CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH ART APPRECIATION: THE USE OF CONSTRUCTIVIST PEDAGOGY

by

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(Under the Direction of Richard E. Siegesmund)

ABSTRACT

This study endeavors to facilitate students’ cross-cultural understanding through a constructivist art appreciation curriculum. My curriculum research combines philosophical and practical inquiries, in which the theoretical framework and the pilot study give insights to the idea of cross-cultural understanding, achieved though an art appreciation curriculum and constructivist pedagogy.

Drawing insights from theory and informal studies into pedagogy and content, the curriculum combines constructivist and humanistic approaches and compares themes between Eastern and Western aesthetics across a broad expanse of time. The culture content connects to life experiences and social issues pertinent to American undergraduate students. The teaching strategies and assessments are process-oriented and based on constructivist ideas. To meet students’ needs and interests, they incorporate diverse means, including group discussions, presentations, visual journals, art criticism, art-making and online-forums. This curriculum endeavors to facilitate the process of students’ construction of knowledge as well as the discovery of the complexity of culture and development of an open attitude toward other cultures.
INDEX WORDS: Cross-cultural understanding, Art Appreciation, Constructivist pedagogy, Curriculum development.
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THE USE OF CONSTRUCTIVIST PEDAGOGY

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In the 21st century, students are best served by a global view that allows for multiple cultural perspectives. A college Art Appreciation course may be the first and one of the rare opportunities for students to learn how to contextualize a variety of forms of cultural practice. Aesthetic experience (Broudy, 1972) can be an effective way to guide cultural understanding. Thus, a specific outcome of an art appreciation course could be the building block of cross-cultural understanding for many college students. This research aims to develop an art appreciation curriculum for cross-cultural understanding at the college level through insights from the literature review; the experience of conducting an informal study; and the organization of a reading group that responded to my curriculum units. This journey drives me not only to examine Western culture but also to re-examine my own cultural origins from a new perspective. This journey also helps me learn to observe and analyze diversity in cultural phenomena in a more objective and critical way.

Educational Purpose

There have been two popular approaches usually implemented in aesthetic education in public schools: performance and appreciation (Broudy, 1972, p. 60-63). The performance approach is based on equipping students with the training for skills that will help them in the practice of art. Such a pedagogy can benefit students’ understanding of the medium and allows the experience of thoughtful application and sensitivity in the process of art making. However,
the learning experience is not comprehensive if technique is the only aspect that students encounter. In addition, there are many reasons, including course availability or pressure to pursue a “college track” curriculum or fear of the subject that students might not choose to take a performance-based art class in high school.

Art Appreciation offers another path for cultivating sensitivities that might produce an aesthetic experience (Dewey, 1934/1959). Art Appreciation refers to the undergraduate introductory course in the understanding of a range of visual art forms. Such a course usually involves lectures on facts and knowledge of artistically significant works, including their stylistic characteristics, biographical information about the creator, and the context of these works within cultural history. However, the degree to which this content affects the aesthetic life of the student is questionable, as the process of learning is not dependent on the passive accumulation of content, but on the structured refinement of perception (Broudy, 1972; Dewey, 1934/1959).

From my review of the literature and from my personal teaching experiences in art appreciation, I am aware of the insufficiency of the lecture approach. Therefore, I wish to propose a more effective approach that can bring students closer to aesthetic experiences in an Art Appreciation course. Moreover, because of the importance of cultivating students as world citizens (Nussbaum, 1997) and holding a global view, the proposed course also endeavors to evoke their cultural awareness and understanding. Thus, for this study, I regard Art Appreciation as encompassing forms of visual art and culture.

This study seeks to develop a college level art appreciation curriculum in the U.S. that is based on a humanistic framework, utilizes constructivist pedagogical methods as tools to foster cross-cultural understanding between Asian and Western art forms, and creates an active learning experience relating to the lived experiences of American young people. The humanistic
curriculum highly values the free will and the initiative of the individual. Dubin and Olshtain (1986) describe McNeil’s (1977) idea of such a curriculum by saying that it ultimately aims to “develop the whole person within a human society” (p. 75). It nourishes “sharing of control, negotiation, and joint responsibility by co-participants; it stresses thinking, feelings, and action; it attempts to relate subject matter to learners’ basic needs and lives; and it advances the self as a legitimate object of learning” (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p. 75).

The proposed curriculum research will include the development of an outline for a semester-long course that is complemented with three fully planned units; articulation of a vision for the course; specific strategies for engaging students in instruction, and forms of assessment.

When completing this designed course, students are expected to understand art within a cultural context; realize the complexity of the idea of culture; use a broad approach to achieve cross-cultural understanding through visual art; be capable of introspection; and demonstrate an open-minded attitude and the ability to think independently and creatively.

Several visual images constitute the heart of the curriculum and support constructivist learning and teaching. Seven criteria are developed for the selection of the visual images. They are listed here and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1. The work demonstrates beliefs, values, attitudes and human behaviors, which further reveal how people from that culture discover the meaning of life.
2. The work represents the aesthetic values of the culture.
3. The work connects to students’ every day experiences and facilitates interpretations of the historical expansion of time.
4. The work evokes a thematic comparison between East and West and across historical periods.
5. The work demonstrates potential for cross-cultural dialogue and historical influences.

6. The work evokes critical thinking about controversial issues relative to contemporary and historical East and West and encourages social awareness.

7. The work has been highly valued or popular in a culture; or the work is highly valued in art history.

Pedagogically, the constructivist method is an approach widely applied in K-12 education (Chanda & Basinger, 2000; Prater, 2001). Advocates claim that this method enhances students’ cultural understanding. However, only a limited amount of research on the use of constructivist methods in college level art appreciation courses addresses cross-cultural understanding. Therefore, I would like to further explore the possibilities of encouraging cross-cultural awareness through an Art Appreciation course with constructivist pedagogy in a university context.

To better inform and develop the proposed curriculum, I conducted an informal study on two art appreciation courses to examine how American students engage in art appreciation instruction and to observe a variety of pedagogical methods in practice within the constraints of a university course. The informal study combined with the literature review will be used to inform the development of a curriculum that fosters cross-cultural understanding through art appreciation.

**Problem of Cross-cultural Understanding**

Dambekains (1994) points to the tendency of taking one’s own cultural beliefs and values for granted. From my perspective, it appears that the Chinese are so accustomed to transition and the Confucian notion of morality that we do not recognize them as notions. Similarly, Western art seems so connected to the notions of visual forms or artistic expressions as manifestations of
individual freedom that people in the culture do not question these notions. Consequently, these unexamined assumptions create misunderstandings about art from another culture and could result in bias.

While first encountering Western art, I wondered why there were so many nudes. I used a Confucian eye to judge this phenomenon without examining its philosophical roots. As a Westerner, one might not understand why the traditional Chinese painting does not have a realistic appearance, and thus might fail to appreciate its poetic essence. Therefore, it is essential to bridge this gap through understanding cultural and historical roots.

**Research Question**

Therefore, out of these discussions, I propose the following research questions:

- How can art appreciation facilitate cross-cultural understanding?
- How does a constructivist pedagogical method apply in college-level art appreciation courses?

**Definition of Term**

Beauty is a term that will reappear throughout this curriculum. It has two fundamental distinctions. The first is *modes of beauty*, when referring to deep insight. The second is *visual appeal*, when referring to initial interest and quick attraction.

**Chapter Outline**

In Chapter 2, the reader will be introduced to the essential theories that constitute the scaffolding of the proposed curriculum. The theoretical discussion includes the idea of culture, the theories of cross-cultural understanding and multicultural education, the theories of art appreciation and the teaching and learning theories of constructivism. These theories are
examined in empirical studies. For constructing the content of the curriculum, the Western and Eastern aesthetic tradition and modern and post-modern aesthetics will be studied and compared.

In Chapter 3, the methodology for the curriculum research and the informal study will be demonstrated. The reader will find the process used when conducting the informal study of the two art appreciation courses and the discussion from the informal study. The reader then will see the criteria of the selection of the exemplar works of art for the proposed curriculum and the discussion of the findings from the reading group, which gave feedback on the curriculum. The informal study and the reading group offered insight into the development of the proposed curriculum presented in Chapter 4.

Based on the findings and discussions from the literature review, the informal study and the reading group, I developed the structure and content of the proposed curriculum, which includes objectives, teaching strategies, assessment, a course outline, and three detailed lesson plans. The reader will learn how the curriculum research informed the development of the curriculum in Chapter 4 and further understand the articulation of the curriculum research in different lesson plans in the chapters that follow. Unit 1 encourages students to be sensitive to everyday visual experiences and seeks to arouse their curiosity about cultural issues. Unit 2 leads students to compare and contrast the cultural traditions of the West and the East through the study of the nude and landscape. Unit 3 brings social awareness within a historical expansion of time through the study of the world of pleasure in the Rococo and Edo periods. Unit 4 examines Modern aesthetics and the Eastern tradition, which have influenced the modern architecture of the West and Japan. Unit 5 concludes this course by extending the world of pleasure in historical time to the contemporary setting: Pop art in the U.S. and Japan.
This proposed curriculum research not only provides American college instructors and curriculum designers insights into a constructivist pedagogy for cultivating students’ cross-cultural awareness through aesthetic experiences, but also suggests the potential of utilizing art to enhance cultural understanding in the realm of K-12 education. It is my hope that this research will further inspire teachers and scholars to contemplate the aesthetic possibilities of educating students as world citizens.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

In this review, I will cover four main subjects: Cross-cultural understanding in which I define key terms and address strategies to achieve understanding; Art Appreciation in which I review the goals and objectives for our current understanding of this type of curriculum; the educational pedagogical approach of Constructivism that is critical to the curriculum; and the content problems posed by Eastern and Western aesthetics. I will address each of these major subjects sequentially.

Cross-Cultural Understanding

Cross-cultural understanding through art appreciation involves the following concepts that need to be addressed: what is cross-cultural understanding?; how is it achieved?; what is art appreciation?; and how does art appreciation relate to cross-cultural understanding?

Definition of culture. Culture is a complex system that defies finite bounds. The notion of culture has evolved from a set of static patterns possessed by a group of people across generations to a broader view of culture as a dynamic and complex organism, which evolves over time and functions as a device for humans to discover the meaning of life (Monaghan & Just, 2000).

John Monaghan and Peter Just (2000) discuss how our concept of culture has evolved from one in which we think of culture as static and enduring, to one that is more dynamic and changing. They suggest that culture offers a means for us to make sense of our mental and
physical worlds and contains all demonstrations of social behavior. Some contemporary scholars, like McFee (1998), Sternberg (2007) and Bodley (1994), emphasize the collective and observable characters of culture. McFee (1998) defines culture as a system of beliefs, values and attitudes held by a group of people, and this system is demonstrated in three parts: “human behavior patterns, the design of their art form, and the structure of their built environment” (p. 26). Sternberg (2007), drawing from Barnouw’s (1985) earlier ideas, defines culture as “the set of attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviors shared by a group of people, communicated from one generation to the next via language or some other means of communication” (p. 1). Anthropologist Bodley (1994) states that culture is composed of “what people think, what they do, and the material products they produce,” and is “shared, learned, symbolic, transmitted cross-generationally, adaptive, and integrated” (para. 5).

Though the contemporary concepts are expansive, they favor the observable and slight the invisible. Levi-Strauss (1983) claims that the unconscious rules (the natural) are important for cultural evolution, and reason is more like a product of cultural evolution instead of its cause. He extends the idea of culture beyond the boundary of rationality. Culture is no longer an external domain of human action, but it penetrates and mediates every aspect of daily human experience (Monaghan & Just, 2000; Rosaldo, 1989).

Nussbaum (1997) emphasizes the complexities of culture and questions the collective nature of it by stating: “Cultures are not monolithic or static. They contain many strands; they contain conflict and rebellion; they evolve over time and incorporate new ideas, sometimes from other cultures” (p. 117). Thus, there are complexities in approaching the question of what is Western or Asian culture. There is no obvious explanation.
A curriculum of cultural awareness. An aim of the proposed curriculum in this dissertation is to further undergraduates’ understanding of European views for appreciating art. To achieve this aim, what should be studied? The theories of Plato and Aristotle? The Renaissance tradition? Kant’s and Schiller’s contributions to modern philosophy? Post-modernist theories of art? The same diversity of considerations arises in the matter of Chinese and Japanese culture.

Nussbaum (1997) suggests that cultural awareness is not the simple retention of a dead set of concepts. Like a living creature, a culture is changing constantly within itself and also by interacting with other cultures. My proposed curriculum does not intend to drown students in an immense sea of culture but endeavors to bring awareness of its complexities and evolutionary nature to students. In this way, students can appreciate the richness and diversity of human cultures, respect them, pursue further understanding of them, and actively participate in creating cultures.

Monaghan and Just (2000) further address the contemporary anthropological view of culture as “not a thing in itself, but as a learning device for uncovering meaning in social life” (Monaghan & Just, 2000, p. 47). Therefore, to gain a comprehensive understanding of a culture, we need to know the observable pattern of a culture transmitted over time through factors, such as the belief and value systems, attitudes, human behaviors and the products generated by this system. We also need to contemplate and examine how people in that culture make sense of their social life and search for its meaning. We need to be aware that any culture is complex and organic.

Complexity is a challenge to a curriculum. Culture is more than a collective idea of “shared communicative symbols” that organize the diversity of individual mind (Monaghan &
Just, 2000, p. 47). Culture also demonstrates diversity within itself through difficult issues, such as gender and sexuality (Nussbaum, 1997). It is impossible to address all the diverse issues in a course. However, it is a challenge to the teacher to foster the students’ awareness of the intricacies of culture by selecting an area which motivates questions and rewards students’ further study.

**Definition of understanding.** In their article on the meaning of African statues, Chanda and Basinger (2000) define understanding as the ability to create relationships from the known to explore the unknown, and to relate pieces to form a whole. They further cite Phillips and Phillips’ (1994) words to define understanding: “there can be no understanding without the use of mental structures to relate one piece of information to another” (p.51, as cited in Chanda & Basinger, 2000). Understanding therefore is a transformative process practiced through the application of mental structures.

Similarly, Koroscik, Osman and DeSouza (1988) address comprehension as a constructive process: the acquisition of meaning is based on finding a consistency between schemata\(^1\) and sensory information. Wittrock (1992) also proposes a constructivist model of prior experience that shapes understanding. Wittrock's model of generative learning includes four main processes: learning processes, motivational processes, knowledge creation processes, and the processes of generation (Wittrock, 1992). He suggests that the learner is not a passive recipient of knowledge but an active constructor of knowledge, who makes meaningful understanding of information in the environment. To generate new knowledge, the learner needs to build a connection between existing knowledge and new information. Only when the learner self-creates the relationships and generates understanding will the knowledge be meaningful and

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1 Schemata are “abstract cognitive structures that summarize and represent relationships among information gathered over time from numerous encounters with stimuli” (Anderson, 1977, 1984, Bartlett, 1932, as cited in Koroscik, et al., 1988, p. 91-92).
sustainable (Lee, Lim, & Grabowski, 2008). Therefore the learner is responsible for his/her own learning. Instruction needs to be learner-centered and relate new information to learners’ prior experiences, and motivate learners’ active participation.

The view of an active meaning-making process of the learner is well supported in educational research (see Bruner, 1996; Dewey, 1929/1960; and Rogoff, 1990). This approach is one of the central thoughts of constructivism. The social aspect of constructivism offers another important dimension of meaning-making and will be discussed further in this chapter in the section on Constructivism.

Therefore, to understand a culture, one needs to examine the relationships between one’s own culture and the distant culture to make a connection with our own experience. In short, a cross-cultural curriculum begins with looking for similarities. From there, differences can be examined. Students can speculate on what might bring about those differences. Comparisons, such as how two cultures influence each other in historical and contemporary contexts, can be examined. These comparisons extend across time. How much does the past speak to the present? The journey of investigating the complex web of cultural influences can help students cherish their own cultural heritage as well as respect the unique heritages of those who come from other cultures.

**Educating the world citizen.** Nussbaum (1997) suggests four problems in cultivating world citizens. First, such individuals need to understand their own culture in a broad world context. Second, they must understand the complexity and diversity of human beings. Third, through critical and independent thinking, there needs to be a recognition of common human needs within diversity. Fourth, such individuals must open themselves to the whole world rather than pursuing stereotypes and obeying authority. To understand another culture, we need to
question, probe and inquire into the simplified and authoritative perspectives toward that culture. We must doubt our own perspectives, which are cultivated by our own cultural context. This process may shatter the safe corner to which we are accustomed. With a basic awareness of how to approach cultural issues, students will “approach the different with an appropriate humility, but with good intellectual equipment for the further pursuit of understanding” (p. 147).

Therefore, I hope students can learn both an open attitude and skills in intellectual approaches toward a life-long pursuit of understanding diversity.

However, as mentioned earlier, the main purpose of cultural understanding is not to overwhelm students with abundant information that deals with all sorts of issues. There is no scope and sequence of instruction that can offer students a comprehensive view of every aspect of a culture, let alone more than one culture. As Nussbaum (1997) suggests, the main goal of teaching another culture, which is not our own, should be to “awaken curiosity and begin a conversation” (p. 144). She leaves the ways of teaching open but still points to an effective way of pursuing cross-cultural teaching, which is to focus on well-selected and central cultural issues in a comparative perspective.

To concentrate on an area can build firm ground for a deep understanding, illuminate a range of issues in both cultures, and motivate students to pursue further study. This type of case study may be a more effective approach than attempting a broad survey that covers hundreds if not thousands of years.

In these focused areas of concentration, to teach in a comparative term is effective for students’ understanding of both cultures because “knowledge is frequently enhanced by an awareness of difference” (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 82). She thinks that one needs to understand one’s own culture well and view it in a world context to realize it as part of a whole human civilization,
to see how much one has been derived from other cultures, and to develop empathetic understanding of other cultures. Such an attitude of respect, equality and democracy toward a distant culture is also emphasized by multicultural scholars, such as Banks (1998), Gay (1994) and Gomez (1991).

There are two constant mistakes one is likely to make while addressing cultures: 
*descriptive romanticism*, which is the oversimplification of the culture and *descriptive chauvinism*, which is the altering of the understanding of the culture by reflecting the image of oneself (Nussbaum, 1997). Consequently, we need to approach multiple texts with contrasting perspectives to gain a spectrum of views. Each text can only represent a single voice from the many voices in a culture. No single voice is the whole culture. A culture contains not only norms but also counter forces to such norms.

We also need to constantly examine and probe how our own perspectives influence how we interpret cultural issues. Nussbaum advocates *interculturalism*, which rejects the impressionistic recognition of each culture without the understandings of “common human needs across cultures and of dissonance and critical dialogue within cultures” (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 82). By realizing the common human desires within the differences, which distinguish cultures, we can associate ourselves to distant cultures and understand and respect different ways of dealing with and expressing desires.

**Multicultural education.** In terms of understanding another culture, I draw from McFee’s (1998) description of Jones’s (1978) model of aesthetic experience, Tomhave’s (1992) *multicultural education theory* and Banks’ (1998) *multiculturalism’s five dimensions*. One should be aware of the plural interpretations of the culture made by different people with their

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2 Here, Nussbaum refers to culture as both distant cultures and racial and religious minorities within one’s own culture.
unique backgrounds, and one needs to place him/herself at the center of the culture in order to really understand it (Tomhave, 1992). Viewing another culture with this empathetic and open-minded attitude addresses the idea of equality of diverse cultures (Banks, 1998; Gay, 1994; Gomez, 1991). Banks further addresses the equity of pedagogy rests in the modification of teaching strategies to satisfy every student’s unique learning style.

In the field of art education, McFee (1998) refers to Jones’s (1978) model, in which moral, political, religious, and economic factors interact with aesthetic experience, and, as a result, form perceptions of art and the ways it is created. In order to fully understand art in another context, we need to understand all the factors involved (McFee, 1998).

Elaborating on this concept, Tomhave (1992) developed six perspectives on approaching multicultural issues in education: acculturation/assimilation, which addresses the idea of the “melting pot of society;” cross-cultural research, which often happens in institutions in which a certain ethnic group constitutes a large percentage of the population; cultural separatism, in which some ethnic groups with a large population will form enough political and economic power; multicultural education theory, which holds that “a person would develop competencies in multiple systems of standards for perceiving, evaluating, believing and doing” (p. 52); social reconstruction, which examines cultural inequities, including racial, gender and class issues; cultural understanding, in which both standards of U.S. educational system and understanding of diverse cultural perspectives can be met. Multicultural education theory is especially important for the proposed curriculum. There are multiple cultures in the world. Every culture is multi-faceted. There are comparisons between cultures and within a single culture that can lead to multiple interpretations. Scholars, people from a specific culture, people foreign to a specific culture and people from various eras might arrive at multiple interpretations of a specific culture
because interpretations are specific to time and context.

For example, an art historian who studies ink paintings from ancient China might wonder what produces the free and abstract expressions in painters, such as Yü-chien of the Southern Song period. Yü-chien himself might think that the abstract and simple expression of form is the visual practice of the Zen spirit (Silbergeld, 1997). Yet, an American, without a specific knowledge of Yü-chien, might feel his ink paintings are monotonous and simplistic. Therefore, it is important to examine a culture from different perspectives, especially from that of the people within the culture and compare the differences and similarities with our own views to examine the different stances and what might influence those differences.

Tomhave (1992) cites Ecker: “there is, indeed, only one way of understanding a cultural phenomenon which is alien to one’s own ideological pattern, and that is to place oneself at its very centre and from there to track down all the values that radiate from it” (Ecker, 1986, p.81 as cited in Tomhave). Placing oneself at the center of a culture enables one to respect it as if it were one’s own. This avoids looking at another cultures as exotic and develops a more empathetic understanding.

