Four individuals collaborated on the research with the purposes of: a) providing a comprehensive portrait of traditional and alternative foundations curriculums in the United States, b) identifying key issues central to foundations programs, and c) suggesting improvements to the current program structure instead of proposing an entirely new type of foundation experience.

INTRODUCTION
Foundations Programs
This article examines the traditional structure of foundations programs prevalent in the visual arts departments of most colleges, universities, and art schools today. Foundations programs, or first year programs, comprise a considerable number of introductory experiences with art content involving a significant amount of time, often the entire first year of an art student's collegiate career.

This article looks at past and current trends in foundations programs and the role that foundations programs can and should play in the overall experience of the visual art student. We isolated our inquiry to foundations programs because they are common to majors in all art disciplines and therefore play a major role in the training of the artist and art educator. Additionally, we selected foundations programs as the subject of this research because students and faculty in art departments across the country often criticize the traditional models as ineffective and irrelevant to the overall program.

Mary Stewart writes:
A foundations program is designed to provide a broad learning experience...and so no foundations program will ever provide the knowledge in a specific field that upper level courses require. Thus, a general foundation followed by a specialized foundation in each major becomes necessary.[1]

For the purposes of positioning our research in a contemporary context, we assume that the current tradition based structure is problematic for various reasons, and charged ourselves with suggesting some ways to improve it.

We chose not to accept the perception of foundations programs as "art boot camp." We see them as an integral part of the educational structure. It was our aim to provide suggestions for improvement to the traditional structure of foundations

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programs, rather than to introduce an entirely new conception of foundations programs. The general foundations program is important and necessary for all students of the visual arts, provided that it is designed to address collective artistic sensibilities and contemporary ideas about art understanding and art making. The training of the art student is different today because artists create in a different, more pluralistic context. Our research suggests that there are realms of art making practice that are not addressed by many current foundations programs. Therefore, the changes we have considered might more effectively incorporate aspects of the contemporary art world while upholding the ideals of the traditional structure of foundations programs. The shortcoming of the current model is that, simply stated, it is out of balance.

We will discuss our benchmarking of current foundations programs, the Betz survey of foundations instructors[2], a focus group survey of students enrolled in Foundations at the University of Georgia, and our suggested revisions for contemporary foundations programs. We begin with an overview of the historical and theoretical underpinnings of foundations programs.

The Bauhaus and Traditional Foundations Programs

In the early 20th century, the Bauhaus School of Design in Germany became an important training center for artists and designers. The Bauhaus is the most important curricular influence on the structure of current art instruction at the foundations level. James Elkins writes that students at the Bauhaus were instructed in a three-stage curriculum, called the First Year Program. The First Year Program was a six-month preparatory class, taught originally by Johannes Itten, that was divided into three topics covering the ideas of three basic principles in art making:

1. *Two-Dimensional Instruction: Training the Senses*: The program offered exercises to train the senses and the hand. The objective was control of the hand, arm, and the eye. The first portion of Itten's program included exact drawings from models and the study of different textures.
2. *Two-Dimensional Instruction: Training the Emotions*: Students were given emotional subjects (such as anger or sorrow) or abstract subjects (such as war or a thunderstorm) and told to represent them graphically. In some instances, an abstract approach was required for the assignment.
3. *Two-Dimensional Design: Training the Mind*: The intellectual side of art was promoted by exercises in the analysis of Old Master paintings, color schemata, and simple, formal oppositions (e.g., light/dark). Live models and abstractions were used.

These same three principles were applied to three-dimensional coursework in the final portion of the six-month introductory course. The First Year Program was designed to lead students into the next stage of training, the undergraduate curriculum of specific artistic disciplines.

The Bauhaus curriculum contained the seeds of the 2D, 3D, and, sometimes, 4D sequence common today as student preparation for more advanced classes. James Elkins writes that this sequence of courses is open to the same objections as the study of "rudiments." His questioning of the sequence and plurality of this structure inspired our own inquiry. We asked: Why assume a particular sequence or chronology? Are there truly "fundamentals?"

James Elkins writes:
After all postmodernism prides itself on not believing in foundations and the remnants of the Bauhaus look more out of place each year. At the same time I'm not so sure there is any such thing as a post-Bauhaus method of elementary art instruction. The Bauhaus notion of rudiments and the sequence are the only workable alternatives to the academic model. It can seem as if contemporary art departments and schools have done away with the Bauhaus by intertwining all sorts of new things in their first year course—digital video, multimedia installation, biology, ideology, politics and even pornography, but the mixtures only obscure the ongoing belief that art does have rudiments and that they have to do with seeing, making and the *tabula rasa*.[3]

Elkins also draws a parallel between the children's exercises advocated by Friedrich Froebel in his kindergarten curriculum, and the first year course at the Bauhaus:
It is worth considering that the kindergarten and the Bauhaus first year course share an interest in non-verbal, a-historical learning and that such learning may not correspond with art making that is done in later years. How many subjects in elementary school are prepared for by kindergarten exercises?[4]

Froebel encouraged children to draw, to compare sizes, make patterns, investigate the textured, color, weave, and model clay using wooden balls, blocks, laths, paper, and hoops. The rationale was that learning takes place best in non-utilitarian interaction with materials. Froebel[5] held, along with educational theorists Pestalozzi[6] and Dewey,[7] that theory need not or cannot develop before activity, a strongly held notion in the design of the Bauhaus program.

Elkins' work in the history of foundations inspired us to ask: Do Bauhaus-inspired foundations programs still work in contemporary art programs? Is such training relevant to the way artists are making work today? In order to begin answering these questions, we needed to confirm that a Bauhaus influenced model was currently the most prevalent model and what variations on this model existed.

ISSUES IN CURRENT FOUNDATIONS PROGRAMS
Benchmarking Current Foundations Programs

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Our research included a benchmarking component that considered the programs that colleges, universities, and art schools presently require for visual arts students. We narrowed our benchmarking data by imposing three parameters. Only those institutions accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) located within the United States were considered. Additionally, only one school from each of the major Carnegie classification types (e.g., Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive) was included from each state. Given these parameters, we included 55 institutions of higher education from 43 states in our benchmarking data.

Most foundations programs researched were those offered in the first year of a student's college education, with a range from 9 to 31 semester hours. For an overwhelming majority of these schools, the foundations programs were based on curricula that appeared to have an unequal balance of the types of courses that students are required to take. For instance, courses considered "significant" (significance determined by the cumulative number of credit hours dedicated to foundations courses) in the education of the foundations art student are heavily skill-based, with an emphasis on basic skill building in courses such as 2-D design, 3-D design, beginning drawing, life drawing, color and design, and art history survey courses. Other courses, such as painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography, etc., appear to be emphasized less, or depending on the institution, are integrated into one of the skilled-based courses mentioned previously along with other media. Trailing even further behind (and non-existent in some programs) are courses that provide focus on technology, visual and critical thinking skills, conceptualization, problem-solving skills, and 4-D design. To summarize, we found that most of the NASAD accredited institutions researched—with some exceptions—are concerned with training/engaging the foundations student primarily in and through physical/manual skills. These programs exemplify what we consider to be traditional foundations programs.

A small number of foundations programs could be considered non-traditional or beyond traditional. The focus of these programs is typically on aspects of visual communication, conceptual aspects of making art, creative and contextual components of artistic practice, or aesthetic issues of contemporary art. These issues are taught through courses that often have titles like "Concept Drawing" or "Art in Life." Our research indicates that these alternatives to traditional foundations courses are typically found in schools of art, particularly those in the Northeastern region of the United States.

Balance in Foundations Programs Curricula

From our benchmarking research, we noticed that a desire to meet the needs of the contemporary artist/art student in his professional training is at the heart of most foun-

dations programs. A chief concern, then, should be how those needs differ from those of the historical art student of the Bauhaus. Mary Stewart discusses a contradiction between the quality of foundations programs and the usefulness of the skills learned in foundations programs when the students take upper division courses. This contradiction leads to a rethinking of the purposes of foundations programs.

According to Mary Stewart, the foundations program should be tailored to fit the goals of the department and school. She posits that a department must decide if its foundation program's purpose is to prepare students for further work in a specific media or to prepare students for a career in art. A balance must be reached between goals of traditional foundations course work and the issues of a contemporary art world. Stewart suggests that foundations programs can tip this balance depending on whether the programs focus on skills of specific media, on integrative approaches from many media, or on concept, idea and creative thinking skills.