Banks (1998) emphasizes five dimensions of multiculturalism as follows: content integration, which concerns the inclusion of cultural content; knowledge construct, which helps students investigate implicit cultural assumptions and viewpoints; equity pedagogy, which adapts the teaching methods to suit different learning styles of diverse racial groups and both genders; prejudice reduction, which helps students develop open-mindedness and respect toward different races; empower school culture and social structure, which makes the whole school culture more equitable. He addresses that multicultural education should not just include different cultural content, but should impel students to think critically and independently about cultural issues with
the attitude of equality, respect, and an open mind. Taking on this democratic attitude, teachers should modify teaching strategies to enhance the understanding of all students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles. Teaching requires a broad range of pedagogical strategies, such as teamwork, discovery and role-playing, in an attempt to meet every student’s style and promote general classroom participation.

Like many scholars, Banks’ (1998) idea of developing open-mindedness toward diverse cultures demonstrates a democratic attitude. Gomez (1991) rejects the idea of presenting a distant culture as exotic because this approach suggests viewing one’s culture as dominant and mainstream while all others are not. Instead one should view one’s culture as distinct as others. Every culture is placed at an equal height, though each of them is different. Gay (1994) proposes the last feature of multicultural education as “a personification of the U.S. democratic ideal of equality as practiced in school programs that accept all peoples' contributions, cultures, issues, and experiences as worth educational content” (para. 73). Gay (1994) and Gomez (1991) both point to the importance of recognizing the contributions of all cultural groups to world civilization. Gomez further encourages us to recognize our own biases by examining how we respond to diversity, which creates an opportunity for us to change our attitudes.

**Section conclusion: Cross-cultural understanding.** This section of my literature review emphasizes four areas: the definition of cultural understanding, and the purpose, attitude and strategy of enhancing cross-cultural understanding. To understand a culture, we need to critically examine not only its static aspects, such as the belief and value systems, attitudes, human behaviors and products passed down cross-generationally through language or symbols, but we also need to understand its organic and complex attributes in which culture is evolving over time and contains norms and conflicts, and many strands. Culture is a learning device through which
humans discover meaning in life.

The world is composed of diversity. All cultural groups contribute to human civilization. Therefore, to be a civilized citizen in contemporary society, in which globalization is constantly occurring, one needs to develop a competence for viewing one’s culture within a broad world context. This process requires an examination of distant cultures with an open-mind and democratic attitude. However, as human beings, we cannot avoid holding some biases toward distant cultures as well as our own. How can we achieve a more equitable attitude toward diversity? The only way is to understand other cultures and also ours, so we can realize the fact that our culture is as distinct as any other.

How can we deeply understand a foreign culture? Simply recognizing diverse cultural contexts is not understanding. Rather, we should focus on a set of central issues in a comparative perspective between our culture and a distant one. Comparisons can enhance understanding of both cultures. Concentrating on a well-chosen area of both cultures helps us gain deep understanding and illuminates a wide range of issues to motivate us to study further, so we can gain awareness of the complexity and diversity of the world and common human needs across cultural boundaries without being drowned in unlimited complexity.

Elaborating on this comparative strategy in which we need to put ourselves at the center of the culture and view it as an insider, we must refer to multiple sources, in which we develop abilities to perceive, assess, believe and act in plural system of standards; and cultivate independent and critical thinking and judgment toward cultural issues instead of believing and obeying authority or blindly celebrating diversity. We also need to question and probe our own views to avoid being confined by our own perspectives. Finally, we can avoid oversimplifying cultural issues and distorting the understanding of culture by reflecting on our own images.
Through this process, cultural awareness expands by evoking curiosity and learning more.

Through respect and appreciation of others, we pursue further understanding.

To achieve a democratic attitude toward diversity, a teacher needs to build on a pedagogy of equity, which is personally empowering and humanistic. Teaching strategies need be modified to enhance the understanding of students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles. To allow everyone to increase understanding, the teacher needs to use a variety of pedagogic strategies. This approach will arouse students’ interests and encourage their participation. In turn, their understanding will grow. To achieve this positive understanding, the teacher needs to associate the curriculum and instruction to students’ prior experiences. Constructivist pedagogy, which is the main teaching philosophy and strategy for this proposed curriculum, addresses a pedagogy of equity.

**Art Appreciation**

In order to effectively address cultural issues through a college art appreciation course, we need to clarify what art appreciation is; what composes art appreciation; and how cultural issues relate to art appreciation. In this section, I will discuss theories of art appreciation and the aesthetic experience proposed by modern and contemporary art appreciation theorists and educators, Broudy (1972), Dewey (1934/1959) and Barrett (2003).

Art appreciation is a complex issue, which, from micro-perspectives, involves personal experiences and backgrounds, and in macro-perspectives, involves cultural and social values. Broudy (1972) claims that the cultivation of perception is the very first and essential step in aesthetic education. Based on responding to sensory quality, Dewey (1934/1959) claims that art criticism should evoke the viewer’s personal interpretation of the sensuous experience and also create an awareness of cultural influences. Art is not a static object but a *live creature*, which
needs to be experienced. Appreciation of art involves understanding of and insight into human
life. Similarly, Barrett (2003) thinks that art cannot always be fully comprehended exclusively
through perception. We also need to gain the contextual information of art to achieve a
comprehensive process of art appreciation, especially when the art is from other times and
differing cultures.

**Broudy.** Broudy (1972) views the aesthetic experience as an important way to approach
value education. He describes the experience as *enlightened cherishing*, which “can be thought
of as love of objects and actions that by certain norms and standards are worthy of our love. It is
a love that knowledge justifies” (p. 6). Realizing human desires does not come through acting
them out in the real world, but through aesthetic experience in which desires are given form and
refined. Such imaginative acts can be deliberately cultivated through aesthetic experience.

He criticizes the two popular approaches usually implemented in aesthetic education in
public school: the performance approach, which is based on the training of skills in the practice
of art, and the appreciation approach, which refers to a typical course in appreciation of painting,
music or literature and usually involves the lecturing of facts and knowledge of works of art,
including the stylistic characteristics, biographical matter relating to artists, and the development
of art history. He thinks the aesthetic experience is more than art-making and simply knowing
facts can hardly affect the students’ aesthetic lives unless the process of knowing is accompanied
by sufficient training in fine-grained perceptions. Therefore, he supports the idea that aesthetic
education should focus on the cultivation of perception of sensory quality and “receptivity to
expressiveness via metaphor” (p. 43). He regards aesthetic education as going beyond
stereotyped metaphors, simple logic and emotions aroused by images. He states, “This
distinction between *having an emotion* and *contemplating the image of an emotion* is peculiarly important for aesthetic education” (p.49).

These ideas are deeply rooted in German Idealism. Schiller (1794/1982) and Hegel (1835/1973) also propose such freedom from conventional thoughts as a result of aesthetic experience (Bowie, 2003). Expanded experiences give insight into our lives. Because sensory qualities are the embodiment of human experience and imagination, which is complex and unpredictable, no definite meaning can be assigned to a given quality, such as the meanings of a word in the dictionary. Art does not yield direct and discursive communications; rather, art functions indirectly and communicates the complexity of the human experience. This is why art is both important for human progression and distinct from science. However, to those who are sensitive to aesthetic images, art becomes direct and immediate communications (Broudy, 1972).

Therefore, the teacher should serve as a facilitator to guide students to perceive the variations and refinement of those qualities with more sensitive eyes. If students approach a work with a certain rigid knowledge, peer opinion, or simply agree upon certain sensory and expressive qualities that the teacher points out without perceiving sensory and expressive qualities by themselves, perspectives narrow.

To cultivate individual perception, the teacher should emphasize that no agreement on what a work expresses is necessary. Broudy asserts that “works of art ‘talk’ in metaphors” (p. 82). However, we are accustomed to looking for literal meanings in works of art. Discussing the nuances of what is perceived can enhance students’ sensitivity to expressiveness. This focused attention can decrease our tendency to look for literal meanings. In the same way, sensitivity to the visual qualities and the emotions evoked may lead us to examine personal and social ideologies and biases. Through realizing ideologies and biases, we can claim an opportunity to
transcend them. Therefore, the perceptual approach is more subtle and fundamental than the performance and appreciation approach.

Dewey. Broudy drew on Dewey’s (1934/1959) concepts of perception and critical interpretation of sensory quality. Most importantly, Dewey emphasizes the connection to life experience in the appreciation of art. He also draws our attention to the actual experiences that art brings to us as well as the ones that we return to art.

Dewey (1934/1959) thinks that to perceive is to “take in,” to receive the traits of the object without any bias for it. To perceive is to see the object as to see it for the first time and with openness, which generates fresh consciousness and allows room to emotionally respond to the object.

Perception is refined through rigorous critical study. Dewey (1934/59) states, “The function of criticism is the reeducation of perception of works of art” (p. 324). Perception goes beyond recognition to require interpretations of sensory input. This statement can be seen in Dewey’s discussion of the role of perception in criticism: “Criticism is a search for the properties of the object that may justify the direct reaction” (p. 308). Because form responds to meaning and meaning informs form, the critic should make judgments and inferences based on the objective qualities of the artwork. Thus, one sees Dewey in Broudy’s (1972) idea that the judgment of expressiveness needs to be built on the observable qualities. Viewers can be guided through a work of art by objective qualities; become aware of how the judgment is drawn from the qualities; and develop their own personal interpretations in the direct response to the artwork’s objective qualities.

Value judgments and dependence on extraneous factors, such as theories and standards can only simplify the meaning of art and narrow perception. The aim of criticism is not to
confine the experience of art in certain perspectives but to help the audience see through a new lens and recreate and expand their experiences: “…the critic shall seize upon some strain or strand that is actually there, and bring it forth with such clearness that the reader has a new clue and guide in his own experience” (Dewey, 1934/1959, p. 314).

Appreciation of art is more than mere enjoyment of forms and involves understanding of and insight into human life. A work of art is often appreciated for its physical appearance and thus, it is isolated from the human experience in which it originated and developed. A work of art is not a static object. As a live creature, human beings’ experience with a work of art is tightly associated with “both conditions of origin and operation in experience” and continuous interaction with the environment. However, a work of art is often appreciated apart from “human conditions under which it was brought into being” (Dewey, 1934/1959, p. 3). Human’s experience with a work of art is organic, uncertain, and continuously evolves through the creation and appreciation process over time. A work of art is the medium through which aesthetic and artistic experience interacts. This interaction recreates the meanings of the artwork. I think a work of art itself is a live creature, which is the embodiment of human experiences—they are specific to time and space.

Dewey also suggests that we need to attend to the maker’s and the original user’s perspectives and be aware of cultural influences (Barrett, 2003). Aesthetic experience exists not only in galleries or museums, but also in every moment of life in which human senses are aroused and souls are touched. Dewey proposes that in our encounters with art, we need to “restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doings, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience” (Dewey, 1934/1959, p. 3). Aesthetic experience is a live and evolving journey,
which cannot be settled to a fixed end but can only be enjoyed as it evolves. Dewey cites Coleridge’s description of the reader of poetry: “The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, not by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution, but by the pleasurable activity of the journey itself” (cited in Dewey, 1934/1959, p. 5).

Therefore, instead of offering some fixed and narrow perspectives or trying to set up arbitrary standards, the teacher needs to be a facilitator rather than instructor. The teacher must be open to a wide range of possibilities and encourage multi-faceted interpretations through the awareness that aesthetic experiences never stop evolving. Our phenomenal world is uncertain. In our encounters with it, knowledge is continuously constructed and re-constructed.

Barrett. Unlike Broudy’s (1972) emphasis on the cultivation of perception, Barrett (2003) senses the insufficiency of formalist ways of seeing. He thinks that the contextualist ways of seeing properly compensate for this insufficiency. His approach also includes intuitive and emotional ways of responding. Therefore, Barrett’s (2003) vision of art appreciation is multi-faceted. In order to comprehensively appreciate and interpret art, one needs to seek “communal understanding of works of art” and make “personal meaning from aesthetic objects,” (Barrett, 2003, p. 135) which responds to Dewey’s (1934/1959) concepts of art criticism.

Art appreciation shares certain common concerns with art history about contextual examination, but art appreciation places more emphasis on drawing personal and philosophical connections from interpreting works of art, such as the art critic. Barrett gives an example from Deborah Solomon, who offers explanations of why people in contemporary society respond to Vermeer. He also discusses the British art critic John Berger, who criticizes old paintings through ideological interpretations. For example, Berger notices the unequal status of men and
women in many traditional European paintings, such as *Susannah and the Elders* (Reni, 1620-25, see Fig. 2.1) and *Venus, Cupid Folly, and Time* (Bronzino, 1545, see Fig. 2.2), and comments on how similar values continue to resound through mass media today (Barrett, 2003).

Historical art and foreign art both evolve within a pace of time and sense of place that differ from our own. If we interpret the art only from our own experience and understanding without knowing what the art meant to the people who made it and used it, and for whom it is native, we are more likely to engage in personal imagination. We will stay in the safe corner of the world we are accustomed to (Nussbaum, 1997). We need to know the cultural context and historical knowledge, from which the art grows, to expand our worldview and be conscious about our bias that might distort the understanding of foreign art.

For example, Japanese architecture is closely associated with Zen Buddhism. Without an understanding of its beliefs, the meaning of its architecture can hardly be explored. In the meantime, we cannot limit ourselves to its belief system and worldview. Instead, we should examine and question its beliefs—as well as our own—to make a meaningful connection with personal and social life in both historical and contemporary settings.

Barrett describes how Gloria Steinem, a Western feminist, made personal and contemporary connections with Indian art. From personal experiences and historical knowledge, she observed the worship of women’s spiritual power in Hindu temples and compared it with the attempt to eliminate women’s power in churches in the Western world. She discussed how this interpretation influenced her view and experience in religious structure (Barrett, 2003, p. 136-7). Therefore, creating an historical and contemporary association can help us generate critical interpretations.
Section conclusion: Art Appreciation. Art appreciation emphasizes perception of objective visual qualities; development of personal interpretation drawn from perception; the connection of our interpretations to the historical and socio-cultural factors of the artwork; and allows historical factors to provide insight into contemporary settings. In a recent art appreciation textbook, Bersson (2004) also suggests that the comprehensive approach of appreciating art combines aesthetic enjoyment and intellectual understanding. This approach is a combination of formalist and contextualist methods of seeing. Bersson (2004) says, “One of art’s most positive functions is the expansion of our awareness—personally, socially, politically, and culturally” (p.11). This point of view is consistent with Dewey’s (1934/1959) *Art as Experience* and Broudy’s (1972) insight about perception.

Although recognizing the importance of contextual knowledge, Broudy (1972) and Dewey (1934/1959) note that poor perception can never be compensated for by any amount of art history or philosophy. The external information related to the work of art can shed light on some aspects of the artistic process and production. However, to place the work within a context causes the work to fall into certain fixed categories and possibly oversimplifies the process of art production. Art involves a continuous process of learning, being learned, creating and being created. Dewey (1934/1959) states, “The world is not to be learned and thrown aside, but reverted to and relearned. The spiritual comprehension may be infinitely subtilized but its raw material must remain” (p. 322). The sophistication of the external information originates from the raw material of art. The evolution of a work of art, from material to idea, can be grasped by cultivated perception.

Finally, Barrett (2003), Dewey (1934/1959), and Broudy (1972) all support the idea of connecting the appreciators’ experiences with the artists’ experiences. Broudy states, “Aesthetic
education ought to concentrate on helping the pupil to perceive works of art, the environment, nature, clothing, etc. in the way that artists in the respective media tend to perceive them” (1972, p.60). Both artist and appreciator experience the process of extracting what is meaningful for them. The artist iterates selection, simplification and clarification (Dewey, 1934/1959). The beholder might not have the talent to create art, but as one associates with the image on a deeper level, one’s responses should be deeper and more sophisticated (Broudy, 1972). It is possible for the viewer to engage in a similar, but perhaps not identical, process of selection, simplification and clarification.

If we ignore perceptual responses or try to develop standards for judging art, we fail to connect with the heart of aesthetic experience: “a development in thought of a deeply realized perception” (Dewey, 1959, p. 300). I agree with Bersson (2004) who claims that the most important benefit that we can gain from aesthetic experience is the expansion of our awareness. Every subject can expand our awareness in different ways. What is so unique about aesthetic experience is that we do not learn about the world from fixed knowledge or through certain fixed methods. We learn about the world from perceiving it with minimal bias, from experiencing with our senses and from contemplating our responses. We draw not only from sensory experience, but also contextual knowledge, as well as other people’s ideas to construct personal meaning. In this process, we gain communal understanding. This process helps us to make an examination of art delightful and meaningful as we are guided in our own experiences. This process also makes the examination insightful for our time, as we intellectually analyze art by including historical and cultural contexts. Therefore, through engaging our soul, desire as well as our intellectual thinking, we learn about the world. As Broudy (1972) suggests, aesthetic experience refines our
desire. Sensuous and intellectual interpretations broaden awareness. This approach is a unique way of learning.

I agree with Broudy that we need to put the cultivation of perception as the very first and essential step in aesthetic education. Then any contextual information can be discussed and expanded with personal insights, and the communal understanding can be finally reached. This process responds to Barrett’s (2003), Dewey’s (1934/1959) and Broudy’s (1972) idea of connecting appreciators’ experiences with artists’ experiences.

I strongly agree with Dewey’s (1934/1959) view of art as a live creature. Art is not a fixed object composed by fixed knowledge. It is made from artists’ life experiences. It responds to our own experiences. Interactions between artwork and audience cause art to evolve through the process of re-creation across time and space. For example, the traditional Japanese house can be conceived as embodying certain ancient values and functions. However, contemporary society adds new interpretations to the house and searches for its new place in contemporary settings. In this way, ancient values are accommodated into modern life.

Rich content that is embedded in art can be explored and discussed. This content can make the learning experience enjoyable as it is about life and experience. Students love social interaction because they are alive. Sadly, in art appreciation class, the usual pedagogical approach is a lecture that delivers fixed knowledge that has few connections to the lives of students and leaves little room for critical thinking. A live creature needs a live content as well as a live teaching strategy to make the content alive and foster students’ understanding. Therefore, I will next discuss pedagogical theoretical framework.
Constructivism

The pedagogy in the proposed curriculum is constructivist. This is appropriate for this course aims to cultivate students’ analytical, synthetic, evaluative and creative abilities to deal with complex problems or situations that relate to their lives. The constructivist theory of education emphasizes building upon students’ prior knowledge and experience, through their active participation in the meaning-making process, in order to develop higher order thinking. Constructivism is sometimes misunderstood by critics as a rejection of direct instruction. However, Taber (2010) concludes that the application of “real” constructivist instruction, which allows for a balanced integration of direct instruction, can result in a more effective pedagogy.

There are two major branches of constructivism: personal and social constructivism. Nelson proposes that social-political construction is knowledge that is constructed by communities and influenced by social-political factors (Nelson, 1993, as cited in Phillips, 1995). Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) also claims that knowledge is constructed through social interactions. In contrast, individual creation of knowledge claims that the individual is the active explorer that constructs his/her own knowledge (Phillips, 1995). Although combining both of the theories might fall into the danger of being ambiguous, I would still like to draw concepts from each of them according to specific circumstances. Teaching is a holistic experience. Certain situations might be more suitable for applying concepts relative to one aspect of constructivism rather than another aspect of constructivism. In other situations, it might be a different story and both aspects can be combined effectively. I will also address these concerns in the later sections.

Constructivist theory. How do human beings make sense of the world? For a long time, we have relied on “truth” legitimated through logic and verifiable means or the scientific method (Bruner, 1996). This is the truth within the domain of logical systems, but how do we interpret a
sense of enlightenment from eye contact with a stranger or the moment of discovery in a new
city when a normal street corner touches your heart? There is no single “logical” reality.

Bruner (1996) suggests that aspects of reality are constructed through narrative, which is
a natural process of meaning making. Furthermore, our ability to turn narrative into meaning is
influenced by culture: “education must be conceived as aiding young humans in learning to use
the tools of meaning making and reality construction, to better adapt to the world in which they
find themselves and to help in the process of changing it as required” (p. 20). The aim of
instruction is more than teaching what is known. Knowing a list of specified content is not
sufficient for dealing with problems in life or to shape a better life. Education should focus on
cultivating students’ abilities to think critically and independently and their flexibility in dealing
with problems. Instead of remembering “facts” (a questionable assertion), students will benefit
more from probing how we know the facts and why we believe those facts (Taber, 2010).

Costantino (2008) describes constructivist antecedents beginning with the 19th century
German philosopher and sociologist Wilhelm Dilthey. In a constructivist framework, “humans
must be studied within the context of their social and cultural lives” (p. 116). In Dilthey’s view,
the aim of the human sciences is to systematically examine human experiences and achieve
understanding of meaning that human beings place on their experiences, which occur in
interactions with people and their environment, such as through religion, literature, art, and
music. Such understanding is achieved through an interpretive process, which is circular and
continuous (Costantino, 2008, p. 116).

Individual constructivism. The constructivist scholar, Phillips (1995), provides a broad
picture of various types of constructivism. He creates a continuum between instruction by nature
and human the creators. Phillips identifies scholars such as Piaget, Glaserfeld, Dewey and James
as representing forms of constructivism rooted in inquiry into the natural world. The view of *individual creation of knowledge* is very important in examining how each individual makes sense of the world. Students are active constructors of their own understanding rather than passive recipients of knowledge. Learning is an iterative process, in which students acquire understanding of new knowledge based on their existing knowledge. Taber (2010) uses the metaphor of “eating” to describe the learning process, in which a student “breaks down, and rebuilds knowledge in the learning process” (p. 28). Each student has his/her own approaches to the construction of such understanding and all of them need to be respected (Phillips, 1995; Taber, 2010). Phillips acknowledges that this belief may be weak epistemology, but it is powerful pedagogy.