We constructed our proposal on the advice of Stewart, who writes that: a) visual communication is fundamental, b) concepts feed communication, c) concept plus compositions equals communication, and d) critical judgment supports creative thinking when designing a foundations program. Stewart also advises that schools revising their foundations programs should also determine what information should be left out: "It is only through distilling the curriculum down to the real basics that any substantial learning can occur." Stewart speaks to the overall objective of any contemporary foundations curriculum: to prepare first year art students for successful continued study in art.

While this objective appears to be straightforward, we found that many of those involved in foundations programs hold widely differing viewpoints about the process of training for successful continued study in art. In the following sections, we summarize the viewpoints of both foundations instructors and students.

Some Foundations Instructors' Viewpoints
In 2003, Scott Betz coordinated a survey of foundations programs in institutions of higher education. This massive undertaking was the offshoot of a survey begun at a 2003 exhibition called *Foundations Today: A Student/Mentor Exhibition* that showcased the work of foundations students and their instructors. Betz writes that his intention for implementing this survey is "to create a clearer profile of foundations teaching in the United States and in some institutions abroad."[10] Over 250 foundations instructors have participated in the survey to date. Their responses provide a wide range of informative answers to the 36 questions Betz posed. The nature of the questions range from those regarding the kinds of the courses that comprise the foundations programs to those that inquire as to the pedagogical techniques that make the courses successful.

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In regard to the nature of the courses that are considered the foundations courses, approximately 19% are drawing classes, 18% are 2-D design classes, and 16% are 3-D design classes. Other courses that comprise a significant ratio of the foundations coursework are art history, color theory and figure drawing. Over half of the approximately 250 respondents, 53 of which have been teaching for over 20 years, indicated that they do not believe that foundation teaching has changed as much in the last 20 years in comparison to the contemporary art world.

Approximately 67% of respondents indicated a desire to change some aspect of their foundations program. When asked about which areas of the foundations curriculum they would like to see changed, they gave a wide variety of responses. However, a few key themes emerged: a) time-based (4D) studio, b) digital media, c) critical/creative/conceptual thinking, d) contemporary art theory and history, and e) art history.

Many respondents expressed a need for more collaboration and cooperation across departments, to help students work in the conceptual and interdisciplinary way that informs much of contemporary practice. Oftentimes, the departments within certain art programs are isolated from one another, and the members of various divisions do not feel the need to work together. They often divide up responsibilities and, in turn, hold expectations for one another. Then when one department doesn't yield the desired results expected by a separate department, individuals begin to play the "blame game." According to Stewart, upper division teachers are equally responsible for the failure of various foundations programs because they are neglecting to see that they must work in concert with foundations teachers in the design of the program's curriculum.

Some Students' Viewpoints

Students, like instructors, play key roles in foundations programs. We designed a survey to gather students' views of current foundations programs, as a comparative point with the Betz survey. Focus group research was conducted with a group of college students who were enrolled in a foundations program. We created a Likert-type attitude survey[11] to measure student interest in, and opinion of, the University of Georgia (UGA) Foundation program. With the assistance of UGA Foundation Coordinator, Christopher Hocking, we distributed surveys to each of the Foundation instructors for each of their students to complete and return. Of the 360 questionnaires distributed, we received 166 completed surveys. Approximately 96% of student respondents were enrolled in the UGA Foundation program. All items were coded and entered into a computer program for statistical evaluation.

Frequency distributions[12] illustrate the range and number of student responses to the twelve questions posed by our Foundation Questionnaire. We noticed that most student respondents currently taking the Foundation coursework were age 19 in their first year

of post-secondary education at UGA. The largest percentage of students, 37%, indicated with a write-in response that their career aspirations were "Other" as opposed to "Professional Artist." Among the varied responses students wrote in for "Other," the largest number (27) indicated graphic design.

The Foundation Questionnaire provided additional qualitative data. The questionnaire concluded with an open-ended invitation for students to make comments and suggestions regarding the Foundation program. Some responded with constructive criticism: "Allow for more creative expansion in a wider variety of media." "Offer foundation courses in more specified fields (painting, photography) as well." Many students, however, provided comments of praise: "I believe the Foundations courses to be essential in getting all students to progress." "The courses served their purpose for me by helping me decided if I am headed in the right career direction. The courses are challenging in their own ways, and having these basic courses allow me to better my techniques with other students who will be going into different areas of art (such as fabric design) before we go to study our individual areas of art."

Proposal for Changes Towards a Contemporary Foundations Program
Based on our evaluation of some of the issues prevalent in current foundations programs, and on data collected both from the Betz survey and our own, we believe there is a need for revision to foundations programs as they exist presently in many art departments. We observed that, historically, foundations programs emphasized the development of skills of producing art and postponed conceptual and idea-generation skills for the upper-level classes. By postponing the conceptual aspects of instruction for more advanced classes, traditional foundations programs may not always address the elements we have defined as essential to a contemporary art program. On the other hand, we have found contemporary programs that are heavily weighted towards a conceptual end but do not foster practical skill or technique.

We propose program changes that balance skill acquisition, manual training, interdisciplinary experimentation, historical knowledge and opportunity for conceptual, creative application. Many current foundations programs seek to redefine the traditional interaction between skills and ideas. Similarly, we propose a three-way balance among skills, ideas, and concepts.

We propose Principles for the Curriculum and the corresponding Objectives for Student Learning. The three *Principles for the Curriculum* are: a) train the senses, b) train the mind and engage affectivity, and c) feed the mind and examine experience.

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PRINCIPLES FOR THE CURRICULUM

Train the Senses

The first component that must be included in a foundations program, in an effort to *train the senses*, addresses the physical and visual skills that are needed for the manual creation of art. These physical skills include the ability to manipulate a wide range of art media including drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, fiber arts, and digital media. In addition to these physical skills, visual concepts, such as composition, unity, and repetition, must be addressed.

Train the Mind and Engage Affectivity

The second component, *train the mind and engage affectivity*, addresses both the cognitive aspects and the emotional and subjective aspects of art. The cognitive aspects of art are thinking skills such as problem solving. The emotional and subjective aspects of art are personal responses to objects and ideas and how those responses affect choices made in the art making process. These two aspects are addressed simultaneously because they are naturally combined in the mental activities related to the study and making of artworks. For example, generating ideas and solving problems creatively both require specific analytical and critical thinking skills, but they also require awareness of one's subjective response to the generated ideas and how to best communicate those ideas.

Feed the Mind and Examine Experience

The third component that must be addressed in a contemporary foundations program, *feed the mind and examine experience*, entails both the acquisition of knowledge through reading, research, or personal experience and the critical evaluation of that knowledge. Developing a solid base of knowledge about art historical facts, artists' biographies, and influences of cultural and political movements is essential in students' education. In conjunction with this knowledge, students must develop the habit of questioning these facts and the way they are presented. This questioning is more than discovering personal opinion; it is developing awareness that facts are often subjective and contextual and therefore express differing degrees of truth in different situations.

Objectives for Student Learning

The three corresponding *Objectives for Student Learning* are: a) students will practice manual and visual skills of art making, such as manipulating media and applying visual concepts such as composition and balance, b) students will formulate mental and affective strategies for the purposes of idea generation, creative problem solving, conceptualization, presentation and communication of personal vision, and critical and aesthetic thinking, and c) students will acquire and evaluate a base of factual knowledge related to the disciplines of art. These learning objectives provide the basis for generating program and course objectives that remain in balance and in concert with the principles

for the curriculum.

Program Structure

Presenting these three fundamental concepts to students in an integrated manner may help prepare art students for successful continued study in art, which is the purpose of a foundations program. A foundations curriculum that intertwines the importance of skills, cognitive and affective responses, and knowledge and critical perspectives moves closer to accomplishing this goal. We anticipate that these principles and objectives will be reconciled with the needs and goals of each school's visual art department. The resulting foundations program may achieve balance in many aspects of its implementation. The changes we propose beg the question: What would a program implementing these components look like?

CONCLUSION

The contemporary foundations program that we propose challenges the Bauhaus assumption that the mind cannot develop before activity. The development of understanding is more likely to occur when the facts, in this case the skills of how to manipulate materials in creating art, are applied to authentic, contextualized problems.