There is not a single set of correct answers—although in the constructivism advocated by Phillips, answers need to inferentially cohere to external evidence. Teachers need to understand students’ approaches and try to facilitate their constructive processes. Facilitating involves the teacher serving as an inspirational guide, more than offering blind instruction. Therefore, thinking of teaching as facilitating, teacher and students co-construct the learning process. In the process, teachers guide students to see the importance of another point of view. In this way, understanding is enriched.

For example, as stated earlier in the section on art appreciation, we not only need to make personal meaning from artwork, but we also need to understand what the artwork means to the people within its culture of origin in order to achieve comprehensive understanding. Moreover, the student-centered and humanistic spirit of individual constructivism not only emphasizes the democratic atmosphere in class but also the cognitive benefits of students’ active participation in the constructive process. Dewey (1929/1960) claimed we learn by participating, not just by
listening. Participating engages students in class and provides a deeper understanding of content through actual experiences. Therefore, I regard class activity as an effective teaching strategy.

**Social constructivism.** Knowledge is internalized by an individual and is a subjective representation of the world. This perspective is rooted in Piaget’s theory of mind, in which he described the child as an active explorer who tries to construct an understanding of his or her surroundings (Phillips, 1995). This cognitive aspect of understanding is also supported by evidence from neural science research (Wittrock, 1992), which has been discussed earlier in this chapter. However, while Piaget thought the mind was a group of logical operations that mediate between the world and our concepts of the world, Vygotsky (1978) never conceived of the mind like Piaget did. Rather, Vygotsky thought the function of the mind was to endow experience with meaning. The process of meaning-making is involved with the use of language and the cultural context in which the language exists. Mental growth not only depends on biological maturation, as Piaget claimed, but also the acquisition of the cultural tool kit, which includes its language and, most importantly, “social interaction” (Bruner, 1997, p. 68).

Through social interaction, a child acquires meaning and knowledge from culturally symbolic systems and internalizes them into his/her existing mental structure. Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge grows from context. Learning cannot be separated from culture (Bruner, 1997). Culture impacts how our minds create and transform meanings, and those meanings also constitute culture. Therefore, we are not only passively influenced by culture but also actively construct culture (Bruner, 1990). Nelson also thinks that the process of knowing can hardly escape from the influences of power relation and bias or interests imposed by social groups (Nelson, 1993, as cited in Phillips, 1995). Social constructivism views knowledge as not
being able to be constructed actively through individual endeavors but only by being enacted in social contexts.

Phillips rejects the extreme form of socio-political constructivism, which claims that the process of knowing is entirely social-political and subjective and ignores that nature can impact the process (p.11-12). I agree with Phillips’s stance of openness to considering both the influences of society and nature, but not relying totally on sociopolitical factors to explain knowledge construction. Although our views of the world are subjective and influenced by socio-cultural factors, there is a certain order that lies behind subjectivity.

**Educational implication.** Bruner (1996) and Rogoff (1990) apply constructivism to educational practices. Bruner and Rogoff advocate that the learner is an active participant in the construction of knowledge rather than a passive recipient of information. This understanding of learning generates the idea of mutual learners, which is supported by the concept of *intersubjectivity.⁴* Vygotsky (1935/1978) proposed the zone of proximal development, in which a child advances through learning with a more experienced partner. Through interacting with people in the environment or cooperating with others, children can awaken various developmental processes. Vygotsky concluded that the learning process could exceed rather than coincide with the developmental process (Vygotsky, 1978).

A similar idea is also addressed by Rogoff (1990) as *guided participation.* She theorizes that learners should be more than passive recipients of information. To maximize cognitive development, learners should actively participate, explore and solve problems in cultural activities with the assistance of and collaboration with skilled adults or peers.

Functioning as a more experienced and skilled partner, the teacher, who plays the role of the facilitator instead of instructor, needs to organize and design the curriculum and pedagogy to

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⁴ Intersubjectivity is the constructivist concept of mutual learning around a shared objective.
be responsive to students’ prior experiences and learning styles. The constructivist approach is
student-centered. Therefore, the content of the course needs to relate to students’ knowledge and
experience, which can also arouse their interests. Teaching strategies need to be modified to meet
students’ needs. In other words, the teacher needs to use a wide range of strategies to facilitate
class learning, as suggested earlier by Banks’s (1998) equity pedagogy for multicultural
proposes that the teacher and students should co-construct the learning environment, in which the
teacher impels students to construe—actively engage—in the learning process. The
responsibilities of learning lie not only with the teacher but also individual students and
classmates. Teaching and learning do not flow only in a single direction—from teacher to
students; this dialogic and interactive process involves multiple interactions among the teacher,
students as peers and the environment (Eisner, 2002, p. 47), where students (and also the teacher)
are encouraged to share and exchange ideas and argue about them.

I agree with Vygotsky’s concept of learning through social interaction, the acquisition of
a cultural kit, and the needs of an experienced partner to reach the zone of proximal development
through the means of intersubjectivity as suggested by Bruner (1996) and Rogoff (1990).
However, we are not passively influenced by social factors. We instinctively solve problems in
daily life, and thereby we construct our reality. We solve problems through both personal and
social approaches. The constructivist scholar, Jonassen, advocates for the flexible use of personal
and social perspectives of constructivism: “in order to uncover the complexities of learning, we
must use a variety of lenses and tools” (as cited in Taber, 2010, p. 14).

Therefore, I would consider the possibility of combining the two main aspects of
constructivism, and adopt Rogoff’s idea of guided participation, which nicely combines
Vygotsky’s concept of enhancing understanding through interacting with experienced partners, Dewey’s advocacy for the learner’s active participation in the process, and Bruner’s meaning-making process through cultural encounter. The learner here is actively learning through social interaction and engages him/herself through participation.

When considering interactions between the teacher and students, I support the concept of Rogoff’s (1990) intersubjectivity and Eisner’s (2002) idea of co-constructing the learning experience. The teacher serves as a facilitator, open to any viewpoint of students, and facilitates the constructive process through discussion and guidance. As stated earlier, the interactions among the teacher and students are multi-directional. With the multi-directional dialogue and a democratic mindset, the teacher and students learn from each other. Students also learn from their peers. The openness to various perspectives not only helps everyone re-examine personal bias but also expands everyone’s views and helps create a democratic atmosphere in class, which is beneficial to the discussion of the cross-cultural themes in the proposed curriculum. The democratic dialogue is a process of communicating and cooperating, which results in a more authentic understanding of reality, because reality itself is composed of multiple dimensions.

**Minimal guidance?** Finally, we need to be aware of a common misconception of constructivist methods of teaching and learning: constructivist methods equal minimal guidance. Constructivists assert that understanding results only from students’ self-discovery of knowledge based on their prior experiences. Therefore, instructors sometimes hold the idea that the constructivist method rejects direct instruction and only advocate implicit instruction and minimal guidance. This polarized understanding of constructivist methods leads to the criticism of loose curriculum structure, little input from the teacher, and vague learning objectives (Taber, 2010).
First, we need to return to the aims of education. I support Bruner’s (1996) understanding of education as helping humans to acquire intellectual tools to adapt to society and become agents of orderly change. It is impossible to fully explain (by direct instruction) what students need to learn for them to deal with properly all kinds of situations in life. To function in the world requires more than holding certain fixed concepts or skills. Life, like culture, can also be thought of as a complicated organism, which the human (another complicated creature) faces. Constructivists have a wide view of learning. Their view embraces the possibility of learning from spontaneous activity that is not necessarily related to intentional instruction. We can consciously or unconsciously learn from experience (Taber, 2010).

A constructivist method motivates students’ active involvement in learning. It cultivates independent and critical thinking and judgment. Therefore, it serves as an approach for students to consciously acquire Bruner’s intellectual tools for life.

Second, guidance is essential for students. Insightful guidance allows students to explore in their own ways to discover meaning without getting lost in a complex maze of information. Duschl and Duncan (2009) also claim that it “take[s] time and usually require[s] targeted guided instruction and designed curriculum” to facilitate important conceptual changes (as cited in Taber, 2010, p. 22). What students can actually gain from exploration is far more than what can be objectively tested. On the other hand, Taber also points to the deficiency of learning by completely depending on prior knowledge. He thinks that a beginner in the domain, who is easily confused by the variety of choices he or she encounters, is likely to fail to efficiently grasp its insights. A flood of information will hamper significant conceptual leaps from what the beginner already knows. Thus, some instruction from experts is still needed. It is the teacher who must seek a balance between minimal guidance and direct instruction.
The combination of minimal guidance and direct instruction is not fixed but flexible according to different situations. Taber (2010) concludes that pedagogic strategies should be “varied, flexible and responsive to subject matter, learners, and teaching context” (p. 36). This idea is central to teaching. Learning is a complex process that cannot be satisfied by prescribed teaching methods. There are countless situations, in which learning takes places and countless subject matters and problems for students with diverse learning styles to deal with. So a teacher needs to be flexible and sensitive to the course content, the learning environment and the learning inclinations of the students, and find the effective ways to organize and address the course content considering “time” and “context.”

**Eastern and Western Aesthetics**

**Western aesthetics.** The word aesthetics was not defined until the modernist era; however, the idea of beauty had been sophisticatedly discussed since ancient Greece. Great philosophers like Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus all related the highest beauty to the notion of the divine, the pure rational beauty, which is beyond any sensible form and can only be “seen” with a purified soul (Aristotle, trans. 2008; Plotinus, trans. 2008). In his *Republic*, Plato (trans. 2008) further denounced the sensible beauty of many forms of art like painting and poetry because he thought the imitative nature of art and the emotions it evokes in audiences would only corrupt the human soul. He thought the only way to see the true beauty was through rationality. However, Aristotle defended the legitimacy of sensible beauty and championed its imitative nature (Aristotle, trans. 2008). He claimed that the emotional impact from imitative art could help humans purify their souls and see the highest beauty.

Unlike the Greek notion of seeing beyond the sensible form through rationality, the German Idealist philosophers, Kant, Schiller and Hegel called attention to our sensuous
experience. They claimed that sensuous experience could resolve the mental conflict with rational experience and could actually elevate morality and realize individual and social freedom, as Schiller (1794/1982) proposed. These philosophers also searched for a universal idea of beauty and harmony between form and content. Art ultimately leads us to realize the “deepest interests of mankind” (Hegel, 1835/Intro. 3, para. 9).

The certainties of either the universality of beauty or an epistemological phenomenology were later challenged by the post-modernist philosophers (Barrett, 2008). Although it would be contrary to the nature of post-modernism to claim that it could be summarized in one way, a central tenant of post-modernism is questioning epistemology (how we come to know). Barrett frames post-modernism as a re-examination and realization of the phenomenal world and its reality. It has opened doors to discuss diversity, cultural significance, and hyperreality. These discussions resemble complex webs full of uncertainty and indeterminacy. Therefore, the universality of beauty is shaken and the idea of anti-aesthetics is proposed.

Classic philosophy. The ancient Greeks had no specific notion of “fine art” as we have in the modern era (Kristeller, 2008). The idea of art and beauty at that time referred to all human conditions, including morality, psychology, science and crafts. Plato and Plotinus both signified that ultimate beauty was the one that goes beyond appearances, and resides in the divine and relates to the purified soul. On the other hand, the nature of art is imitative. Socrates thought that the imitative nature of poetry—and the fear and pity it arouses in the audiences—drew people away from beholding the truth. In contrast, Aristotle thought that beauty sublimes to the emotional soul of the audiences. These ideas are developed more fully below.

Beauty. What is beauty? Is it only within sensory experiences that people usually conceive the idea of beauty nowadays? Is there any common principle between our different
experiences of beauty? In Plato’s *Symposium*\(^4\) (trans. 2008) and Plotinus’ *Ennead I, vi* (trans. 2008), there are two kinds of beauty: the beauty of body and that of soul. In the sensible world, Plotinus (trans. 2002) claimed that a thing was only beautiful when it was mastered by Ideal-Form—a unity of diverse parts into one whole. However, there is another higher beauty that is beyond sense-perception and can only be seen and contemplated by the soul. Plato (trans. 2008) also valued the pursuit and nurture of spiritual beauty instead of bodily beauty. The spiritual beauty is a higher level of reaching toward immortality, which we desire based on the human nature of possessing the good and eternity.\(^5\)

There are steps to beholding true Beauty: loving the beauty of a particular body; loving all bodies; loving custom, knowledge; and finally seeing absolute Beauty. This absolute and universal Beauty rests beyond materialistic aspects of life (Plato, trans. 2008, p. 37-40). It is born from the Good and purified soul (Plotinus, trans. 2008). This is the beauty we need to search for since it makes us moral and close to God.

*Imitation.* Art is imitative in nature, according to Plato. In his *Republic* (trans. 2008), Plato wrote that many forms of art were useless. As they are imitative, the emotions they arouse hinder understanding of universal truth. In contrast, Aristotle in the *Poetics* (trans. 2008), defended art as capable of purifying the soul and helping people reach a state of truth.

In Plato’s *Republic*, Socrates criticized the imitative nature of arts such as painting, poetry, and tragic drama as directing people’s mind away from the truth. Not only do the arts imitate an appearance, but they can be objects produced by someone not acquainted with the knowledge that the objects claimed to depict (Plato, trans. 2008, p. 26). In addition, tragedy and poetry usually arouse fear and pity, which feed and strengthen the emotional part of the soul.

\(^4\) The *Symposium* is a written record by Plato of Socrates’s retelling of Diotima’s ideas of love.

\(^5\) Dotima stated, “love is wanting to possess the good forever” (Plato, trans. 2008, p.37).
However, they cannot bring us “the prudent and calm character,” which is “constantly unchanging, that it is not easily imitated; and, when imitated, it is not easily understood” (Plato, trans. 2008, p. 31). Only “the prudent and calm character” is rational and is the only part that can lead us into the truth. Therefore, according to Plato, poetry and tragedy corrupt the human mind.

In contrast, Aristotle contended that tragedy should imitate actions in a dramatic form. It is composed of incidents and expressions that arouse pity and fear in the audiences to achieve “its catharsis of such emotions” (Aristotle, 2008, p. 44). He thought that by seeing a dramatic imitation and responding to it, the audience could sublimate the emotions portrayed, which in turn purifies the soul.

Though a little strident, Plato admonishes us not to be fooled by outer appearances and emotions. People are drawn into the illusion and confuse it with reality. On the other hand, Aristotle’s idea of poetry as a means of sublimating humans’ emotions appears to be close to the contemporary theories of the therapeutic power of art (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1987). Through imitating and dramatizing, we create our own world of fantasy, with which we are familiar and at the same time is also refreshing to us.

*Enlightenment theories.* The philosophical discipline of aesthetics was introduced in the eighteenth century. The aesthetic experience does not have to bear moral or epistemological benefits, though these are possible, because it is “a free play of our mental powers that is intrinsically pleasurable,” a concept that can be seen in Kant’s and Schiller’s aesthetic theories (Guyer, 2008, para. 1).

The term *aesthetics* was first introduced by Alexander Baumgarten in 1735. He intended to judge and analyze beauty by means of rationality and scientific method (Guyer, 2008). The word originated from the Greek works: *aesthesis, aesthanesthai, aisthetos,* and *aesthetikos,*
which are associated with sensory perception (Siegesmund, 2010). In the 18th and 19th century, German Enlightenment and Idealist philosophers developed different philosophical aesthetic theories (Siegesmund, 2010). They especially explored the function of the sensuous experience, as compared to the rational one, and examined its benefit to human liberty and morality.

_A German definition of beauty._ Immanuel Kant (1790/2007) thought that beauty relates to sensuous experiences. He described the idea of beauty as the object of a universal delight (p.42). Such delight determines the judgment of taste, which is personal preference and how one feels within. It relies not on the concept of the objects but on the perception of the subjects. His idea of _adherent beauty_ also addresses the notion that it is the harmony among the perceptible form, material, content, function and purpose in a beautiful object or a successful work of art which delights us, like the harmony in a beautiful summer house or race horse (Guyer, 2008, 7.1, para. 3).

Similarly, Schiller (1794/1982) defined beauty as living form. Something is beautiful when it contains both form and life, which concerns reality, content and feelings. Schiller wrote:

> As long as we merely think about its form, it is lifeless, a mere abstraction; as long as we merely feel its life, it is formless, a mere impression. Only when his form lives in our feelings and his life takes on form in our understanding, does he become living form; and this will always be the case whenever we adjudge him beautiful. (p.101)

For example, the marble is lifeless but becomes a living form in the hand of the architect. For Schiller, a human being is a life (feeling) and has a form (intellect), but if the two elements do not combine, he is not a living form (reason) (1794/1982). Kant and Schiller both referred beauty as a sensible form, which is considered an inferior type of beauty in Plato’s and Plotinus’s theories.
Besides Kant and Schiller, later German Idealist philosophers like Hegel emphasized the significance of imagination, perception, and the feelings of the subject as a counter-weight to formal reason. They continued Kant’s interest in a work of art as beautiful when it conveys an aesthetic idea. It is a representation of the imagination, which is appended to a given concept of reason but employs free imagination. Imagination “quickens the cognitive faculties” (Kant, 1790/2004, p. 130). Hegel (1835/1973) also stated works of art required intuitive responses from our senses and feelings (Hegel, 1835/Intro. 3, para. 3). They require a different mode of thinking from scientific thinking. Schiller also claimed that the spirit of art sets human beings free from all social conventions and political power (Schiller, 1794/1982, p.55).

Hegel formulates the sublime task of beauty as “expressing the Divine, the deepest interests of mankind” (Hegel, 1835/Intro. 3, para. 9). Art leads to “a suprasensuous world” (Hegel, 1835/Intro. 3, para. 9), which makes us perceive the world from fresh eyes, eyes that cannot be fooled by the various appearances and forms in the phenomenal world. In this way, art provides a critical means through which we can see the excesses of formal reason.

German beauty and morality. Kant viewed “beauty as the symbol of morality” (Tauber, 2006, p. 29). It can transform an egocentric individual by helping to develop a mental state attuned to the morally good (Tauber, 2006, p.30). In particular, Kant regarded the ideal as composed by “the expression of the moral” ideas (Kant, 2008, § 17, para. 8), which “govern men inwardly” (Kant, 2008, § 17, para. 8). The internal moral ideas that combine with ideas of reason and imagination make the inner moral visible in the form of figures.

Schiller’s philosophy of morality is similar to Kant’s. He also thought morality was the result of reason. He proposed that aesthetic experience could serve as a means of realizing the morality and freedom of human beings, therefore building a society of liberty (Tauber, 2006),
“…because it is only through Beauty that man makes his way to Freedom” (Schiller, 1794/1982, p.9).

But why is moral education not suggested as a means of cultivating moral character? Schiller and Kant thought that the rational and theoretical teaching used in moral education goes against our feelings and our desires from the ego. As Freud claimed, the conflicts between the id and the superego often result in emotional problems (Barlow & Durand, 2009). Therefore, moral education cannot result in real liberty but can only imprison people. The elevation of morality needs to be conducted through the transformation of the heart and the mind, which can be done through aesthetic experience. “…the way to the head must be opened through the heart. The development of man’s capacity for feeling is, therefore, the more urgent need of our age, not merely because it can be a means of making better insights effective for living, but precisely because it provides the impulse for bettering our insights” (Schiller, 1794/1982, p.53).

Sensation and rationality are two opposite aspects of Western philosophy. While Socrates in the Republic strongly rejected the interference of sensation and emotion triggered by bodily forms, Kant, Schiller and Hegel justified the legitimacy of the bodily forms in the idea of the beautiful. Instead of fearing humans’ attachment to the sensible forms, Schiller and Hegel used sensuous experience to release humans from the attachment to the rational world, and therefore delight and transform the heart. Through such an experience, humans can readily elevate their level of morality and rise above reality to see absolute beauty. Such a notion might be close to Dotima’s approach in Symposium for a man to progress from seeing merely bodily beauty to realizing absolute Beauty. Unlike the ancient Greek pursuit of the truth through rationality, the

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6 Id, ego, and superego are three main parts of the mind in Freudian theory. The id operates according to “pleasure principle”; the ego operates according to the “reality principle”; and the superego operates according to the “moral principles.” The ego is the mediator between the id and the superego (Barlow & Durand, 2009, p. 18).
German Idealist aestheticians placed more emphasis on individual experiences and feelings and how to use them to realize universal principles.

Because the socio-cultural and historical circumstances of and mindsets in ancient Greece and modern Western civilization are quite different, I find that each mode of thought is neither right nor wrong; Socrates’ rejection of art and modern philosophers’ embrace of sensible form are each valid. Nevertheless, ancient Greek wisdom remains immensely powerful. It points to the heart of the human condition and problems that still exist today. We still need to understand such wisdom.

I deeply feel that the ancient wisdom from both Greece and China is like an immense sea, so deep and broad, that I can keep exploring it for a lifetime. The discussions I address here are only parts of the immensity, and they come from my own interpretations or those of other authors, which I think can hardly cover all the wisdom that ancient philosophy conveys.

**Post-Modernism.** Questioning the German Enlightenment philosophers’ view of aesthetics as imaginative reason, beauty, taste and culture, the post-modern era extends its boundaries to social investigation in terms of value, social interaction and technological forms of communication. Artists and viewers both participate in the process of creating meaning for artworks (Alter-Muri & Klein, 2007). Some art educators openly doubt the value of beauty (e.g. Tavin, 2007). Post-modernism is an ambiguous, complex, interrelated and unstable system, which “destabilize[s] other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the univocality of meaning” (Aylesworth, 2010, para. 1).

**Hyperreality.** Technology and mass media mediate the way we perceive and experience the world today (Aylesworth, 2010). Images are produced and re-produced with the click. They spread worldwide in a second. The world of virtual reality where images have no external
references, and communications are not experienced in a real space creates hyperreality (Aylesworth, 2010). The boundary between reality and simulacrum\(^7\) blurs. Baudrillard (1994) refers to hyperreality as a final stage of simulacrum where images and symbols reproduce themselves and have no reference to reality at all (as cited in Ayesworth, 2010). “The hyperreal is a system of simulation simulating itself” (Ayesworth, 2010, 6. para. 2).