Such an integration of activity and thought might be embodied in a program that develops the physical tasks of art making while attending to the mental tasks of art making. Such an aim is facilitated when students acquire knowledge and experience in their foundations programs and look at that experience critically. Additionally, students in a balanced foundations program can be taught to think analytically and creatively, even as they acknowledge the subjective and emotional realm of thinking. We propose a contemporary foundations program that intertwines physical and visual skills, cognitive and affective reasoning, and knowledge and the critical perspective of that knowledge. With these considerations in foundations programs, we envision a program better equipped to prepare first year students for successful continued study of art in a contemporary world.

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Notes

1 Mary Stewart, *Curriculum design: Asking the right questions*, (2001). Retrieved May 21, 2006, from http://www.niu.edu/art/2dfoundations/revising2.html, Question 1 section, ¶1.

2 Scott J. Betz, *Foundations survey results*, (2003). Retrieved May 21, 2006, from http://faculty.weber.edu/sjbetz/webmechanicsfolder/foundationsurvhome.html.

3 Elkins, James, *Why art cannot be taught: A handbook for art students*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 36.

4 Elkins, James, *Why art cannot be taught: A handbook for art students*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 37.

5 Froebel, Friedrich, *The education of man*, Hailmann, W. N., ed., (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1911).

6 Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich, *The education of man, aphorisms*, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951).

7 Dewey, John, *John Dewey on education: Selected writings*, Archambault, R. D., ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

8 Complete benchmarking data available on the World Wide Web at http://www.robbiequinn.com/research/foundation_benchmarks.htm

9 Stewart, Mary, *Curriculum design: Asking the right questions*, (2001). Retrieved May 21, 2006, from http://www.niu.edu/art/2dfoundations/revising2.html, Question 1 Section, ¶8.

10 Betz, Scott J., *Foundations survey results*, (2003). Retrieved May 21, 2006, from http://faculty.weber.edu/sjbetz/webmechanicsfolder/foundationsurvhome.html, Home, ¶1.

11 Survey instrument available on the World Wide Web at http://www.robbiequinn.com/research/foundation_survey.htm

12 Frequency distributions are available on the World Wide Web at http://www.robbiequinn.com/research/foundation_freq_dist.htm

Book Reviews

Responding to Art: Form, Content, and Context
with Core Concepts in Art CD-ROM
by Robert Bersson
McGraw-Hill, 2004

Reviewed by Geraldine Wojno Kiefer
Assistant Professor of Art History and Art
Shenandoah University

Expanded to "Judging a book by its covers and frontispiece," the old expression provides apt entry to Robert Bersson's eminently teachable *Responding to Art: Form, Content, and Context*. Jaunty color plates of Henri Matisse's *The Dance* and Roy Lichtenstein's *Artist's Studio: The Dance*, caught in a bright blue field, adorn the back and front covers, respectively.

Bersson's carefully crafted and compact appreciation of the two works, printed opposite the Lichtenstein frontispiece, makes it evident at the outset that this is no ordinary textbook. Three paragraphs into the book, the reader has a lucid sense of its direction: formal and content-based analysis; comparison and contrast; critical reception and perspectives; explanation of movements and themes in cultural contexts; art-historical influence; intersections of fine art with mass media; and a focus on the artist's studio. Bersson's writing on these themes presents them vividly, visually, and conversationally. Bersson stresses good writing not only by example but also explicitly, by presenting a fine student essay in "Art and Appreciation" (Chapter 1) and guidelines in "Writing about Art" (Appendix I).

There is no better choice than *Responding to Art* for a one- or two-semester art appreci-ation course. Rather than edit chapters or themes from more weighty tomes geared for art history surveys, teachers can utilize *RTA* right out of the wrapper. The frontispiece is a ready-made course introduction. A prototypical syllabus smoothly proceeds from Part One, a guide to appreciation, composition and frameworks of art, through Parts Two and Three, overviews of the two- and three-dimensional arts, including architecture. The midterm break of this sample term slides between Parts Three and Four. The latter, "A History of Art," occupies the second half of the book and the semester.