Hyperreality causes the world to become inorganic. Reproducing without relating to an original alienates us from connecting to “the inner life of a subject or of society” (Ayesworth, 2010, 8. para. 3). Our connection to computers blocks our connections to our inner lives as social beings. It creates a sense of indeterminacy that extends to our awareness of the contextual diversity in the real world.

**Multicultural Concerns.** French philosopher, Jean-François Lyotard, in *Postmodern Fables*, describes art as a cultural product that demonstrates historical, political, economical and social reality (Lyotard, 1997). Art involves a web of complex relationships with contexts and other objects from what are traditionally viewed as other disciplines. Lyotard (1984) discusses the concept of the “metanarrative” (xxiv), which represents the epistemological basis of theories in science, history and philosophy, etc. He argues that we have noticed that the metanarrative cannot fully explain the phenomenal world, which is full of difference and diversity rather than universality. Therefore, post-modernism is composed of infinite micronarratives, which enable judgment in each context. The firm ground where meaning and knowledge are based is shaken, and artists in post-modern times investigate states of “ambivalences and indeterminacies” (Schiralli, 2002, p.61). “Chance, irony, derailment, displacement, pastiche, allusion or ‘intertextuality’ and an obvious disdain for the cool light and clear edges of the modernist

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\(^7\) The concept of the simulacrum refers to “a copy or image without reference to an original” (Ayesworth, 2010, 6. para. 1)
aesthetic all have come to characterize the postmodern way of thinking about art” (Schiralli, 2002, p.61). The value of aesthetics is questioned; the notion of anti-aesthetics is proposed.

Anti-aesthetics. Tavin (2007) claims that aesthetics is useless in the field of art education because art educators have interpreted aesthetics as a bourgeois fascination with taste and beauty to the exclusion of examining its historical and political references. Tavin interprets Kant’s theory of beauty as disconnected to any external conditions. Instead, he understands it as a harmonious entity through an autonomous internalizing process, which is mysterious and ineffable. Due to the fact that aesthetics relates to sensuous experience and in some ways to special objects like works of art, there developed two popular concepts for art curriculum: 1) formalism, which is derived from the British theory of taste and 2) the cultivation of perception—articulated in art education curriculum through the Bauhaus—which is about feelings and imagination. Both of them form a universal mode of experience. Formalism, in particular, creates a system of seeing, analyzing and knowing. Universality separates art from the social-political experience.

Therefore, Tavin (2007) proposes “a postmodern language of representation” (p. 43), which has been used in the field of visual culture, cultural studies and sociology. Its premise is that “responding to images is primarily a process of socialization and signification, and always connected to the material conditions of the world” (p. 43). Such a process is not a natural and indescribable gift from inner experience. Art is a language that is “always understood as political, and in the last resort, incomplete” (p. 43). However, other art educators show concerns over the total abandonment of aesthetics in art education. Schiralli (2002) cautions that without traditional standards of fine art, we will be drowned in the sea of visual images in society, and art education will simply become cultural studies.
I agree with Tavin in his concerns that we must question the legitimacy of the modernist system. However, I think the concept of universality, which was proposed by Hegel and Schiller, refers to more than just a universal mode of beauty. Their idea of true beauty is beyond the sensible form and lies in the divine. Tavin thinks that responding to images is always associated with external reality and denies our spiritual interactions with them. His testimony against aesthetics is scientific and rational in that he believes every judgment needs to be based on observable evidence. We cannot scientifically prove the existence of the metaphysical beauty described by some German Idealist and ancient Greek philosophers because it is not something we can measure. Not everything is external. A significant part of art is internal. By denying the inner activity in experience, we at the same time deny other possibilities which might not be within a logical realm. Tavin responds to the post-modern concerns of cultural diversity but still follows a firm epistemological system and fails to leave the judgment open for where personal sensory perception may lead.

On the other hand, Duncum (2007) holds a less radical position. He also thinks that beauty is likely to hinder people from seeing the meaning in works of art. In contemporary society, which is filled with all kinds of alluring images in advertisements and mass media, people easily get lost in this image monster. However, this potential for imagery overload is exactly why we need people to be able to understand beauty. Not until we understand beauty and how it might fool us, can we really see the true social meaning behind it (Duncum, 2007). Duncum’s concerns of how beauty would fool us is related, to some degree, to that of Plato’s, in that the latter thinks that art is only an imitation which draws people away from the truth and arouses emotions which pollute the human soul. Plato was worried that the impact of art would allure us and hinder us from seeing the absolute, the truth. Though Duncum refers to the social
meanings of art, he does not refer to absolute truth. He is concerned with how beauty might make people fall into shallow thoughts of enjoyment instead of contemplating the deeper meaning in art. We need to overcome our shallow acceptance of beauty. In Chinese, there is a saying: “to overcome the enemy is to understand him.”

We do not need to totally reject modernist thought, as Tavin suggests. If we did, art would just become part of anthropological or communication studies in visual culture. Nevertheless, it is equally foolish to blindly follow formalist principles of beauty without knowing the context from which they originate.

**Western inspirations on my curriculum.** Through understanding the importance of socio-cultural factors in an artwork and uncertainty in the phenomenal world in which knowledge is constructed in our encountering of it, my proposed curriculum aims to address socio-cultural meanings with a balanced understanding of aesthetics. I seek an awareness of diversity and its influences, the indeterminacy and complexity of culture, and a wide range of possibilities and interpretations. I focus on three visual philosophic manifestations in Western art: form and the nude, the Bauhaus, and post-modernism.

**Form and the nude.** Since ancient Greece, the West has had a great tradition of the human figure as the subject of visual art. The grace and harmony of the Greek figural sculpture convey an ideal beauty, which is tranquil and calm. Later, Michelangelo endowed his figures with emotions and expressiveness. Greek and Renaissance sculpture are different manifestations of ideal beauty, which reflects the human’s inner self and the divine intellect in Plato’s and Plotinus’ ideas. However, how can matter convey the idea of the divine? And why is the nude the best subject to realize this ideal?
Plotinus thought that art transferred form into matter. The form here refers to the intelligible form (divine beauty). As a Neoplatonic follower, Michelangelo believed that it was not the task of the artist to correctly imitate nature—as Da Vinci suggested—but to bring the preexistent forms (concetto) out of matter. Concetto does not originate with the artist but is the intelligible form implanted by God. The artist needs to be endowed with intelleto\(^8\) to perceive concetto (Vess, 1998-2001).

The German Idealist philosopher Schelling (1802-3/1989) saw the nude as the medium to express soul and reason. The human figure also carries the symbolic significance for the standing pose, referring to independence from the earth (Schelling, 1802-3/1989); man is the center of being, which links God and earth. Here, from the ancient Greeks, through the Renaissance masters, to the German Idealists, there is an emphasis on the analysis of anatomy as symbolically significant. The nude is a perennial symbol within Western culture.

**Bauhaus.** Inspired by Enlightenment philosophy and the Industrial Revolution, modernism as a new mode of thinking and attitude toward art was born in the rapid development of science and technology, in which truth was constructed upon scientific inquiry (Phelan, 1981). In the early 20\(^{th}\) century, artists advocated utopian ideals for the new century. They sought a universal language in art that either demonstrated the spirituality of human beings (abstraction) or improved society and living conditions (functionality).

**Bauhaus,** an art and design school founded by Walter Gropius in 1919 in Germany, coordinated aesthetic, functional, economic and social purposes of art and design through rational strategies. The search for a universal language in form, the unity among form, function, purpose, content, and the scientific and pragmatic approach for problem-solving reflected

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\(^8\) Intelleto is the ability to perceive harmony and ideal beauty.
German Idealism’s idea of universality with unity of form and content, achieved through rationality and individuality.

*Post-modern concerns.* Rejecting the universal principles and pursuit of goodness inherent in modernism, contemporary artists and architects bring socio-cultural and historical concerns into their works. They break aesthetic rules and the boundaries of different disciplines, examine the phenomenon of hyperreality, question ideology and personal and social identity, while they evoke multi-faceted meanings and indeterminacy.

Gardner, Kleiner and Mamiya (2005) describe how the strictness and impersonality of a modern building like the Sears Tower in Chicago (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1974, see Fig. 2.3) fails to respond to the features of the place in which it is located. Nor does it contribute to the diversity of urban life. Its uniformity discourages social interaction. Conversely, post-modernist architecture seeks to bring forth “pluralism, complexity and eclecticism” (p. 1063), such as Moore’s *Piazza d’Italia* (Moore, 1976-1980, see Fig. 2.4), which combines Italian history and contemporary material and color design. Cultural and historical reflection can also be found in Anselm Kiefer’s field paintings, which evoke despairing emotions toward the Nazis and nationality, as well as in Christian Boltanski’s installation: *Reserve of Dead Swiss (small)* (Boltanski. 1990, see Fig. 2.5), in which the indefinite of identity brings multiple interpretations (Fineberg, 2000). In another example, South Korean artist Nam June Paik developed a video synthesizer, which allowed diverse manipulations of images and music in the video and created a visual “time-collage” (p. 1084) to address philosophical and political content along with the hyperreality from technology (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005).

Post-modernism is not concerned with absolute beauty. It embraces forms of popular culture. For example, American artist Jeff Koon draws inspiration from daily objects, and
Japanese artist Takashi Murakami from anime and Edo prints. Their works of art evoke people’s response to and reexamination of our daily visual experiences with their bare presentation without the disguise of beauty. Murakami and Koons impel us to question the definition of high and low art. Art in the post-modern sense becomes a visual and cultural study, which offers an investigation and introspection of social phenomena.

**Eastern aesthetics.** Eastern philosophy has its roots in Confucianism, Taoism and Chan (Zen) Buddhism. Eastern art has been tightly associated with and influenced by this traditional philosophical system. Forms of art like visual arts, poetry, music, and scenes of nature have been viewed as wholly human experiences. They are experiences of the highest states of mind, as important as religious experiences in Western cultures. These experiences help people to transform to a higher level of being—a process of transcendence (Li & Cauvel, 2006).

My proposed curriculum focuses on the culture of Japan. The fundamental aspects of Japanese traditional aesthetics are drawn from Chinese aesthetics and Zen Buddhist philosophy. In the Heian period from the late eighth century, Japanese art started to develop its unique identity, which is very different than that of the Chinese style (Lee & Richard, 1994). **Yamato-e,** developed in the late Heian period, emphasized flat forms of rich and contrasting colors and a two-dimensional sense of depth, which are characteristic of Japanese woodblock print around the 18th century. Japanese art developed some of the aspects of Chinese aesthetics to an extent that transformed them into uniquely Japanese phenomena, including the idea of simplicity, wabi and sabi and Yûgen. From its no drama, architecture, tea ceremony and visual arts, Japanese art is characterized by extreme simplicity and absolute tranquility, which is highly suggestive and also stylized. Japanese artistic forms create an aesthetic world, which is organic and at the same time

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9 The monument of **Yamato-e** is the set of illustrations of *The Tale of Genji*, Lady Murasaki’s eleventh-century novel, which depicts, with great subtlety, the sophisticated and mannered court practices.
extremely orderly and simple. However, to understand this world, it is important to begin with Chinese aesthetics.

The idea of beauty had been traditionally associated with sensuous experience and morality before Confucius. Confucius advocated the use of art to guide and mold human nature to elevate morality and gain interpersonal harmony. This conception included harmony between humanity and heaven. On the other hand, Taoism and Chan Buddhism advocate the naturalization of human existence in the phenomenal world. Both deemphasize words and texts and focus on spirituality. They seek to transcend the attachment to the sensible world and become aware of the impermanence of things. This process allows an individual to become at one with the universe. Although both Taoist and Confucius advocated the idea of humans’ harmony with the universe, Confucius returned to the focus on humanity and emphasized the human stance. In all three cases, Chinese art, which is the legacy of Japanese artistic tradition, focuses more on conveying the spirituality of things and harmonious existence in the universe, as well as evoking emotional understandings, rather than addressing concrete and temporal reality.

**Rites, music and Confucius.** The word for aesthetics in Chinese is “meixue,” which literally means the study of beauty. The Chinese character for “beauty” or “beautiful” is 美 (mie). This character combines characters for “ram” (the top part) and “large” (the bottom part). It means when a ram is large, it is beautiful. Therefore, the idea of beauty refers to taste and the sensuous experience. According to the late Han lexicographer, Xu Shen’s early dictionary, the *Shuo wen jie zi*, it not only associates the character, mei, to taste, but also relates it to the good and social, for the earliest written evidence showed the character, mei, as a man with ram; this man refers to a priest in early shamanistic ritual, which has an important social purpose. Therefore, the idea of beauty was related to both the sensuous and the good since ancient China
in the time before Confucius (Li, 2010). *Yueji*\(^{10}\) (the Record of Music) links art and music with the sensuous experience. “The eye wants the best colors, the ear the best sounds, the mouth the best flavors…when people can sense what is good or bad, but there is no way to voice their joy or anger, things will be difficult” (Li, 1994, p.48). Though the aesthetic consciousness celebrates sensory pleasure, it was regulated by social system: ritual and music, which are the externalization of humanity’s inner feelings and emotions. They “guide and nurture the emotions from outside in” (as cited in Li, 2010, p.16) and return the people to “the rectitude of the Way of humankind” (*Li ji* 19.1/99/4).\(^{11}\) This is why Confucius emphasized rites and music strongly. For Confucius, rites\(^{12}\) are not religious but social, and include “acknowledged behavior patterns, customs, institutions, and lifestyles”(Yu, 2007, p. 97). Rites regulate and give order to the external world, while music\(^{13}\) speaks to the inner feelings and shapes the emotional faculties of the individual to harmonize and accord them to virtue. They complement each other to harmonize and stabilize society. Therefore, Chinese people traditionally tend to treat and express emotions in a moderate manner and internalize the overly violent emotions.

Confucius especially advocated the cultivation of virtue, “humaneness” (*ren*).\(^{14}\) Personal virtue makes a person a human, and as such this person is able to influence others. Self-cultivation aims for a person to reach the mental state in which he or she can follow “the desires of the heart without overstepping the bounds of right” (*Analects* 2.4). It is a self-conscious process toward humanity, which does not address individual freedom but emphasizes

\(^{10}\) *Yueji* is China’s earliest collection of documents on aesthetics. 

\(^{11}\) *Li ji*, the Book of Rites, is one of the Confucian classics. Its chapter nineteenth is *Yueji*, the Record of Music. 

\(^{12}\) Rites in Chinese is *Li*. 

\(^{13}\) “Simple or rich tones and rhythm should be such as to awaken the goodness in man and prevent evil and corruption” (Li, 1994, p.47). The goals of music are to educate people to elevate the morality since music can quiet and harmonize one’s heart as is implied in *Zuo zhuang*, the earliest work of narrative history in China.

\(^{14}\) Confucius’ central thought, “humaneness” (*ren*) (Li, 2010, p. 40), was regarded as an ideal personality. The characters of *ren* are, “‘to love’ (*Analects*, 12:22), and ‘to return to *li* [rites or rituals]’ (*Analects*, 12:1). Love is related to the traditional sense of *de* as kindness or bounty. *Li* refers to the set of ceremonies and social practices of the Zhou dynasty which is thought to be endowed with *de*” (Yu, 2007, p. 33).
interpersonal concerns. The virtue Confucius spoke of is not a theoretical one for seeking universal and abstract ideas but one related to “practical rationality” (Yu, 2007, p. 76) for social purposes and practices.

Art, too, serves the purpose of developing a harmonious human life. It serves to satisfy human senses and emotions, and at the same time, it connects social ethics and policy. It frames the contexts of social justice and proper manners for human behaviors. Li (2010) cites Confucius’s word in Analects 7.6, “Set your intention upon the Way, rely on its Virtue, lean on humaneness, wander in the arts” (p. 47). The practice of arts is the realization of humanistic thoughts. The arts Confucius referred to include the Six Arts: ritual, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy and mathematics. It is through the mastery of the objective world from various perspectives that one can develop an ideal personality and reach the real liberty of the mind. Those skills directly relate to the governing of the states and maintaining the well-being of society. The idea of using art for self-cultivation was also adopted by the Japanese, who developed chadō, the way of tea (tea ceremony), and shôdō, the way of writing (calligraphy) (Parkes, 2008). It is expected for Chinese or Japanese intellectuals to be good painters, calligraphers and also poets. The arts in the Confucius tradition seem more interrelated than in the Western tradition.

For the purpose of shaping emotions and cultivating virtue, Chinese art does not emphasize representational depiction but the presentation of the principle of the universe. It serves as pragmatic means to harmonize the conflict between our nature and socialization. The realization of humanity only exists in this life, in reality, within relationships among humans, but not in the next life or in heaven, nor can it be achieved through individual freedom. On the other hand, Taoism suggested that real freedom would only be gained from transcending reality and
becoming at one with the universe. Its idea of beauty lies in the spirit and in the virtue that accords to the principle of the universe, not in the bodily form. The main figure espousing this philosophy, Zhuangzi, once said, “what one loves is not the form but what enlivens that form” (Li, 2010, p. 93).

**Taoist and Zen philosophy.** Taoism arose from the same ancient tradition that produced Confucianism. It was viewed by some scholars as both opposed to and complementary to Confucianism. Confucianism emphasizes the idea of the “humanization of nature” (Li, 2010, p. 78). Taoism, on the other hand, emphasizes the idea of the “naturalization of humans,” (Li, 2010, p. 78) in which humans return to their original state of being. Confucius’s ideal world is constructed by consciousness, order and humanity. However, Taoism seeks to transcend the order of the sensible world and any sensible form, since our senses are constrained by them. It seeks to become at one with nature and the universe as a whole. And this is true freedom, which nothing can threaten or alter within a person, even life and death (Li, 2010). Similarly, Zen seeks to transcend the dualistic view and achieve oneness (Nagatomo, 2010).

Zhuangzi advocated achieving real freedom through abandoning the sensible world and “wander[ing] free and easy in the realm of non-action”, while Confucius advocated cultivating the ideal personality through pragmatic means (real action) (Li, 2010, p. 79). The Taoist idea of “non-action” in Chinese is “Wu wei.” “Wu wei” is often expressed as “wei wu wei,” which means “the action of nonaction” (Loy, 1985, p. 73). Water demonstrates the power of “wu wei” (Loy, 1985), the power of following the way of nature without letting human will fight against it and disrupt its harmony. It appears weak, but with time, it carves stones and moves earth. “The soft overcomes the hard” (*Tao te ching*, 15 36). The Taoist founder, Lao Tzu said, “The highest good is like water, which benefits all things and contends with none. It flows in low places that

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15 *Tao te chin* is a Chinese classic text written by Lao tzu around the 6th century BC.
others disdain and thus is close to the Tao” (*Tao te ching*, 8). Because it doesn’t compete with anything, stays in a low stance and nurtures everything, this tender spirit is close to the Tao. Lao Tzu stated: ”Tao is beyond words and beyond understanding. Words may be used to speak of it, but they cannot contain it. Tao existed before words and names, before heaven and earth, before the ten thousand things. It is the unlimited father and mother of all limited things…” (*Tao te ching*, 1). Tao cannot be described in words and cannot be understood with intellect. It is the source of all things and the way of the cosmos.

Taoism does not reject the sensible form but seeks to transcend it to realize the Tao. It emphasizes the spirituality of things instead of the external reality. Taoists thought great beauty could not be intellectually understood but could only be grasped through following the Tao. Zhuangzi said, “there is great beauty on earth [in the natural state] though it does not speak” (Li, 1994, p.50).

Similarly, Chan16 (Zen) Buddhism deemphasizes the reliance on the world of sense and intellect. Chan Buddhism was transmitted to China from India by Bodhidharma, who addressed the central teaching of Chan, “A special transmission outside the scriptures; Without depending on words or letters; Pointing directly to the human mind; Seeing into one's own true nature, and the attainment of Buddhahood”(Laumakis, 2008, p. 194). Chan began to be transmitted to Japan in the 12th century. It encourages us not to be confined by words and “everyday perception and logic” (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005, p.781), not to look for the external world, but to search within and then understand our existence and its purpose in the world. What is significant is not intellectual understanding but enlightenment, which in the Chan tradition “arises by direct mind-to-mind transmission from teacher to student” (Laumakis, 2008, p. 194).

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16 Chan is a Chinese word, which means Zen in Japanese.
The enlightenment experience can be addressed by “the doctrine of Śūnyatā,” which is hard to translate (Suzuki, 1951, p.4). The closest term in English is emptiness or void. It is not a concept of negation, but from this state, entities come into existence. Śūnyatā “envelops, as it were, the whole world, and yet is in every object existing in the world” (Suzuki, 1951, p.4). It relates to “the Buddha's observation that nothing possesses an essential, enduring identity” (“Śūnyatā,” 2011, para. 2). Śūnyatā can only be experienced. To experience it, we need to transcend the sensible world of dichotomy “in such a way as not to be outside it” (Suzuki, 1951, p.5). Zen teaches us not to seek materialistic life and happiness from the sensible world but to pursue a natural, simple and free life, and be aware of the transience of life and mind. Zen’s teaching has especially influenced Japanese aesthetics greatly in aspects of simplicity and perishability, which will be further discussed later.