A cornucopia of reading, discussion, and project assignments makes the Berssonian art appreciation course diverse and lively. Conceived as an unfolding pattern of themes and variations, the running text of each chapter is stocked with change-of-pace educational features. These include "critical thinking captions," "interaction boxes," "accompanying quotations," "technique boxes," and "appreciation essays": content-rich capsules on artists, workshops, processes, genres, and works of art (vi-viii).

Useful and apropos as they are to the material at hand and as well suited as they are to teacher-class interaction and problem-based learning, the captions, boxes, and quota-tions bow before the appreciations. Like gems studding a richly patterned textile, these essays give students access to a treasury of art, cultures, and ideas, not to mention a collegial symposium of writers and highly polished writing. Bersson sets the design with his authorship or co-authorship of "Bill Reid, *The Spirit of the Haida Gwaii*" (28); "The Art of Album Cover Design" (64); "The French Revolution in Fashion" (73); "In the Tradition of the Chinese Masters: I-Hsiung Ju Paints a Picture" (119); "An Interview with

Artist Peter Ratner on Computer-Generated Art" (121); "The Architecture of Oluwole Olumuyiwa" (294); "Xochipilli: Aztec God of the Spring" (440); and "Rosa Bonheur, *The Horse Fair*" (496).

Another running pattern involves artists' workshops and studios. The many narratives and illustrations of artists at work make the trip through RTA intimate and engaging. This thread moves from Egyptian and Greek artists at work through a Renaissance sculptor's workshop and on to a contemporary architectural office. Isamu Noguchi, Alexander Calder, Duane Hanson and a host of contemporary modelers, welders, and carvers dot the field.

Teachers using *RTA*'s built-in art appreciation "syllabus" will not address each part or chapter in equal depth. They will likely focus on themes and periods of their interests and expertise. Throughout, the text provides a comprehensiveness and multi-dimensionality to the fields of art and art history that educators will welcome. They can adapt, re-order, and weight each part as desired and still come up with a "symmetrical" course. This symmetry is equally beneficial to students, who can review and cross-reference foundational material in Parts One, Two and Three while studying historical topics in Part Four.

RTA's flexibility and adaptability are seconded by its culturally grounded, tripartite thrust: art cuts a broad swath through fine and popular fields; art is mapped in large (intercontinental and continental) and small (regional and local) territories; and art and its appreciation are keyed to communities. As a scholar and teacher, Bersson strongly advocates the creative synergy of communities. These include not only the artists, patrons, and critics he writes about, but also the academics, professional writers, collectors, and student essayists who have written for him. By extension, they also include student communities, small groups that might and should be formed to do interaction box projects, such as adopting and researching a building or dressing up in contemporary fashion styles (a Bersson favorite!).

Another thesis of the book is that art appreciation maps worlds and works of art. Bersson stresses that twenty-first-century pluralities—media, messages, and audiences circulating in global and increasingly virtual environments—require that students be taught not only about, but also through these pluralities. Hence, in Chapter 6, the graphic arts are introduced through a capsule history of printmaking and expanded through a look at mass-media technologies and instruments—newspapers, magazines, posters and advertisements. In Chapter 7, photography is grounded in a brief history of processes and inventions. The chapter then segues to film, digital media, and mass-media applications. The architecture chapter, Chapter 10, is grounded in a chronological survey of structures, materials, and building types, which lead to key

architects of the modern period. It concludes with postmodernism, preservation, and community design.

Explorations and critiques of mass culture are built into these three chapters. Admittedly, this presents a welter of ideas in three bundles. Reordering them with new subheadings—for example, design (creation), production (processes and technologies), reproduction (instruments), and reception (reading and critiquing)—might better clarify this material. Alternatively, mass-media investigations and critiques might be considered in their own chapter.

RTA's histories are concise capsules that lend themselves either to a quick, one- or two-class summary or to more extensive discussion. Sometimes things get a bit too compact. For example, Baroque art, split between Chapter 14 and 15, would benefit by its own chapter. Likewise the arts of the Americas, subtopics of Chapter 15, could be expanded. Negative connotations built into the subheading "In the Shadow of the Fine Arts: The 'Minor Arts'" ("Native American Arts," "African-American Arts," and "Hispanic Arts," 472-76) call for rethinking. These caveats notwithstanding, *RTA*'s histories are excellently organized, written, and illustrated. Bersson's skill as a contextualist is evident in dual references for selected works: Giovanni Bellini's *St. Francis in the Wilderness* (80, 417), Jan van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Wedding Portrait* (114, 413), Leonardo da Vinci's *Ginevra de' Benci* (40, 44), and Giotto's Arena Chapel (The *Lamentation* and *Crucifixion*, 25, 405). "Ways of Seeing Nature across Time: The Middle Ages and the Renaissance" (77-82) is an excellent introduction to "From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance" (402-18). The only problem here is that while instructors should welcome these opportunities to present the text in a more lively fashion than page-by-page, students might object to going back and forth to complete their unit on Renaissance art.

Ultimately, *Responding to Art* can be introduced by its covers, but only judged by its contents, which earn high marks. Readers will not fail to note that its lively, personable approach, the result of an impassioned lifetime commitment of a teacher to his métier, makes it a good read as well as a good text. And there is a bonus point: a glimpse at Robert Bersson's workspace, pictured on page 265. It is captioned "home office of Robert Bersson, 2002." A second edition from this studio/workshop of art and ideas is eagerly anticipated.

Responding to Art: Form, Content, and Context, **by Robert Bersson.** Comes with Core Concepts in Art CD-ROM, version 2.0., 1st edition, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004. 704 pages, 2 appendices ("Writing about Art," "Timeline of Artists and Art"), glossary, notes, index. 5 one-color line illustrations, 23 four-color line illustrations, 79 one-color halftones, 666 four-color halftones (773 total illustrations). ISB

Drawing From Life: The Journal As Art
by Jennifer New
Princeton Architectural Press, 2005

Reviewed by Professor Leslie Fedorchuk
Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design

Drawing from Life is not a how-to book. The instructor/student looking for a textbook with exercises laid out systematically will be sorely disappointed. It is, however, a wonderful spark for the imagination of any foundation level art and design student—with endless possibilities for its use by a resourceful instructor.

Jennifer New has collected journals (for the purposes of this review I am using journal as inclusive of "sketchbook") and arranged them into what she calls a "four-pointed hierarchy" of reasons for keeping a journal. She asks, "What can be derived from viewing the pages of a physicist and a songwriter side by side? A quilt maker and a cartoonist?" Indeed. I might add to that, what are the advantages of exposing the visual and written journal work of people such as photographer Carol Beckwith; musician David Byrne; product designer Erica Bohanon; and geologist Rick Hoblitt to future members of the creative class who find their way into our courses? Simply put, goals are obscure without a variety of models to aspire to. This book offers a host of models.

My own memories of early art teachers stressing the importance of keeping a sketchbook are still vivid. I am grateful that watercolorist Barbara Cervenka, an early mentor and teacher, was generous with her own journals – and my early "aha" moment was that they could contain so much more than quick gesture studies and perspective drawings of the Detroit area, where I was a young artist. They could also include collages, written entries, photographs, and to-do lists. In this day of oh-so-many tech tools vying for attention (blogging, podcasting, MySpace and gaming), how do we convince students that the basic eye/hand thinking of the mark on the page is as crucial to their growth as any other tool they will use? The vivid variety in this text makes it obvious.

Observation, reflection, exploration, creation—these are the four points in New's hierarchy. Although they are fluid and overlap, they form New's basic template for organizing the variety of journal images she has gathered. A brief foray into the history of the journal (with examples from Leonardo da Vinci, Lewis and Clark, and Thomas Edison) stands apart from the four main sections, each of which begins with a brief overview. Each person whose work is represented in the book comments on the role of journals in their art.

For example, about Kansas City artist/designer Christopher Leitch, New writes:

"Each morning, Christopher Leitch writes down an objective, non-analytical summary of the previous night's dreams. It is a practice started when Leitch was seventeen and knew he wanted to be an artist but was not sure yet what that meant. Few members of his family had been to college, and most of what he knew about art came from his grandmother and mother. "My mom was a real craft queen," he remarked fondly. "If we needed something, we made it.""

Countless crossovers of discipline, medium and genre are wonderfully apparent in this book. The strength of *Drawing From Life* is the rich abundance of examples. Instructors may wish for some sort of rubric for integrating this book into their curriculums, but the absence of any defining method for instruction opens limitless options for use of the book.