In the Taoist and Zen mind, the dichotomous concepts of beautiful or ugly, right or wrong, good or bad do not exist. Lao Tzu stated:

When people find one thing beautiful, another consequently becomes ugly.
When one man is held up as good, another is judged deficient.
Similarly, being and nonbeing balance each other; difficult and easy define each other…
The wise person acts without effort and teaches by quiet example.
He accepts things as they come, creates without possessing, nourishes without demanding, accomplishes without taking credit.
Because he constantly forgets himself, he is never forgotten. (The Tao te chin, 2)

We usually take a fixed stance when viewing things, so we always jump between two ends of the polar. Lao Tze addressed the harmonious nature of opposites, for they balance each other. In some aspects, this tender attitude is like the Confucian notion of the Doctrine of the Mean for
advocating not falling into either extreme but keeping a moderate temperament. However, Lao Tze did not make virtue a standard as Confucius did (a conscious design to follow goodness). He simply followed the Tao and sought to be at one with the universe. Similarly, Zen informs us of the narrow scope of the dualistic view and teaches us the meaning of “not two,” in which mind and body, I and others, I and nature should be “experienced as one” (Nagatomo, 2010, 4.3 para. 1). To address the holistic perspective, Nagatomo cites the Zen statement: “Heaven and Earth share the same root, and I and the myriad things are one (-body)” (Nagatomo, 2010, 4.3 para. 1).

Logically speaking, one can only exist in relation to the other, such as yin and yang, which are two opposite but complementary aspects. Yang refers to movement while yin refers to quiescence. Yin and yang alternate cyclically. They originate from “the Great Ultimate (taiji),” where they exist in “a latent state but are merged without distinction” (Pregadio, 2008, p. 363). Representations of yin and yang can refer to female and male, birth and death, and visible and invisible. One cannot exist without the other. Lao tze stated: ”The visible and the invisible belong together, the one (visible) part is effective only through the power of the invisible” (Blaser & Malms, 2001, p. 18).

Life is a cyclic process of transformation from one to its opposite and from its opposite backward. It is Zhuangzi’s (369-286 BC) idea of “change,” which brings about “energy breath” (Jullien, 2007, p. 68) and life. Because every sensible thing yields to transformation, a wise man “does not take his stand on that which has form” (Jullien, 2007, p. 68). Unlike the ancient Greeks, Chinese thought “makes no sharp division between the visible and the invisible (alias the sensible and the intelligible, the latter being the ‘principle’ and ‘cause’ of the former, arche, aitia)” (Jullien, 2007, p. 68). The Chinese philosophies—no matter if it is the Confucian idea of the passage of life or the Taoist and Chan notion of transformation and impermanence—all relate
to the transitional phase between one and the other. It is neither life nor death, neither being nor nonbeing, but a “transforming” process.

**Philosophical manifestations in the art.** The philosophies discussed suggest to me five common themes embedded in various forms of Far Eastern art: the notion of time, spirituality, simplicity, suggestiveness and intimacy with nature. Except for simplicity, which is relevant especially for Japanese art, all the other four themes involve the discussion of both Chinese and Japanese art. The realization of the transient nature of life makes artists sensitive to the passage of time, as manifested in admiration of seasonal change and grief over perishability. The Taoist and Zen notion of transcending the sensible world and the Confucian idea of the spiritual influence of art demonstrate the tendency towards spirituality, which is shown in the visual tradition of ink painting with its simplified and abstract forms and its psychological space of voids and solids. The idea of simplicity was developed to an extreme and formulated in a unique Japanese style. The idea of simplicity also suggests the Eastern artists’ love of ambiguous beauty, in which nothing is expressed explicitly but hidden in a veil. Last, the Taoist and Zen idea of harmony with nature is a constant theme in painting and also a significant element in architecture and garden design.

**Notion of time.** The Chinese and the Japanese are especially sentimental over the passage of time. We have the tradition of admiring seasonal changes, like viewing snow and appreciating phenomena in nature that reflect the vicissitude of life, like the waxing and waning of the moon. Japanese art praises the beauty of perishability. “If man were never to fade away like the dews of Adashino…but lingered on forever in this world, how things would lose their power to move us! The most precious thing in life is its uncertainty,” the priest Kenko says (Keene, 1995, p.39). On
the other hand, Chinese poet, Su-Shi (1037-1101) in *Memories of the Past at Red Cliff*, as cited by Bakhit, Osimi, Cissoko, Bazin and Unesco (2000), grieved over the perishability:

East flows the mighty river,

Sweeping away the heroes of time past;

Is Zhou Yu’s Red Cliff of Three Kingdom’s fame;

Here jagged boulders pound the clouds,

... He laughed and jested

While the dread enemy fleet was burned to ashes!

In fancy through those scenes of old I range,

My heart overflowing, surely a figure of fun,

A man grey before his time.

Ah, this life is a dream,

Let me drink to the moon on the river! (p. 438)

The notion of time is an emotional interpretation. Interpreting time can convey grief over impermanent nature of the world, the vicissitude of life, and how little the human being is compared to the greatness of nature. No matter how great the achievements of a person are or how happy a life a person leads, everyone will eventually be buried in the waves of the mighty river and never come back. Su-Shi conveys the Buddhist teaching of realizing the transience of life, that the sensible world is eventually an illusion and a dream. Realizing that nothing can escape the inexorability of time makes the Japanese build a wooden house instead of a brick or stone one, and also makes them treasure the evidence of the human touch on artworks or furniture.
Perishability leads to the idea of *Mono no aware*, which basically means the pathos of things for their transience. This notion is manifest in the Japanese love of cherry blossoms,\(^\text{17}\) which represents the love of the beauty of transience as a symbolic ideal, for it evokes a feeling of *Mono no aware* in the viewer (Parkes, 2008). Though both the Japanese and Chinese mourn over the transience of life, they hold different attitudes toward death. While the Japanese view death as beautiful, the Chinese are more inspired by “an inner emotional reflection on death” (Li, 2010, p. 128). Death cultivates the human spirit and makes it endure the hardships of life. Therefore, the Chinese appreciate the plum blossom, chrysanthemum, orchid, bamboo\(^\text{18}\) and pine, for they can endure the harshness of life and each of them represents a kind of moral spirit.

**Spirituality.** The rituals of preparation before starting a painting are considered vital. The state of the heart is shown on external works of art. The mind should be in tranquility and emptiness, neither in excitement nor anxiety, like the Confucian notion of the *Doctrine of the Mean*, the Buddhist meditative situation and the Taoist idea of *wu wei*. In this manner, it is possible for the artist to become one with the universe. Only when the mind is clear and free of outward distraction can one see the essence of matter and capture its spirit by brush (Siren, 1973). Each moment builds up the meanings of the painting. However, unlike abstract expressionism’s free expression of inner emotions, the emotions are shaped and accorded the virtue or the principle of the universe to express the Tao in all things. Siren (1973) describes how important the grasp of essence is for the artist:

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\(^{17}\) Japanese have the tradition to go out and view the cherry blossoms under their trees. The blossoms usually fall within a week. In many Japanese anime and drama, cherry blossoms are used often both symbolically and aesthetically to represent the transience of life or a mournful beauty that Japanese appreciate so much as an almost ideal beauty.

\(^{18}\) Plum blossom, orchid, chrysanthemum and bamboo are called “Four Gentlemen.” They and pine tree all have certain moral meanings and appear often in the Chinese painting since the Song dynasty. The four plants represent the unfolding of the four seasons and later were used by Japanese and Korean artists.
Whatever motif the painter represents, be it large or small, complicated or simple, he should do it by concentrating on its essential nature. If something of the essential is lacking, the spirit is not focused. The spirit must be fused with the work: if not so, the essentials will not be clear. (p. 222)

The Taoist and Chan (Zen) focus on spirituality is reflected in the artists’ emphasis on catching the essence of things. They use simplified and abstract forms to suggest objects and use voids to imply psychological space. In *Mountain Village, Clearing After Rain* (Yü-chien, mid-thirteenth century, see Fig. 2.6), we can see the simplification of solid forms and very spontaneous brushwork, resulting in a nearly pure abstraction. The essence of landscape and hikers is captured by only a few brushstrokes. The forms are dissolved into a misty atmosphere. “The role of voids and solids in establishing a strongly contrasting figure-ground relationship is critical to the assertiveness of compositional design in a Chinese painting” (Silbergeld, 1997, p. 49).

Further stressing the idea of Śūnyatā in Zen, the Japanese artist attends to the aesthetics of emptiness in the design of painting, prints, architecture and garden, like the blank background of the Ukiyo-e and the use of void in the Zen garden.

*Simplicity*. Asian art also pushes the idea of simplicity and intimacy with nature to an extreme. Zen teaches us to live a simple life, to own no possessions and to abandon the desire of achieving worldly success (Yoshida, 1969). Japanese culture highly values naturally-derived things, like the use of raw wood in architecture and the preference for a rusty-looking kettle in the tea ceremony rather than a new-looking one, which is usually much cheaper. The Japanese hold the belief that “less is more,” which responds to modern aesthetics like the Bauhaus school but with a more humble and subtle expression. Two ideas were further developed from Zen

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19 Ukiyo-e (pictures of the floating world) are a genre of Japanese painting and woodblock prints. They are the products of the urban culture in the Edo Japan between 17th and 20th century. The popular subjects of Ukiyo-e come from the pleasure quarters (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005).
teaching and the art of tea: wabi and sabi. Wabi refers to simplicity and cultivated rusticity: understated beauty. To extend the meaning of wabi, Parkes (2008) describes Hirota’s idea of wabi in the Zen Tea Record: one’s thoughts will not be moved even in a hard situation. In a similar sense, Sabi refers to “the value found in the old and weathered” (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005, p.786). The concept is extended by Hammitzsch as Parkes (2008) cites his comments, “The concept sabi carries not only the meaning ‘aged’—in the sense of ‘ripe with experience and insight’ as well as ‘infused with the patina that lends old things their beauty’—but also that of tranquility, aloneness, deep solitude” (4, para. 2). Both concepts of wabi and sabi were realized in the Shino water jar, Kogan (Late 16th century, see Fig. 2.7), and the Taian teahouse designed by Sen no Rikyu (Sen no Rikyu, 1582, see Fig. 2.8) (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005, p.785-6). They suggest preference for nature and earthy qualities rather than man-made and well-crafted quality. They also imply humility, which can be seen not only in the design of teahouse and tea wares but also in people’s behaviors in the house.

Intimacy with nature. Shaw (1988) cites Lao Tzu’s words, “Man models himself on earth, Earth on heaven, Heaven on the way. And the way on that which is naturally so” (p. 185). One can find his/her way to become at one with the universe through taking nature as a model. Zen also addresses the holistic experience between man and nature as discussed earlier in this section. Nagatomo (2010) states that Zen holds “the human being must be understood as a being rooted in nature” (4.3 para. 3).

Intimacy can be found in painting and architecture. Many landscape paintings show the greatness and eternity of nature compared to the uncertainty of human life, and the harmony between them. The Chinese and the Japanese imitate nature in gardens and integrate interior space with the garden. The Chinese Classical gardens in Suzhou (Around 1127, see Fig. 2.9) and
the Daisen-in garden of Daitoku-ji in Japan (1525, see Fig. 2.10) intend to re-create landscape scenes like that of a painting, replicating its organic sense through the use of rocks and, sometimes, water (Lee & Richard, 1994, p.443-5). These gardens intend to mentally engage people just like a landscape painting does, serving as a spiritual retreat from worldiness (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005, p. 780-2). The separation between inside and outside is not firmly defined as in the Western architecture. The Chinese use carved trelliswork windows and (interior) courtyards, and the Japanese use verandas and sliding doors covered with translucent paper to integrate interiors and nature (Keswick, et al., 2003; Yoshida, 1969).

There are few objects or architectural creations, except for the Great Wall, that aim to show human power and human conquest or resistance to nature like those of the West (e.g. the pyramids or Michelangelo’s grand sculpture). Instead, we can see many forms of Chinese and Japanese art that seek subordination to nature and unity with nature. The intellectuals’ love of nature is beyond appreciation: it is their mode of living (Li, 2010, p. 97).

Suggestiveness. The love of simplified form and psychological expression also reflects the appreciation of the mysterious beauty between the said and un-said, which is highly valued within both the Japanese and Chinese cultures. Such an ambiguous and half-spoken beauty is usually achieved in an indicial mode. Jullien (2007) describes the idea of indice as “a logic of suggestion,” (p. 109) which waits to be revealed, like a woman with a veil. Many Chinese poets like to use indices to suggest feelings, emotions, thoughts or concepts. For example, a feeling of abandonment or loneliness is suggested by indices of details or of nature: a pathway covered by grass, which refers to few visitors stopping by (Jullien,2007), or a boundless and empty scene. In Liu Zongyuan’s River-Snow, the Tang poet wrote:

A thousand mountains without a bird,
Ten thousand miles with no trace of man.

An old man in his straw cape and hat sitting in a single boat,

Alone in the snow, fishing in the freezing and snowy river.

The feeling of loneliness is expressed by a spacious scene without any bird flying or man treading, contrasting the image of an old man fishing along on the snowy day. This feeling further shows the unyielding character of the poet in his political environment.

In Japan, the idea of allusiveness, indefiniteness and incompleteness, instead of explicitness and completeness, is called **Yûgen**, which means mysterious. **Yûgen** is also viewed as the most significant principle in **Nô** drama, a great Japanese theater tradition; and **Yûgen** also plays an important role in visual arts and literature, like Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji*, and modern film, like Ozu Yasujirô’s *Late Spring*, to express the feeling of **Mono no aware**, the pathos of things (Parkes, 2008). Keene (1969) describes how the monk Shotetsu in the fifteenth century addressed the idea of **Yûgen**:

> **Yûgen** can be apprehended by the mind, but it cannot be expressed in words. Its quality may be suggested by the sight of a thin cloud veiling the moon or by autumn mist swathing the scarlet leaves on a mountainside. If one is asked where in these sights lies the *yugen*, one cannot say, and it is not surprising that a man who fails to understand this truth is likely to prefer the sight of a perfectly clear, cloudless sky. It is quite impossible to explain wherein lies the interest or the remarkable nature of *yugen*. (p. 298)

Eastern Asians do not like to lean on either end of the polarity. We like what is in between: mysterious, lyrical and lingering. This is why Chinese and Japanese painting is not representational but at the same time not totally abstract. Eastern art gives a sense of indeterminacy. This idea also links to the Japanese love for irregularity. Keene (1995) cites the
priest Kenko’s word in *Essays in Idleness*: “In everything, no matter what it maybe, uniformity is undesirable. Leaving something incomplete makes it interesting, and gives one the feeling that there is room for growth” (p.32). Japanese architecture tends to be asymmetrical and calligraphy follows a sense of irregularity, too. Perfection for the Japanese comes from imperfection.

In conclusion, the Chinese and Japanese cultures value sensitivity toward change and the passage of time in nature. This admiration of nature and emphasis on spirituality are reflected in various forms of art and can be traced from the philosophies of Taoism, Zen and Confucius. Spirituality is expressed in a suggestive mode. It is the beauty of the half-unspoken, which cannot be described in words but only grasped by the heart.

**Comparison between Western Aesthetics and Eastern Philosophy**

Four themes can be drawn in the comparison between Western aesthetics and Eastern philosophical tradition: symbol vs. indice; shaping vs. transition; expressive vs. moderate; functionality vs. emotional communication through observation. They will be fully addressed in the following discussion.

**Western classic philosophy and Eastern philosophy.** As opposed to the Greek notion of form leading to the divine, Taoism views human life as a transforming process and encourages humans to return to naturalness by following the principle of the universe. We see this contrast in how Plato and Plotinus advocated elevating morality to achieve immortality, while Confucius, working independently, advocated elevating morality to achieve social harmony. Confucius also emphasized using moderate forms of art to temper emotions, in contrast to Aristotle’s use of dramatic forms to purify the emotions.

Greek philosophy after Socrates holds the notion of the clear separation between visible and invisible, between bodily form and ideal form. However, the Chinese tradition does not have
the ancient Greek notion of “form.” The Chinese tend to view the operation of the universe as a transforming process from visible to invisible and from invisible to visible. “Chinese painting takes us to the root of the visible in order to find the invisible, instead of conceiving the invisible as being on a different planes and of a different nature” (Jullien, 2007, p. 70). Thus, Western art has the tradition of using the symbol to project the visible onto the invisible meaning, while Eastern art tends to use the indice, where the visible and invisible “compenetrate each other” (Jullien, 2007, p. 109). The symbol and the indice are important points of cultural comparison.

The Greeks sought to elevate humans to a higher state of being and freedom by purifying the soul through rationality. Instead of pursuing a divine level through intelligence, Taoism encourages the human to return to an original state of being by transcending any sensible form, including one’s wisdom, and following the Tao by practicing *wu wei*. The idea of *wu wei* is neither about possessing nor abandoning. It is about possessing without holding on to the sensible form. The practice of *wu wei* requires a moderate attitude, which sits between two polarities and is close to the Confucian idea of the *Doctrine of the Mean*. Humans need to be aware of and conform to the principle of the universe. Therefore, Greek philosophy tends to pursue a realization of the ideal form in art and focus on the depiction of representational reality, while Chinese philosophy tends to seek an intimate relationship with nature and the invisible essence of things. Though the Greek and Chinese process to gain ultimate freedom is somehow reversed, they both suggest the importance of transcending the sensible form and worldly matter. Shaping and defining as opposed to accepting transition is another point of comparison.

Greek philosophers and Confucius both advocated cultivating a virtuous life, although their aims and means varied. The ancient Greeks aimed to immortalize humans and gain individual freedom. Confucius aimed to humanize people and gain social harmony. For
Confucius, the meaning of existence could only be grasped in this life, not in the next life or in heaven. Confucius nurtured virtue through sensuous experience, which guides emotions. In contrast, Plato nurtured virtue through rationality and viewed sensuous experience as an evil thing that would corrupt the soul. In this sense, Aristotle seems closer to the Confucian idea of using art to purify the soul. Aristotle used art in a dramatic form to arouse and release a somewhat extreme emotion like fear and pity as an act of purification. However, Confucius used art in a moderate form to internalize extreme emotion and quiet the mind. Therefore, Eastern art tends to be moderate, while Western art, by comparison, is dramatic and expressive.

**German Idealist aesthetics and Eastern philosophy.** German Idealist aesthetics has similarities to Confucian philosophy, for both of them emphasize the benefits of sensuous experience and the use of sensuous experience to cultivate one’s mind and to elevate morality. Schiller sought social harmony that promoted individual freedom. Confucius sought social and interpersonal harmony. One was more concerned with bringing individual and social liberty through using art to free the human mind from social conventions, while the other was more concerned with strengthening the social order through quieting the human mind through art. The role of the individual in society is a point of comparison.

German Idealist philosophers Hegel, Kant and Schiller discuss sensual experience as provoked by art. Similar to Kant’s view of the beautiful, Confucius also talked about humans’ desire for sensual satisfaction, which can be achieved through the practice of art. Unlike Kant’s notion of separating beauty and morality, Confucius saw aesthetic experience as a means to arouse morality, which a human being should follow to live an honorable life. He did not stress the realization of individual freedom from social convention as a means to elevate morality and
construct a liberal society as did Schiller and Hegel. Instead, he encourages the internalization of emotions to accord with virtue, which brings about social order.

Although their ways of approaching morality and socialization are different, both Confucius and Schiller intended to use art to construct a certain social harmony and guide people to achieve a certain personal goodness. In addition, much like Schiller’s perception that the beautiful should be a living form, which needs a human touch to form its aesthetics, Confucius also defined art as a refined human product or activity. “Music is born in the heart. When a person’s emotions are aroused, they turn into sound, and sound that has been refined is called music” (Quote from Yueji, Lee, 1994, p.47). His idea of music seems to respond to the modern idea of art as a refined discipline.

There is a distinct difference in the way the Bauhaus and Confucius approached the functionality of art. The Bauhaus tried to design products to function well for daily use, be suitable for mass production, yet still possess aesthetics and human thought. Mass production allowed for highly precise calibrations—matched to specific materials—and could achieve an aesthetic response. This pragmatic character implies a materialistic character, in which convenience in life and an awareness of beauty converge. Scientific discovery in the time of political revolution drove the modernist emphasis on inquiry. Such disciplinary tendency toward external qualities is seldom found in the Eastern tradition. For example, functionality for Confucius was constructing rationality in daily life for ethical concerns. The Chinese have different schools of artistic styles, but none of them emphasizes the analysis of the world by identifying and categorizing core elements. They stress emotional communication through observing a changing and unpossessable world.
**Post-modern philosophy and Eastern philosophy.** Post-modernists question the epistemic world. Stability is shattered, and we realize the diversity of various cultures. In the ever-changing world, where did we come from, and where are we going to? Taoist and Zen’s notion of change responds to the post-modernist idea of uncertainty and indeterminacy. However, the Eastern tradition never totally abandons the idea of a standard of aspirational beauty for its function of cultivating the human mind and bringing about social order.

Zen Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism always teach us to observe the perishability of life—its uncertain and changing nature. Life is a series of chances, which cannot be predictable. Uncertainty, unpredictability and the nonlinear and transforming path can be seen in post-modernist theory. John Cage (1912–1992) created a piece for solo piano, called *Music of Changes*. It is an indeterminate and instrumental work. The process of composition involved the idea of chances. The decision was made by using *I Ching* (Kostelanetz, 2003).\(^2\) In 4'33" [a music composition with four minutes and thirty three seconds of silence], Cage was inspired by Zen and tried to re-examine the communicative purpose of music. Under the influence of Zen Buddhism, Cage perceived music as “a means of changing the mind” (Cage, 1979, as cited in Solomon, 2002, The turning point, para. 5). It is a process of self-discovery, a process of being aware of the environment. Music becomes a journey of retrospection like the practice of meditation. Cage said “nothing is accomplished by writing a piece of music; nothing is accomplished by hearing a piece of music; nothing is accomplished by playing a piece of music” (Lieberman, III, para. 3). This nothingness not only reminds me of the psychological space in the Song landscape painting and Japanese prints, but also of a great teaching of Zen that ultimately nothing can be gained. The awareness of spirituality is also addressed by Lyotard (1997):

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\(^2\) *I Ching*, known as the Book of Changes, is an ancient Chinese classic text. It is highly valued by Confucianism and Taoism, and its philosophy is widely used by Taoism like the notion of *yin and yang* for describing the changing nature of all things.
“…aesthetic existence must incessantly be awoken from servitude and death. The alerting to nothingness is always heard in a masterpiece…It is a philosophical banality to oppose the false plenitude of appearance to the truth of Being in its absence” (p. 241). What surpasses the form and the sensible is what makes a work a masterpiece. The avant-garde tries to recall the presence of this unnameable.

Eastern tradition has always taught us to live harmoniously with nature. Frank Lloyd Wright designed the building *Fallingwater* (Wright, 1939, see Fig. 2.11), which possesses not only the simple and clear use of line and shape characteristic of the Bauhaus but also demonstrates the intention of being organic: integrating with and growing out of the environment. Levine (1996) describes the exterior surfaces of *Fallingwater* were to “reflect the environment just as its interior was to reveal actual traces of it” (p. 238). In fact, Wright himself was seeking a complex, post-modern integration of cultural values. *Fallingwater* is a merger of Western and Eastern aesthetics.

Although the Eastern tradition pays great attention to the essence of things, the value of beauty is never abandoned. Beauty in Eastern thought is the presentation of the human soul and its sensibility toward the external world. With the tender spirit, it cultivates the emotions and quiets the mind, and further harmonizes society. Therefore, the beautiful is traditionally highly valued in China and Japan. Thus, Eastern aesthetics, even in its most radical popular forms, is not amenable to post-modern ideas that would abandon beauty. Eastern art could never be purely concerned with society and politics. There is always a basic and enlightening spirit that is allowed to shine through beauty.

This theoretical framework needs to be further examined by empirical research. Therefore, in this concluding section of my literature review, I examined the existing research on
cross-cultural understanding in art appreciation, which also further informs the possibility of the proposed curriculum.

**Empirical Studies**

In the last twenty years, there have been few empirical studies fully related to my concerns. The aim of my research is to develop a college level art appreciation curriculum in the U.S. that utilizes constructivist methods to foster cross-cultural understanding. The research papers discussed in this next section are relevant to my topic in different ways.

First, Mahoney and Schamber’s (2004) and Wright’s (2000) studies demonstrate the effectiveness of constructivist methods on cultural understanding. Wright’s study also shows the dimensions that help students gain flexibility, openness and comfort toward cultural diversity. Second, there are many factors that influence students’ understanding of art. They are cultural assumptions (Neperud & Stuhr, 1993), art criticism skills (Beck, Martinez & Lires, 1999), comparative art context and verbal cues (Koroscik, Short, Stavropoulos, & Fortin, 1992), the effectiveness of the questions in discussion (Stone, 1997), and the use of technology (Quinn, 2009). Finally, constructivist methods also proved to be effective in science education and design education in studies by Syh-Jong (2007) and Tétard and Patokorpi (2005). Tétard and Patokorpi’s (2005) research, in particular, provides insights about how students might respond to different aspects of the constructivist method.

**Effect of constructivist methods on cultural understanding.** Mahoney and Schamber (2004) applied Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity to assess freshmen’s intercultural sensitivity in two different kinds of general education courses. Bennett’s model defines different levels of cultural acceptance. Through a mixed-method design that included students’ completing 10-minute writing prompts as a part of their course work, Mahoney and
Schamber found that the curriculum that involved more active participation of students improved students’ intercultural sensitivity more than the course based on students’ completing assigned readings and then listening to lectures. The research shows how constructivist instructional approaches can nurture multiple ways of seeing, which leads to better cultural understanding through interactions and diverse ways of communication.

Wright’s (2000) research also shows positive results on cultural learning through the use of constructivist-oriented methods, compared to information acquisition approaches. The participants are first semester undergraduate German students. It is a quantitative study using the CCAI (Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory) to measure the effects of two ways of teaching. The treatment group that was taught by the constructivist method demonstrated positive results on flexibility/openness and personal autonomy in CCAI while the control group that was taught by the information-acquisition approach showed non-significant decrease in cultural receptivity in CCAI. The importance of flexibility and openness on cross-cultural understanding has been addressed by many scholars like Banks (1998), Gomez (1991), Nussbaum (1997) and Tomhave (1992). There are several important dimensions that help students in the treatment group comprehend and feel comfortable and open-minded with foreign social demands. Such outcomes are achieved through an emphasis on the ambiguity of culture, the use of techniques of inquiry, process-oriented learning and learner-centered approaches, and the enhancement of students’ sense of empowerment.

Both studies demonstrate the effectiveness of the constructivist method on the cultural learning of college students. In particular, I would like to consider certain aspects of the constructivist approaches used in Wright’s (2000) study and adapt them into my curriculum, for they resulted in students’ openness and comfort toward diversity. First is the emphasis on the
ambiguity of culture, which informs Nussbaum’s notion of the complexity of culture. Second is the enhancement of students’ sense of empowerment, which makes students feel comfortable and confident with cultural diversity, as Wright (2000) describes. The third mostly relates to constructivist ideas, which include the use of techniques of inquiry, process-oriented learning and learner-centered approaches. They are all essential components in the design of my curriculum. In particular, Wright (2000) suggests students’ association of their experiences, cultural background, attitudes and values with the ideas presented about another culture, makes them more likely to have a positive response toward diversity. In addition, the design of the writing prompts in Mahoney and Schamber’s (2004) research would be an example of the techniques of inquiry, and will be included in my curriculum, since such prompts offer a chance for students to mentally do problem-solving, as suggested by the authors.

**Factors that influence the understanding of art.** The significant roles tradition, context, value and their changing nature play in the appreciation of art can be found in Neperud and Stuhr’s (1993) “Cross-cultural valuing of Wisconsin Indian Art by Indians and Non-Indians.” Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, they found that people’s values, which are cultivated within a particular context, have a great impact on how they perceive and judge art. This work underscores how cultural assumptions impact on aesthetic judgment.

In another study of note, Beck, Martinez and Lires (1999) examine whether training students in strategies for critical analysis enhances their interpretive skills on ethnic dance. The researchers studied students’ essays to measure effectiveness. The authors found that training in the skills associated with art criticism increases students’ art appreciation. Writing criticism is an effective means of assessing students’ understanding and articulation of art (Barrett, 2003).
Contextual variables in the teaching of art are also important for undergraduate students’ understanding of art as demonstrated by Koroscik, Short, Stavropoulos and Fortin (1992). Contextual variables refer to verbal clues and a comparative art context, in which a work of art was placed with other related artworks. The research findings showed that a comparative art context impacts on the way students look at and think about an artwork, and verbal cues enhance the elaboration on meanings of art. Used together, they result in a greater depth of understanding. They also found that base art comparisons on key ideas related to students’ existing knowledge can reduce the occurrence of misunderstanding if students can identify the relationship. They conclude that the problems of understanding artworks refer to two factors: students’ existing knowledge and students’ strategies to activate the existing knowledge. Therefore, the teacher not only needs to know the students’ knowledge base but also needs to use proper teaching strategies like verbal cues to help students activate their knowledge.

The importance of verbal cues is also observed in Stone’s (1997) research. She examines college students’ knowledge acquisition about art, and enjoyment and interests in art, through comparing the effectiveness of two kinds of art museum tours: lecture tour and inquiry/discussion tour. However, the findings are inconclusive, for both tours help students acquire information about art and promote interest in art. Neither shows the retention of information. Stone suggests that these results might stem from flaws in the inquiry/discussion questions. The inquiry/discussion technique does not address enough related aspects of the works with enough number of questions. The questions usually lack interpretive dimensions and sometimes aesthetic dimensions. They encourage the viewers to look at parts of the works instead of the whole. In sum, the questions fail to foster an in-depth examination of the work, and Stone (1997) argues that it might result in the unsuccessful retention of information about a work of art. To solve the
flaws, there should be more related aspects and more questions addressed for a work of art. I think the questions should have interpretive dimensions and also aesthetic dimensions because they help students perceive, observe and think critically about the work. Although I do not totally agree with the importance of the retention of information in art appreciation, I agree with the points Stone made about holding a successful discussion that can foster students’ in-depth examination of a work of art.

Another factor that influences the understanding of art is the use of technology. Quinn (2009) examines how an e-learning environment influences college students’ learning in art appreciation courses. He observed the differences of knowledge construction and the meaning-making process happening in the e-learning environment from that in the traditional art appreciation class. The use of email and bulletin discussion lets students slow down and think about their reading and writing. It allows teaching to be slower paced, and allows the learning activities to be reflective and cyclical. The e-learning approach also carries the character of student-centeredness.

In conclusion, I want to make these points regarding cultural assumptions, art criticism, and comparative art context. First, as Neperud and Stuhr (1993) imply, cultural assumptions influence aesthetic judgment. In my curriculum, I would like to address the issue of context through artworks to foster students’ cultural understanding as also advocated by Barrett (2003). Second, as Beck’s et al. (1999) research suggests, writing art criticism benefits students’ understanding of art. In my curriculum, students will both present oral and written art criticism. Third, drawing from Koroscik’s et al. (1992) study, the idea of comparative art context will be adopted in the display of works of art according to the same theme or the same artist in the proposed curriculum instead of being displayed alone. Art, when being put in the context—no
matter whether it is cultural and historical context or the context of other works—offers students a more in-depth way of looking at and understanding a work. The ideas of relating the content of art to students’ prior knowledge and using the strategies to make students activate that prior knowledge reflect constructivist theory. I will emphasize these ideas in my curriculum design.

An in-depth examination of art as suggested by Stone (1997) is essential for a successful discussion. Therefore, I will control the numbers of the works shown in class to address more questions and more aspects for an artwork, and emphasize the interpretive and also aesthetic dimensions of the work. Finally, based on the benefits of technology (Quinn, 2009), which offer student-centeredness and are free of time constraint, I would use an online-forum as an aid to compensate for the size of my designed course. A large class might easily lack student-centeredness and sufficient time for having personal reflection and communication among the teacher and the students.

The application of constructivist methods in other fields. Although in a quite different field from art, constructivist methods have proved to be an effective tool for students’ learning in science and information system design. Syh-Jong (2007) examines how talking and writing activities in a collaborative group influenced students’ knowledge construction in a physical science method course for secondary science pre-service teachers at a Taiwan university. The findings from the interpretative methodology show positive responses toward the methods. Students thought the process was rich and interesting, and superior to traditional ways of teaching science. This approach facilitates students’ active construction of science knowledge and understanding of concepts and generation of personal explanations. Students found their attitudes toward learning changed from passive to active and open-minded. Therefore, Syh-Jong
suggests that social constructivist methods should be incorporated into the teacher training courses and future science education.

On the other hand, the well-designed constructivist method in Tétard and Patokorpi’s (2005) study on how the constructivist approach can improve the learning of the information systems design gives me insights about how students might respond to various aspects of the constructivist method. Similar courses mostly focus on presenting plentiful design methods and techniques. However, their course is design-process oriented and emphasizes students’ application of design methods and techniques to a real-world problem. An advanced-level course for both undergraduate and post-graduate Information Systems students in Finland, it is a ten week course, mixing lecture and workshop. Teams develop a design project chosen from one of three different topics. The course involves a lot of teamwork, cross-group and facilitator-student communication, including group discussion, cross-evaluation of peers’ work and the facilitator’s periodic feedback. The aspect of this course that I most appreciated is that the facilitator kept track of the students’ work in progress and offered feedback along the way. The facilitator’s feedback related to the students’s prior experiences, thus making sure the development moved in the right direction. The instructor allowed the students to work at their own pace but also suggested workplans as well as four optional checkpoints for students to keep track of the project progression. This course gave plenty of room for individual growth and freedom but also framed this freedom with a basic structure and careful guidance. I am enthusiastic about the design of the course. It conveys the real spirit of the constructivist method, which is usually misunderstood as minimal guidance. The guidance the facilitator needs to achieve in the

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21 The situation of such courses is similar to how an art appreciation course is traditionally presented as an introduction of forms of visual art from ancient time to today.
constructivist mode is flexible, adaptable to students’ temporary mindset, and therefore more sophisticated than that of the teacher using direct instruction or teaching in a strict structure.

According to the result of the case study, students appreciated the freedom of choice, face-to-face teamwork, democratic discussion, guidance of the suggested workplan (but some felt it suggested deadlines). They also liked that the design problem was close to a real world problem, but they wanted more peer-to-peer communication and more stringent criticism from the facilitator. The reflections suggest students’ need for freedom, teamwork, discussion, peers’ support and facilitator’s guidance, which informs how I would search for a balance between guidance and freedom in my proposed curriculum and especially seek to make sure that the content is connected to students’ real world experiences as also advocated by Koroscik et al. (1992). But being aware of the differences in the nature of my course and the authors’ course, I would modify the strategies to better fit beginning learners.

It is also found in the study that teamwork is time-consuming, and sometimes there is a problem of free-riding.\(^22\) Though online learning resources are offered, it seems that what students really need more is peer support and facilitator guidance. The preference for face-to-face communication gives another consideration of the application of technology in my curriculum design. Therefore, the use of technology will be an assistant to compensate for the deficiency of classwork but will not be the major source of communication for students.

Finally, free-riding might also be a problem in the curriculum I proposed, since it is hard for the facilitator to intervene during group work. But I think it might be improved by encouraging the participation of certain unmotivated individuals during after-class, one-to-one, talks. In the assessment, the teacher can ask students to write reflections about their roles in their teamwork, so the teacher will have a better idea if students are responsible for their teamwork.

\(^{22}\) Free-riding refers to the situation, in which there exists members who make no contribution to the teamwork.
For every teaching strategy, there are upsides and downsides. Teamwork is time-consuming, but at the same time students can hear a variety of voices and learn to negotiate and organize members’ opinions in a respectful way.

This chapter has outlined key theories and themes, specific points of comparison on which to build curriculum, and constructivist theory for an interactive classroom. Next, I will discuss my specific methods for constructing the proposed curriculum.
CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Curriculum Research

The curriculum research paradigms I use in this dissertation are from the humanistic tradition as well as the practical tradition in curriculum research. The humanistic tradition includes philosophy, history, and criticism. The curriculum presented in this dissertation is grounded in philosophical inquiries, which “conceptualize curriculum practices and examine curricular ideals” (Walker, 2003, p. 142). There are three levels to this approach. First, I articulate the concepts and theories of cross-cultural understanding, art appreciation, the constructivist method, and comparative cultural aesthetics. Second, I respond with specific concepts that can be explored in the curriculum. Third, I propose a scope and sequence of study that can foster students’ cross-cultural understanding through art appreciation.

Still, any curriculum remains conceptual until it is practiced in the real world. Walker (2003) states, “Researchers, reformers, and professionals all need a grounded understanding of both conventional practices and innovative ones in order to determine what sustains existing practices and how to sustain new and desirable ones” (Walker, 2003, p. 149). Therefore, my curriculum research also incorporates the practical tradition to better inform and strengthen the theoretical framework of the proposed curriculum. In contrast to the emphasis on theoretical concerns, the practical tradition focuses on educational practices in the real world. Therefore, I conducted informal observations and interviews for my curriculum development. Through
observation of one art appreciation course that involved discussion of multiple cultures and another that emphasized application of constructivist methods at the University of Georgia, I observed two instructional settings. The informal study allowed me to gain data regarding teaching content, strategies and interactions between students and the teacher, and verbal and somatic pedagogic mannerisms. In addition, through interviews with the instructors, I ensured that the teachers had ample opportunity to reflect on their own practices.

An artist is the creator of a work of art. Broudy (1972), Dewey (1934/1959) and Barrett (2003) all address the importance of associating appreciators’ experiences with artists’ experiences. Therefore, I was compelled to hear the voice of artists in addition to art teachers. Therefore, I submitted a request for an amended IRB to allow me to interview three artists concerning their views on the interpretation of creative work in an art appreciation of course.

The observations and interviews provided insights into how I conceptualized my proposed curriculum. I approached this investigation into an art education pedagogy with the specific aims outlined above by exploring the following relevant lines of inquiry: how to increase student motivation; foster student understanding of other cultures; and arouse student potential for aesthetic experience. Additionally, I queried, are there other elements that I have not considered that might meet the objectives of my proposed curriculum? Finally, are there negative influences on student learning of which I need to be aware?

As I completed my drafts for specific curriculum units, I arranged four reading group meetings for giving feedback and advice on the design of the curriculum, attended by two undergraduate students and a fellow graduate teaching assistant at the University of Georgia. This group itself was cross-cultural and provided critical insights to the lessons presented in this
dissertation. Therefore, this section will begin with my informal study and its implications for the structure of a practical curriculum, and will conclude with the humanistic framework.

**Informal Observations and Interviews**

Classroom qualitative research methodology seeks to understand the interactions between the instructor and his/her students and the complexity of those experiences (Hubbard & Power, 1993; 2003). My purpose was to observe people’s interactions in the natural setting of the classroom or directly interact with people through semi-structured interviews. I informally observed two art appreciation classes and interviewed the classroom instructors. Both of these classes followed the same schedule, meeting every day for four weeks, the second course following the first one in succession; I observed every meeting of each class.

**Class observations.** In both art appreciation classrooms, the course content closely followed the textbook. Yet, each class had a distinct style. One teacher emphasized cultural aspects to illuminate content while the other emphasized design activities to reinforce content. Although their approaches differed, both classes helped me to identify and explore the constructs that are central to my proposed curriculum: cross-cultural communications and constructivist methods.

I found that students more actively participated in class when the teacher used constructivist methods. Students generally were not responsive and easily lost interest during direct instruction. It was evident that college students grasp points quickly and liked challenges that required them to think. They also liked creative activities and making personal artwork. The class atmosphere was more active and more insightful through multi-directional and democratic communication.
**Students’ backgrounds.** The students in the two classes came from different backgrounds. One class was composed of second year to fourth year students from different departments. Some of them were working summer jobs. This commitment affected their learning outcomes due to their limited available time. In contrast, the other class was composed of high-performance high school graduates who were incoming first-year students. Each class had distinguishing characteristics as communities. Therefore, different teaching strategies or attitudes could have been appropriate for each class. In such situations, teachers need to be flexible and adapt their strategies to accommodate the needs and interests of different students and classroom communities (Taber, 2010).

Although the students in the first-year class were generally more willing to participate during class and follow instructions, they did not demonstrate the kind of diversity in learning styles or backgrounds that encourages a classroom atmosphere in which students can hear very different viewpoints from peers. In the other class, the diversity of ideas usually brought about excitement and unexpected insight. However, it is a teaching challenge to adopt a range of teaching strategies to meet everyone’s learning needs. Nevertheless, it could be very exciting to teach a class that showed the kind of variation and intellectual ferment as the class that was more diverse in its student composition.

**Teaching strategies and students’ responses.** I regarded the students in both classes as dynamic. They liked to experience life, to express themselves, and to confront challenges. Therefore, both groups were usually very actively engaged in class while being asked questions—either by the professors or between themselves in group work—and encouraged to realize their personal freedom by expressing themselves. They were excited and motivated while holding group discussions, doing activities and making art, and when they confronted
controversial issues. The students in both classes were like a combination of Mondrian and Kandinsky paintings, with their composition of bold colors: sometimes in polished order, sometimes in a dynamic rhythm and chaos. They were eager to investigate the world around them and express their voices. They were sensitive to every experience. In turn, they demonstrated sensitivity to art as the embodiment of human experience. However, it was clear that in these large classes there could have been more room for personal intuitive responses to and feelings about a work of art.

Both Dewey (1934/59) and Broudy (1972) suggest the importance of perception in the aesthetic experience. Dewey emphasizes personal interpretation based on the visual quality of art and also refers to its context as a mode of comprehensive understanding (1934/59), stating, “The function of criticism is the reeducation of perception of works of art” (p. 324). An observation that I made was that it was difficult to design specific tasks that allowed for direct emotional response from the students, other than in art-making activities. My curriculum should address the challenge of providing more space for students’ direct responses.

Barrett (2003) and Dewey (1934/59) both address the importance of understanding contextual knowledge to form a comprehensive understanding of art. There is also the need for sufficient instruction from teachers on the relationships between visual, expressive qualities and personal, contextual meaning. Students sometimes were guided on visual qualities without being informed of contextual influences. This insufficient acknowledgement of contextual knowledge might lead to misunderstanding in discussions, especially about historical and foreign art. On the other hand, being informed of contextual information without being guided in perception might result in confining students in a narrow and rigid scope. An Art Appreciation course should help students to see their world in a new way.
Education should not just provide fixed knowledge for students to memorize but help students acquire tools for meaning-making in the real world (Bruner, 1996). The meaning-making process engages students to think critically. Both classes showed deep interest in student meaning-making as opposed to the passive reception of knowledge.

Students not only construct knowledge independently, but they do so through social interactions (Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978). We can see aspects of constructivist methods in their group discussions and designed teamwork activities that offered the students a chance to think, explore, create their own opinions, exchange ideas with peers, and learn from the perspectives of others. The class demonstrated democratic communication among classmates. Students reacted to these opportunities with enthusiasm.

Students were also very engaged in art-making because they considered their work a form of self-representation, which gave them a sense of ownership and empowerment. They cared about what they were doing, and actively searched for assistance. It was somewhat surprising to find that the students developed a certain degree of confidence and comfort in the process of art-making, an activity which is sometimes viewed as unnatural for many adults. Here, an open and encouraging attitude by the teacher is important, so students feel motivated, but not judged. Encouraging students to keep a sketchbook is a good idea. This task is helpful to develop individual, creative, reflective, visual practices for class projects and activities. The use of a sketchbook allows students to become comfortable with the use of visual language to express ideas.