Regardless of how one uses it, incorporating *Drawing From Life* is certain to add vitality to classroom conversations. The book excels as a supplemental teaching tool because it builds student appreciation for journal-keeping and offers examples that can guide them to more sophisticated thinking.

The State of FATE

President's Message
for FATE in Review
2006-2007
Volume 28

Anticipating the Best

Barbara Nesin, President
Foundations in Art: Theory and Education
Associate Professor, Spelman College

Much of what we do as foundations professionals involves the process of preparing ourselves and our students in anticipation of what will come of all our efforts, brainstorming, dialoguing, and planning. So much work goes on behind the scenes that only a relative few can fully appreciate it all. This is true of our own creative and scholarly work and of the time and effort that we invest in our responsibilities as educators, both in the classroom and through our never-ending search beyond our campuses for the material and ideas that will stimulate and inspire the best from our students. It is also true of the anticipation I feel every time FATE's board and members prepare for the next national biennial conference, the next regional conference or activity, or the next issue of this journal, *FATE in Review*. Based on almost 30 years of FATE's success, I have learned to anticipate the best from this organization and am continuously proud of the large measure to which we deliver just that.

As I perused the list of articles accepted for publication in this issue of *FATE in Review*, I realized how much our topics reflect the era in which we presently find ourselves. What a different world it is today than it was 30 years ago when FATE was founded. Most of our contributors in this volume attempt to articulate ways to include a socio-political and global context for how we teach art founda- tions: Terry Barrett's "Approaches to Postmodern Artmaking;" the "Search for Content and Meaning" espoused by Lori Kent; Ned Irvine's insights about artist books as "a Tool of Change," and Chris Dockery and Robert Quinn's search for "Balance in Contemporary Foundations Programs;" and even the reviews of Bob Bersson's text that takes on the challenge of providing a cultural context to surveying artistic production and Leslie Fedorchuk's "Drawing from Life" all speak to some anticipated outcome of work that grapples with the artist's role in this time of full-scale wars and domestic tensions in the U.S. and abroad around race, poverty, ethnic differences and environmental sustainability. The role of the artist has always been understood within the context of the contem- porary issues of his or her time, yet today it is somehow more urgent, perhaps because we have the technology for grander scale destruction. The potential for art and artists to make a positive difference in the world has captured the creative energy of many forward-thinking scholars and social critics. We are fortunate to anticipate more provocative thoughts on this subject in the keynote address to be delivered by Carol Becker at our biennial conference in Milwau- kee hosted by Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design March 28-31, 2007.

What I anticipate from all of this deliberation about the current state of the world and our role in it is that we, as concerned and vital art professionals, will model for our students that we are always engaged in trying to learn and understand more about what is happening around us and to interject our creative vision of new possibilities. Even more, what I anticipate is that because we do this, the next generation of artists and designers will be equipped to make a difference—however small or large—in how the world is shaped. New technology does not necessarily mean new paradigms of thinking, though the hope is that the two will go hand in hand. Many of the paradigm shifts that began in the twentieth century have yet to come to full maturity, but if we can reinforce a positive direction, we can hope that our students will take it to the next level. At the least, we can let them know that we anticipate their best efforts. For many of us, this is the connection between our creative and scholarly work and our teaching. Whatever we have been able to glean about art-making constitutes a dialogue with the next generation, perhaps a generation of what Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson call "The Cultural Creatives," the title of their book subtitled "How 50 million people are changing the world."

We are privileged to be teaching, making, and talking about art at such a critical moment in history. I anticipate great things.

Barbara Nesin, M.F.A.
President, FATE

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About FATE

Foundations in Art: Theory and Education, FATE, is a national, non-profit 501(C)(3) organization dedicated to the promotion of excellence in the development and teaching of college-level foundations courses in both studio and art history. Founded in 1977 as an affiliate society of the College Art Association (CAA), members include approximately 400 studio and art history faculty and administrators, and over 60 sponsoring institutions. The organization sponsors a national conference bi-annually, regional conferences in interim years, panel sessions at CAA and regional associations, and publishes a professional journal (FATE in Review) and a newsletter. For more information, please see the website at www.foundationsinart.org.

FATE logo

Philip B. Meggs
(1942-2002)

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