The classes showed that non-art students can feel confident to express themselves visually if the teacher possesses a positive attitude. Teachers’ expectations can greatly influence how students view themselves and indirectly influence their learning outcome.
**Teachers’ and students’ attitudes and their interactions.** A democratic and open attitude toward different opinions encourages students to express their own thoughts. Therefore, the students felt respected and more comfortable in class discussions and able to voice their personal expressions. Individual freedom in discussion or activity with general guidance from the teacher empowers students who might otherwise lose direction. Constant practice of constructivist teaching principles in a large class is a challenge. There needs to be balance between guidance and freedom and I saw this modeled very well with many students. The teacher has to properly control the timing of content and activities. At the same time, students need freedom to express their own ideas and visual language.

A class that demonstrates multi-directional communication is not likely to be too chaotic or too strict. The interaction between the teacher and students is active. The teacher distributes even attention, facilitates discussion, and makes herself approachable. Such an open interaction seems to engage students more in class discussion and activity, and create trust between the teacher and students. With open interaction, the questions that students ask will be more personal and relevant.

Insightful questions by the teacher or students while discussing controversial contemporary issues immediately aroused other students’ interests and eagerness to express their opinions. Students paid more attention when challenged. However, bias can turn an inspiring cultural discussion into a limited one. It is essential to allow students’ and the teacher’s attitudes to be open, so both the students and teacher have latitude to discuss personal opinions as well as try to carefully examine an artwork within the framework of its original culture and its meaning to those peoples. Instead of simply continuing to persist in what we already believe, we should
question our preconceptions or other types of authoritative thinking, a type of change that Nussbaum (1997) suggests for cross-cultural understanding.

In an introductory class, such as the art appreciation course, we especially need to be aware of oversimplifying the meaning of the work of art, especially with foreign or historical art. There is a danger of insufficient guidance on the relationship between visual language and contextual influences. An insufficient understanding of this relationship can result in an over-simplification of the interpretation of the artwork.

For example, if the teacher just shows the visual language of Impressionism, but fails to point to the historical context in which it was created, students will most likely only see the visual allure of Impressionist work without understanding its original idea as means of questioning the perceptions of art passed down from the Renaissance. Nor will they know of the profound influences on this movement from scientific innovations, such as photography and contemporary color theory. Impressionist painting offers more than visual gratification. It also carries historical importance.

**Conclusion on observations.** Constructivist methods appear to motivate students to learn, respond and actively participate in class. The practice I observed seemed consistent with the personal constructivist theory proposed by Piaget (1980) and Dewey (1929/1960), and it also supports social constructivist theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978), Rogoff (1990) and Bruner (1996, 1997).

Diverse teaching strategies not only meet various students’ learning styles but also serve as a means to keep students interested in the class content, while more monotonous teaching strategies easily bore students and are not efficient in engaging overall class learning. This conclusion aligns with Banks’ (1998) call for diverse strategies in equity pedagogy.
In addition, the teacher’s open attitude toward differences would in turn likely impact students’ attitude and therefore their learning outcomes. A democratic attitude is critical to achieving cultural understanding (Banks, 1998; Gay, 1994; Gomez, 1991; Nussbaum, 1997). Multi-directional communication between the teacher and students and between peers enhances mutual understanding and learning.

Art appreciation is the course designed to introduce students to the aesthetic experience and lead them to interpret visual language. Without a sensitivity to seeing and perceiving, one can hardly interpret the meaning behind visual expression. Students in both courses demonstrated the ability to think critically, but they seldom revealed their personal feelings and emotions toward a work of art. This was compensated for to some degree by the use of personal sketch books, creative activities and art-making. Art is a live creature, which needs to be experienced and felt (Dewey, 1934/1959). The comprehensive understanding of art needs to include both the cultivation of perception and the intellectual understanding of context.

Finally, as Nussbaum (1997) warns, the teacher needs to be attentive to the danger of oversimplifying the complexity of art and culture. Even with an introductory class, the teacher at least needs to bring students the awareness that beauty is only skin deep. Each kind of visual language has its origins in cultural and historical context, which involves the parameter of time and place and interactions with humans. Art and culture are evolving organisms, which cannot be finalized by certain fixed views or arguments.

**Teacher interviews.** The interviews revealed an essential aspect of the constructivist method: the teacher’s reflective ability. Since constructivist methods aim to build on students’ prior experiences, which keep accumulating and changing, the teacher needs to keep track of students’ progression and know where they are at different points in time in order to adjust the
pedagogy and the curriculum to best satisfy students’ needs at a particular time and place. The importance of this type of flexible and adaptable teaching is also implied by the research of Taber (2010). One of the opportunities for reflective teaching is students’ weekly feedback, to which the teacher can refer when considering suitable adjustments in instruction.

Allowing students to express their thoughts freely is not always easy on the teacher. The teacher must be introspective and aware of his/her own subjective opinions. Yet this ability for the teacher to be open-minded helps students to learn as students practice communicating in the classroom.

Process assessments were difficult for the teachers. They required a lot of paperwork and made grading complicated, even with the help of a teaching assistant. There was a need to search for a simpler and a more efficient way to do the assessment for a large class size. Using online tools (Quinn, 2009) may be a useful solution here. In teaching, there needs to be a balance between what would benefit students and what would constitute a manageable work load for teachers.

In all of the interviews, the teachers mentioned time constraints. Students need access to one-on-one conversation to improve; one of the interviews suggests that they do not seem to read comments. Time limits make it hard to practice constructivist methods. Sometimes a lack of time necessitates a transmittal pedagogy, even if the teacher prefers a constructivist approach. If time is short, a teacher may be forced to just tell students what they need to know.

The interviews provided an opportunity for me to re-examine different perceptions and viewpoints toward learning outcomes. Sometimes what I have in mind about teaching is too ideal. The observations and interviews helped me realize how hard these ideas are to practice in the real world. I gained an appreciation for the complexity of the classes’ conditions and the
school’s objective requirements. Teaching in the real world is always about finding a balance between ideal and reality. This need for balance was addressed directly or indirectly in all the interviews conducted. My proposed curriculum will also be a demonstration of the efforts of finding such balance, especially considering the size of the class, the time frame in which it is taught and the practices characterizing constructivist methods.

**Artist interviews.** By the end of the observation of the two art appreciation courses, I felt the need to gain alternative perspectives by collecting interviews from artists, who actually practice art-making. Along with autonomous artworks, artists provide a major source of crucial information and contribute to an understanding of how to conduct an art appreciation course. What artists try to convey through their work, as well as a knowledge of how the work conveys cultural messages are topics that are very pertinent to art education and the unique perspective of each artist, worthy of pursuit. In art appreciation, it is important to learn from the perspective of artists and to listen to the educational perspectives of art teachers.

Photography is the medium of my introductory lesson; my curriculum also touches on interior design. These are two areas that I am unfamiliar with as a professional artist. Therefore, I interviewed two photographers and one interior designer. Two of these artists were faculty members at the University of Georgia. One was a graduate teaching assistant.

These were one-on-one and semi-structured interviews. These were approved by IRB with an amendment to my original approval. The questions from the protocol are as follows:

- What do you think is the foundation that needs to be introduced in order for a beginner (college student not familiar with the field of art) to appreciate/understand art?
  - How do you inspire students to learn this?
- What do you think is the foundation for a beginner in order to appreciate art from another
culture?

- How do you inspire students to learn this?

- What are the important aspects that can help students appreciate art?
  - Can you give me an example of how you teach with these things?

- What about art criticism, history and aesthetics? (In case they do not mention these aspects)
  - Is perception important? (In case they do not mention this aspect)
  - Is applying perception important to the creative process?
  - Give me an example of something you do in your teaching.

**Artist interviews and discussions.** A work of art has been created by an artist. When we try to bring an understanding of art to students, it is as important to know how artists perceive the teaching of the understanding of art as much as to know how art teachers actually go about teaching it. Dewey (1934/59), Broudy (1972) and Barrett (2003) also address connecting the appreciator’s experience with the artist’s experience. Therefore, the three interviews conducted here aim to bring insights on the artists’ experiences and their views on teaching art appreciation to a beginner of art.

Although the interviewees include artists and a designer, there are some common themes addressed: understanding context and connecting art to students’ life experience. The interviewees think that art originates within its cultural and historical context, so to understand art is to understand that culture. We need to interpret art from the eyes of the culture that created it. For example, one of the professors observed that we would never understand why it is so critical to have water and all the natural elements present in Arabic architecture without knowing the importance of water in Arabic society. Identical symbols might have different meanings across cultures. Aesthetics is relative to each culture. There is a danger of focusing on the visual
elements of art and principles of design without looking at the culture from which an artwork originates.

Art teachers advocate connecting art to students’ experiences; the artists interviewed emphasized the same theme, including the importance of visually expressing personal experience, thinking critically about contemporary issues in art, and having a personal connection with works of art. Artists use the art of the past to reflect on our own time. This form of artistic appropriation can inform approaches to art appreciation. This concept of cross-cultural and cross-historical examination responds to Barrett’s (2003) ideas on interpreting art.

The idea, experiences and context behind a work of art are central concerns for most artist-teachers and art educators. Beauty, as understood in the multiplicity of its cultural manifestations, can be an effective tool for engaging viewers. Beauty is a motivator to look deeper. It is indeed the ideas conveyed by art that makes a work of art valuable and worth looking at. Therefore, artist-teachers and art educators can use students’ intuitive responses to modes of beauty as a means to examine the ideas behind the appearance of the work of art.

**Concluding discussion of informal study.** I advocate the use of constructivist methods for the effectiveness it holds on students’ learning process based on the class observations and interviews with art teachers discussed in this section. These methods include, but are not limited to, the students’ use of personal sketchbooks, group discussions, personal art-making, and group work. I also advocate the importance of understanding context and visual concepts for appreciating and knowing art. However, as suggested earlier, there was an obvious insufficiency in cultivating perception and building links between visual language and experience (or context) in the observed classes. A comprehensive aesthetics experience is composed of both perception and an intellectual understanding of context. Therefore, I will emphasize the link between visual
language and context in my proposed curriculum. Although this was not as apparent in the
teaching I observed, I will also consider the historical and cultural aspects of art in the
construction of my curriculum and the design of my course content. Finally, it is beneficial to
guide students in their encounters with actual works of art. Therefore, I will plan to include a
field trip to an art gallery or museum.

The Humanistic Curriculum Framework

With these reflections on how art appreciation could be taught, I turned my attention to
constructing the actual curriculum for this dissertation. At the core of an art appreciation
curriculum is visual images. These images, which I call exemplar artworks, support the content
to be learned and provide entry ways into constructivist tasks. Based on the theoretical
framework described earlier and the findings from the informal study in the previous section,
there are seven criteria central to the selection of exemplar artworks in this research.

1. The work demonstrates beliefs, values, attitudes and human behaviors, which further
   reveal how people from that culture discover the meaning of life.
2. The work represents the aesthetic values of the culture.
3. The work connects to students’ every day experiences and facilitates interpretations of
   the historical expansion of time.
4. The work evokes a thematic comparison between East and West and across historical
   periods.
5. The work demonstrates potential for cross-cultural dialogue and historical influences.
6. The work evokes critical thinking about controversial issues relative to contemporary and
   historical East and West and encourages social awareness.
7. The work has been highly valued or popular in a culture; or the work is highly valued in art history.

I will explore each of these points more fully. The exemplar works that relate to each criterion will be briefly mentioned but discussed in detail later in the curriculum section.

1. The work demonstrates beliefs, values, attitudes and human behaviors, which further reveal how people from that culture discover the meaning of life.

   To understand a culture, one needs to observe patterns of belief and values transmitted over time, as well as attitudes, human behaviors and the tangible products generated from this system. In addition, it is necessary to contemplate and examine how people in that culture make sense of their social life and search for meaning. One needs to look for complexities. Therefore the work needs to demonstrate not only the belief system of the culture but also how people from that culture discover the meaning of life. For example, painting and interior design from the Rococo period\(^{23}\) signify the praise of the joy of life, elegant aristocratic taste, and artifice in Salon culture. With similar praise for the pleasure in life, Ukiyo-e prints represent the entertainment culture among the general public and popular taste in Edo Japan.

2. The work represents the aesthetic values of the culture.

   In order to bring students an aesthetic experience and cultivate their perceptions, as Broudy (1972) and Dewey (1934/59) advocate, the work needs to represent the aesthetic values of the culture, like the harmonious beauty of the East, which is revealed in *Pure and Remote Views of Streams and Mountains* (Hsia, 1190-1225, see Fig. 4.2), or the ideal beauty of figural forms in the West, which is shown in Michelangelo’s *David* (Michelangelo, 1501-1504, see Fig.\(^{23}\) Rococo is an 18\textsuperscript{th} century artistic style, which is characteristic of feminine sensibility.)
4.3). The subtlety and simplicity of Japanese woodblock prints in the Edo period and the sweetness and pleasantness of Rococo painting also carry cultural beauty that attracts people. When people are captivated, they will pay attention, and then they have a chance to grasp the ideas and meanings behind the surface beauty of the work (Artist Interview, September 2010). Aesthetics is also a demonstration of culture (Artist Interview, September 2010). Besides being a lure, it also reveals cultural meanings. On the other hand, Duncum (2007) proposes that only when we understand beauty can we know how it might fool us and therefore grasp the meaning of the work. Therefore, beauty can be used in multiple ways to enhance students’ understanding of the meaning of art.

3. The work connects to students’ every day experiences and facilitates interpretations of the historical expansion of time.

   To arouse students’ interests and motivate them, they need to find their experiences represented in exemplar works. Then, students can use their prior experiences to construct new knowledge. For example, Jeff Koons’s works are inspired from daily objects in American life. Students respond to, and draw inspiration from, familiar objects of visual experience. In a similar sense, Takashi Murakami’s works draw inspiration from the otaku culture in Japan, anime and manga, which are also popular among American youth. They can see the unique translation of otaku to works of art, and can be motivated to explore its cultural messages.

4. The work evokes a thematic comparison between East and West and across historical periods.

   To generate students’ critical thinking, the proposed curriculum needs to allow students to discuss issues in depth. So it is constructed on historical and cultural thematic concerns. For
example, Rococo painting and Ukiyo-e prints are selected to promote the discussion of fantasy culture in France and Japan around the 18th century, while Koons’s sculpture and Murakami’s works are selected to prompt examination of the fanciful world in contemporary America and Japan, respectively.

5. The work demonstrates potential for cross-cultural dialogue and historical influences.

The dialogue between the East and West has become a popular subject in modern times. While Far Eastern countries became Westernized as early as the Age of Discovery, the Western world has only relatively recently gained an authentic interest in ancient Eastern philosophy and culture. To demonstrate these mutual influences and also associate them to ancient traditions, the work needs to show potential for cross-cultural dialogue and historical influences. Tadao Ando’s minimalist architecture (see Fig. 8.2) provides a case study. It conveys not only the modern aesthetics of universality and functionalism but also embodies the Eastern tradition of perceiving space and nature. In a similar way, one can find both the classical, modern and the Eastern idea realized in the work of Mies van der Rohe.

6. The work evokes critical thinking about controversial issues relative to contemporary and historical East and West and encourages social awareness.

Works of art are closely associated with human social experience. To bring awareness to humanity and its evolution, we need art to examine critical and controversial issues. A popular subject of Rococo painting was love. Salon culture celebrated the pleasures of life. Today, art from this period also lets us contemplate the role of women at that time. Did women actively compel the artistic taste of sensuous fun? Or were they only objects of pleasure in men’s eyes? A
similar discussion of the roles of women can be found in Ukiyo-e prints, which served as commercial products to gratify male consumers. These discussions further evoke contemplation of and critical thinking about the image of women in contemporary society in Japan and the West.

7. The work has been highly valued or popular in a culture; or the work is highly valued in art history.

Exemplar works of art are not limited to what we find in museums. However, works of art that carry significance represent not only the artist’s mind but also people’s collective mindset and interests across time in a culture or across cultures. For example, Michelangelo’s *Capitoline Hill* (Michelangelo, 1537, see Fig. 4.6) reveals the pursuit of the ideal form of the human figure. The *Katsura Imperial Villa* (1620-1663, see Fig. 4.7) in Japan demonstrates the search for humans’ harmonious relationship with nature.

**Quality check in the final curriculum: The reading group.** In order to address how standards of quality in the data would be met in the proposed curriculum research, I conducted a Critical Friends reading group. Critical Friends protocol is a central strategy, which follows certain steps in order to facilitate an intellectual community in a seminar context (Costantino, 2010). The group—composed of a Taiwanese freshman who aims to major in art, an American junior undergraduate in photography, and an American photography graduate teaching assistant—gave me feedback on my curriculum.

Four Critical Friends reading group meetings were held from October to November in 2010 for giving feedback and advice on the design of the curriculum. This curriculum is designed for undergraduate students, most likely freshmen. Therefore, I needed direct input from
the undergraduates. The curriculum also aims to enhance cross-cultural understanding of Eastern art, so it was important to hear what an Asian student would think about the content and its organization. Finally, the curriculum needed to undergo an examination for its legitimacy and accuracy by an art expert, who could offer critical opinions from a professional stance. Therefore, I included a photography graduate teaching assistant.

During each meeting, one topic from each unit was demonstrated and discussed. The four meetings covered an overview of the syllabus and discussions of all three units. The meeting usually lasted about an hour or more. After the initial teaching demonstration, the participants freely discussed their thoughts about the design. I usually just listened at first and later joined the discussion and further explained the ideas or posed questions.

The discussions were very inspiring and helpful for me to be able to see from different perspectives, instead of remaining confined within my own logic and thought patterns. They offered some great insights for the design of the curriculum and also teaching strategy. There were several points that prompted my re-examination of the proposed curriculum. The group recommended that questioning posed during teaching needed to be inspiring. They also suggested keeping the lessons simpler. They were interested in the cross-cultural content; images that are visually appealing and also demonstrate multiple cultural understandings; and what connects art to life experience and contemporary issues. They alerted me to be aware of the pitfalls of oversimplification. Because the group was culturally diverse and mixed-gendered, I learned from their different reactions to the curriculum content. By using Facebook for communication, the group demonstrated a way to solicit responses through the use of technology. There are five points that came out of the reading group that I want to discuss in detail.
The first point is the most important of all, for it addresses a fundamental attitude and way of thinking for a constructivist curriculum. In the art project for the last unit, “Create your Own Pop,” I developed an essential question to inspire students to think about their visual experiences in daily life. However, as the art expert in the group suggested, the question was too obvious to compel students to think more deeply and more sophisticatedly. I think she pointed out an important mistake that I tend to make, not only in this one question but also in my daily thinking, as well as my attitude. Direct and trivial teaching cannot inspire students to reflect deeply. Art should be a means from which to examine life through the details that we usually ignore. Attention to implicit aspects of life helps expand our awareness. Therefore, we should be more sensitive to life and experience and be attentive to the perspectives that we usually do not see. The teacher should guide students to their own experiences instead of pointing in a direct way. To make the curriculum more constructivist, I not only changed the question but also re-examined if such modes of thought also occur in the design of the other units. I truly think that this is the spirit I need to keep throughout my curriculum, my teaching, my art, and my life.

Second, the group suggested that I should make the lessons simpler. Although they were active and interesting, they appeared to cover too many activities and types of content, considering the time constraints of the classroom. By making the units simpler, they will avoid being “too busy.” It takes time to set up video and group discussions. Some of the activities can be done as home assignments. Students can read articles I post online and respond to accompanied prompt questions with comments on eLC instead of discussing them in class. Online discussion can facilitate the exchange of ideas among classmates. Quinn (2009) also proposes the benefits of an online forum to learning, as it provides time management for the

24 The old question is to “think about what your favorite pop images are.”
25 The revised question is to “think about what you often see in daily life.”
teacher while supporting adaptability to individual student needs. Therefore, the use of Facebook and eLC in this proposed curriculum serves as a communication platform for students and the teacher to exchange ideas and for students to respond to posted information like class reading, visual or written assignments or other sources of references.

Moreover, extended study of the course content can also be achieved through offering a list of references of other artists or historical artistic movements or contextual information in the syllabus. Students are encouraged to refer to the extended references, which demonstrate the complexity of culture and avoid the danger of oversimplifying the cultural content.

Third, the general descriptions of Western photographers’ works confused the group. While there were certain cultural tendencies, there were also examples of work that deviated from the general style. Thus the general descriptions show the danger of oversimplification, which might let students form certain impressions about a culture without further examining other distinct aspects. A similar problem happened in discussing the idea of the nude and landscape in Unit 2. So, in the units that discuss art in a wider range of contexts like Unit 1: Street Photographer, and Unit 2: Nude and Landscape, I will inform students of the more prominent idea existing in the culture but also point out that the principle does not apply to all artists in the culture. A brief introduction or a list of references of other forms of visual expression or types of subject matter will be provided to prevent confusion and misunderstanding.

Fourth, the group showed great interest in cross-cultural content; images that are visually appealing and also demonstrate multiple cultural perspectives; and connections to life experiences and contemporary issues. They liked the cross-cultural content and were excited to learn about various cultures, especially the Taiwanese freshman and the American photography
major. The freshman complained that his art appreciation class always talked about Western art and just very briefly introduced art from other cultures. He wanted to know more about art from other cultures, especially Japan, which might be due to his interests in anime. He appreciated the balanced content between Eastern and Western art in the proposed curriculum. The group was also interested in the discussion of social issues in different cultures, such as the roles of women.

In addition, they were all attracted to visually appealing images that also demonstrate multiple cultural perspectives, such as the photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson and Hiroshi Watanabe. They showed less interest in William Klein’s photographs, which they thought were less appealing and less visually interesting. Such reactions support Dewey’s claims that we learn as we are lured (1934/1959). Cartier-Bresson’s photos were recommended by the group more than Klein’s works not only because of their visual impact, but also because Cartier-Bresson is a more representative figure in photography. He proposed the idea of the decisive moment, which can lead students to think more deeply about photography.

Responding to constructivist ideas and the findings from the informal study, the reading group liked and was very intrigued about the course content that connected to life experience and was associated with contemporary issues. An example is the comparison of the social context of the Edo period in Japan to life in Las Vegas in the U.S., and comparing the roles of women in the Edo era to those of women today. Moreover, they all showed an extreme interest and passion for the Japanese topic, otaku. They were intrigued and excited by contemporary artworks like Murakami’s works inspired from anime, and Nara’s illustrative works, which examine identity. The discussions were active. The junior photography student hoped she could learn about images similar to these in a multicultural art class. She found this content much more interesting to learn about. I think this might be due to the contemporary artistic senses shown through the works,
which speak to the minds of young people, and might also be due to the exaggerated and fun expressions and actions of the manga-like figure in Murakami’s painting, which are new, fresh and exciting.

Similarly, the video of otaku culture in the same unit also got many active responses. The members of the reading group enjoyed the personal expression apparent in this culture and felt that manga characters were sensual. The graduate teaching assistant thought that the otaku video built a good bridge between Western and Eastern forms since the actress who tells the story of otaku culture is American. Their opinions, in some aspects, solved the doubts I originally had toward teaching pop culture and art, especially anime-inspired art, which falls on a blurred line between art and commercial products. They also showed the flexible mindset that young students might have toward visual experiences. Such a sense of flexibility is also something that I should hold as a teacher.

Fifth, I noticed the different reactions, according to the group members’ different cultures and genders. For example, the male Taiwanese freshman thought the Japanese tea ceremony was boring, while the female American photo major was interested in learning more about it. This difference in interest might be due to the Taiwanese and Chinese familiarity with tea culture and the feeling that it is less exciting. The Taiwanese freshman pointed out one of the concerns I have: the gentle aspects of Eastern culture might not interest American youth, who—based on my observation in the informal study—respond more to controversial, eccentric and exciting aspects of art. However, the American undergraduate in the group gave me another viewpoint on the interests of American youth. It seems like they might like to know what they do not know. In addition, there are different gender reactions toward images with erotic hints. Female members may tend to feel uncomfortable toward extreme forms of sexual expression, such as Murakami’s
My Lonesome Cowboy (Murakami, 1998, see Fig. 3.1). However, the group all agreed on the positive impact of the images with an implicit and mild sexual expression, such as Daido Moriyama’s Tights in Shimotakaido (Moriyama, 1987, see Fig. 3.2). Like those that depict beauty, such images can attract students’ attention and trigger their engagement in a deeper discussion about the meaning and aesthetics of the work, instead of the erotic pleasure they might first associate it with. Therefore, in discussing Daido Moriyama’s works in the first unit, I include Tights in Shimotakaido as one of the online references.

The reading group really inspired me to reflect on my mindset and attitude toward teaching, art, and life, which was an unexpected gain for me. Its members provided insights on the choice of artworks, the organization of the course content, the danger of oversimplifying a cultural idea, the use of online forums, and students’ possible reaction toward different types of works, and toward cultural and contemporary issues, as well as references, in my proposed curriculum. The group praised the general content and further confirmed the allure and meaningfulness of certain important aspects of the course content, such as cross-cultural comparison, the association of traditional contexts with contemporary examples, the discussion of social issues and Japanese Pop art. The graduate teaching assistant was also positive about the inter-related thematic structure of the curriculum.
CHAPTER FOUR
Cross-Cultural Art Appreciation Curriculum

Introduction

The proposed constructivist curriculum is flexible and can be adjusted to students’ needs and interests. I regard the curriculum as an organism, which constantly changes according to the communication needs that exist between the teacher and students. Therefore, the proposed objectives, teaching strategies, assessments and course content refer to a general direction to follow, and will further develop and grow with students’ input and the teacher’s reflection.

The main objective for the proposed constructivist curriculum is to inspire students to gain cross-cultural understanding through art appreciation. There are three educational aims: the understanding of art in a cultural context, the use of a broad approach to achieve cross-cultural understanding, and the demonstration of an open, introspective, and critical attitude.

The same flexibility is applied to the course content. Although the general structure of the curriculum presented here was developed according to the literature review, the content is malleable and may be modified as necessary based on students’ preferences and learning conditions. The content structure is based on comparative themes to help students generate critical thinking through an in-depth discussion of certain central issues in historical and contemporary Western and Eastern societies. The content also builds on the previous content of my curriculum and connects to students’ life experience to facilitate their construction of knowledge.
The pedagogy for the proposed curriculum requires a democratic mindset, a reflective and introspective sensibility, and a positive, honest attitude that is empathetic towards the students. This caring for their learning includes promoting students’ interest in the curriculum, enjoyable engagement with ideas and positive personal growth. Teaching strategies based on this pedagogy allow individual freedom within a general sense of guidance. This approach includes the teacher’s open discussion with the class to promote more questioning than lecturing; group discussions; group presentations; individually guided art-criticism exercises; pre-class assignments; research; online forums; art-making; free-writing; sketch book assessments; and other purposeful class activities.

To assess students’ learning in the constructivist curriculum, the teacher needs to be concerned with a process-oriented assessment rather than a product-oriented one. Therefore, the assessment for the curriculum is based on the idea of authentic assessment. A complete set of rubrics is in the appendix. Assessment will focus on a visual journal, reflective feedback, a critique exercise, responses in an online-forum, an art project, group presentations, and a research paper. Students will be engaged in lower and higher order thinking (Bloom, 1956). The final rubrics will incorporate students’ suggestions and can be revised by the teacher as the course progresses.

Objectives

The objectives fall into three categories: the understanding of art in a cultural context; the use of a broad approach to achieve cross-cultural understanding; and the demonstration of an open, introspective, and critical attitude. The objectives reflect on definitions of culture; theories of cross-cultural understanding; art appreciation theory; the constructivist theory of teaching and learning; and findings from empirical literature and informal observations and interviews.
The understanding of art in a cultural context.

1. Students reflect on how art is a material product, generated within specific groups of people and how it demonstrates systems of beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviors, and ways of discovering the meaning of life. Through these products, ideas are transmitted from generation to generation (Monaghan & Just, 2000).

2. Students have a basic understanding of the complexity and organic nature of culture by examining art from that culture within a historical scope.

The first category, the understanding of art in a cultural context, draws from the definition of culture as a not only a system of belief and values passed down from generation to generation, but also a learning device to make sense of life (Monaghan & Just, 2000). Therefore, students need to understand how art is one of the embodiments of culture. They also need to have a basic understanding of the complexity and organic nature of culture. By interpreting culture within different time frames, they will not form judgments light-heartedly and oversimplify the richness of the culture and its ambiguity (Nussbaum, 1997; Wright, 2000).

The use of a broad approach to achieve cross-cultural understanding.

3. Students will perceive, observe, interpret, examine, criticize, and compare visual language and cultural phenomena from the East and West.

4. Through a set process of art criticism (Broudy, 1972; Barrett, 2003), students will respond to artwork.

5. Students will perceive works of art and architecture “in the way that artists in the respective media tend to perceive them” (Broudy, 1972, p.60).

6. By incorporating various perspectives arising from contextual study, group study, discussion, formal lectures, and personal art making, students will consider a broad
approach to visual culture and expand their awareness by synthesizing their own responses.

7. Students will compare different visual cultures, across time and place, with visual experiences in contemporary life in order to gain cross-cultural understanding. Perceiving, observing, interpreting, examining, criticizing and comparing are important strategies for the second category, the use of a broad approach to achieve cross-cultural understanding. It is important to connect appreciators’ experiences to artists’ experiences (Broudy, 1972; Dewey, 1934/1959; Barrett, 2003). Broudy (1972) and Dewey (1934/1959) address the importance of perception in understanding art. Dewey further advocates criticism as interpreting sensory information to make personal meaning. In constructivist methods, it is central for students to respond to visual language with personal feelings and form personal interpretations about the meaning based on each individual’s experience. Moreover, students need to be able to further examine and criticize visual language and its cultural and historical context, so they can discern important relationships. Comparison is an effective means to enhance cross-cultural understanding (Nussbaum, 1997). On the other hand, students will expand awareness not only by experiencing visual culture through various means such as contextual study, lecture, and art-making but also by seeking “communal understanding of works of art” in group and class discussions (Barrett, 2003, p. 135). Students need to hear various perspectives from multiple sources and have various experiences with art to be able to synthesize information from these sources with their own experiences, which will hopefully yield an expanded personal vision.

Finally, connecting art with life experience is essential for constructing one’s own knowledge and for having an aesthetic experience (Dewey, 1934/1959). In the informal
observations and interviews that are part of this IRB-approved study, encouraging students to express their intuitive responses toward art and about the classroom practice increased the students’ interest and engagement. Therefore, the teacher should facilitate students’ capacities for associating art with their own life experiences.

**The demonstration of an open, introspective, and critical attitude.**

8. Students maintain an open attitude toward different perspectives and cultures, ask questions, and leave ideas open for a wide range of possibilities, instead of forming fixed conclusions.

9. Students demonstrate original, independent thinking and respect others’ opinions.

10. With understanding of another culture and various perspectives, students can introspectively examine and discover more about “their own beliefs and values as translated through an art object” (Dambekains, 1994, p. 84).

11. Students demonstrate creative abilities to incorporate what they have learned in class and their life experiences into their art projects.

12. Students can cooperate with their peers to complete class activities and assignments.

13. Students comfortably and confidently express opinions and feelings.

The last category, *the demonstration of an open, introspective, and critical attitude*, helps students put another culture on an equal stance with their owns, re-examine their own beliefs, reduce prejudice and see from the perspectives of that culture in order to more fully understand it (Banks, 1998; Dambekains, 1994; Gomez, 1991; Nussbaum, 1997; Tomhave, 1992).

There is a human tendency to take many beliefs and values of one’s own culture for granted (Dambekains, 1994). Dambekains states, “Teaching students to examine an important issue from the perspective of another culture might present complex problems and questions in a
fresh manner and enable us to see ourselves with new understanding” (p. 84). Therefore, I think one of the most important objectives and benefits that students can gain from cross-cultural study is to have an opportunity to re-examine the cultural and personal beliefs and values that have been self-evident since they were born. Since all cultures contribute to in some manner to human civilization, introspection helps students to expand their awareness and appreciate and respect the diversity in the world. The same logic is applied to abilities that demonstrate empathetic understanding of others’ perspectives, such as group discussion. Introspection also leads to an open attitude, which is important for cross-cultural understanding.

To understand a culture, students need to think critically and independently about cultural issues, viewpoints or assumptions, instead of obeying authority or just blindly celebrating diversity (Banks, 1998; Nussbaum, 1997). Students need to question, probe, and inquire, and refer to multiple sources and opinions to avoid oversimplified concepts and personal biases. Culture and art are evolving and organic (Dewey, 1934/1959; Nussbaum, 1997), so students must entertain ideas that connect to a wide range of possibilities.

Furthermore, to expand their understanding through verbal and written formats, students need to visualize their ideas and construct knowledge from learned content in class and from life experience in a creative engagement with the material through an art project. Learning does not occur only within one’s mind but also takes place within a social context. Therefore, cooperation with peers is also a significant aspect of the learning process; students can exchange various ideas and learn to respect and incorporate the viewpoints of others to enrich their own. An artist in the informal study said, “Art is about communication.” Communication with others not only helps students to understand art but also makes them feel comfortable and confident as well. All of these skills are part of my teaching objectives.
Teacher’s Attitude

The teacher’s attitude is the foundation for a successful implementation of constructivist methods. Therefore, my discussion of the teaching strategy, below I draw four essential ideas from the theoretical framework and informal study.

1. A democratic open attitude to create equity in the classroom (Banks, 1998; Nussbaum, 1997) and foster social interaction for learning.

2. A reflective and introspective ability to respond to students’ needs and interests and offer proper guidance.

3. A positive and honest attitude to help students’ progress.

4. Caring about students’ learning condition and process.

Teaching Strategy

Human beings live through searching, and we gain wisdom along the way (Dewey, 1929/1934). Education should facilitate the human desire to search, i.e. to facilitate students in the *individual creation of knowledge* (Phillips, 1995). On the other hand, constructing knowledge is not a solitary activity. We actively participate in activities; learn from interacting with others as well as our surroundings; and learn with more experienced partners (Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978).

Therefore, constructivist pedagogy guides my teaching. In the curriculum this dissertation presents, I consider both the individual and the social construction of knowledge. The teaching strategies that derive from this pedagogy include the teacher’s open discussion with the class to promote more questioning than lecturing, group discussions, group presentations, individually-guided art criticism exercises, pre-class assignments, research, online forums, art-making, free-writing, visual journals, and constructivist and self-reflective experiences. These activities and
different ways of facilitating and stimulating students’ thoughts make the course more rhythmic and intriguing. As Dewey (1934) claims, we learn as we are lured.

**Questioning and discussion.** Through open and essential questions, the teacher inspires students to search for ideas that originate from the students’ own engagement with the material, and then the teacher challenges or supplements those ideas. Frequently in my lesson plans, one can see the teacher begin the lesson with an open discussion with the class—introducing an artwork, artist, culture or historical context with both knowledge and questions. Sometimes those questions come from a pre-class assignment, such as a reading or a video. Alternatively, one can see the teacher guide the following group discussion with simpler images, which bring forth certain important aspects or questions that can be further explored.

Discussion allows the exchange of ideas, and students can learn from alternative perspectives as well as an attitude of respect and cooperation. Depending on varying conditions, discussion can be managed in the classroom, in small groups, or online in Facebook or other electronic classroom mediation tools, such as eLC. Facebook and electronic classrooms are important communication tools for a large lecture hall class. These digital tools allow each student to post their assignments and make comments to their peers’ work or respond to reading assignments. eLC can be used when students or teachers need to upload files for discussion, while Facebook can be used in any other situation for facilitating the exchange of ideas. Such individuality is hard to achieve during the limited amount of class time. These digital tools also provide a nice platform to distribute class assignments and to exchange other information and resources related to the course.

**Group work.** Teamwork characterizes a majority of the class activities. Working as a group encourages more ideas that can be heard by the whole class. Students will expend more
effort if they know they will be held accountable for presenting their ideas. Presentations also foster communication among students, and between the presenter and his/her peers in the class. Due to the large class size, many activities, such as discussions and presentations are done in groups. The teacher randomly selects the groups, so every student will be as focused as possible on class work. To be fair, the teacher will keep a record of the order in which groups present and will try to change the order over the term. All groups present work to the teacher for assessment—no matter whether the group presents on stage or not. In addition, the teacher, as a facilitator, will comment further on the content of the presentation, strengthen the important concepts by supplementing other examples, offer new ways of thinking and ask insightful questions that will evoke advanced explorations of the students’ understanding.

Art criticism, free-writing and research.

Art criticism. During group discussion, students will have a general template to follow to promote meaningful interacting and discourage random chatting. This template is the critique exercise (see Appendix B). The teacher follows a similar process when leading students in responding to a work of art. The content of the critique exercise is based on Buster and Crawford’s (2007) ideas for studio critique. Their critique model has been altered to better fit the educational purposes of my proposed curriculum. There are six categories in this critique exercise: immediate response, description, formal matters, the story it tells, the work in the world and note. I will discuss the function of each of these categories.

Housen and Yenawine’s (2001) Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) and Feldman’s (1992) methods of art criticism emphasize the following specific steps to critique a work of art. They both start from careful observation and descriptions of a work of art and then lead to analysis and interpretation from the observed visual qualities. However their steps do not include students’

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26 Each group has a presenter for each discussion. Every group member takes a turn at being the presenter.
intuitive responses. Therefore, I choose Buster and Crawford’s (2007) model of critique for the purpose of the proposed curriculum because it encourages students’ intuitive responses. Their model offers certain degrees of flexibility within a general structure. Anderson and Milbrandt (2005) also propose a similar method of art critique with direct reaction as the first step.

I agree with Housen and Yenawine’s idea that, as an important step toward cultivating perception, the viewer needs to pay attention to the observable qualities of the work as carefully as he/she can and be able to describe them in detail. I also appreciate their constructivist idea of facilitating students to self-discover knowledge and develop critical thinking through careful observation and social interaction (VUE, 2004; Housen & Yenawine, 2001). Their methods are rational and structured and also democratic. However, sometimes we might have some irrational or un-self-conscious feelings and ideas, which might come from our sub-consciousness and can hardly be detected by reason. Those feelings and ideas might suggest something important about ourselves in relation to the artwork.

Because Broudy (1972) and Dewey (1934/1959) have emphasized the importance of perception and the notion that judgment should derive from observable qualities of the work, this critique exercise starts first from the intuitive response to the work: immediate response, and then moves to the careful observation of the observable qualities of the work: description. To further understand its expressiveness and metaphors, which help us grasp its meaning (the next category of discussion), we also need to analyze the formal matters in the work, such as material choices, line quality, colors, composition and presentation, etc. Buster and Crawford (2007) designed this exercise for criticizing students’ artwork, so they emphasize the personal meanings conveyed through the work, but not the historical and cultural factors.
However, this proposed curriculum deals with appreciating historical and foreign art, such that the contextual information has a great influence on the meanings of art. Barrett (2003) and Dewey (1934/1959) claim that a work of art cannot be fully understood without knowing its contextual information. Therefore, the category, *the story it tells*, first leads the viewer to interpret personal meanings, as Barrett (2003) advocates. Second, the viewer needs to associate with the artist’s messages and the cultural and historical meanings to make a comprehensive interpretation (Barrett, 2003; Dewey, 1934/1959). Finally, the viewer can contemplate the cultural and historical meanings of the work of art in the contemporary context in response to Dewey’s (1934/1959) advocacy of connecting art to lived experiences.

After the midpoint of the course when students have achieved a certain level of comprehension about historical art, they can start to associate or compare the work they are discussing with other historical works. We also need to think about how the work would change in relation to different presentation formats or settings. This process is the purpose of the category: *the work in the world*.

Finally, when students criticize their peers’ work, they also need to address if the visual language successfully conveys the creator’s intentions. This category will not be used while the class discusses the exemplar artists’ works since if the works are not successful, they will not likely to be considered exemplars by scholars or art experts.

In short, this proposed model first leads the viewer to make a personal interpretation based on perceptions of the visual quality of the work, such as Dewey’s (1934/1959) idea of art criticism; examine its contextual meaning for the artist, the culture and historical time; synthesize the contextual meaning with the viewer’s own interpretation (which might be in different cultural contexts); and place the work in a contemporary context for re-interpretation or comparison to
other contemporary works. This model carries the constructivist idea of self-discovery and is also suitable for group discussion.

**Free-writing.** In addition to art criticism, sometimes the teacher will slightly change the classroom dynamic away from stringent analysis by having students free-write, an activity that encourages the exploration of unconscious mental processes through random thoughts. Free-writing allows students to write whatever comes into their mind without stopping or worrying about the words or composition. This writing process is spontaneous and records thoughts that sometimes are not self-censored. This activity is like an extension of the first item in the criticism exercise: Immediate response. Free-writing allows students to reflect freely about their feelings and thoughts. Many times, our intuition surprises us. This activity compensates for the intensity of practicing art criticism as a group and allows one to freely bring out authentic personal feelings or thoughts.

**Research.** In addition to spontaneity, some structured preparation is also necessary to engage students in the learning process. A pre-class or research assignment can help students have the needed background knowledge to respond to the teacher’s questions for facilitating discussions. This kind of assignment might also help students to self-construct knowledge by searching for examples for class or group discussions. For example, in Lesson 3 of Unit 3 in my curriculum, students need to search for an example from the U.S. or Japan for an issue of taste or women’s roles and bring the example to class and be prepared to discuss the example in a group setting.

**Visual journal.** A visual journal cultivates aesthetic response through visual or written reflections. A visual journal is like an idea book, which records the feelings, emotions and ideas in class and in daily life. In this course, students need to constantly reflect on the works of art or
visual culture shown and plan for studio projects creatively. A visual journal can encourage students to respond with visual language, and cultivate their individual and creative ideas and critical thinking. The use of a visual journal was well employed in one of the art appreciation classes in the informal study as a record for the learning process for both the students themselves and the teacher. In addition, a visual journal can also allow students to experience what artists usually experience in the process of creating a work of art.

**Art-making.** Aesthetic experiences need to coordinate with artistic experience (Dewey, 1934/1959; Broudy, 1972). Art-making helps students understand why a work looks a certain way and how an artist conveys messages visually, as well as illustrate the efforts and mindset of the artist. Students will experience enjoyable moments in addition to difficult ones when trying to visually realize their ideas. They will later look at a work of art more empathically. Their perspective when looking at a work will be more artistic, and they will be more likely to think visually, as artists do. In addition, art-making also gives students a sense of empowerment. Students are in charge of the design and development of their work, guided by suitable suggestions from the teacher as they are needed.

On the other hand, since most class activities are group-based, when approaching the art-making unit, I want to give each individual a chance to work individually; address his/her personal concerns; and explore his/her own visual expressions. Three art-projects are evenly spread throughout the course. One is in the beginning of the term, another is in the middle and the last is at the very end of the course. These activities offer a periodic change in the students’ mode of thinking and experiences. These activities are also necessary to achieve the purpose of the course.
Constructivist experience. Because they also need to give feedback in this teaching and learning experience, students do not just passively receive information. The teacher is not an authoritative instructor but an inspirational guide. The learning process is co-constructed by both teacher and students (Eisner, 2002). I attempted to create a web-like series of multi-directional interactions and forms of communication, which allowed for free and flexible exchange of thoughts among all. My aims equate with Dewey’s, as articulated in Phillips’s (1995) article: engaging students through active participation and personal exploration. With the aid of an experienced person, the facilitator, students will gain an advanced understanding of art (Vygotsky, 1978; Rogoff, 1990).

Finally, my teaching strategies all endeavor to make the curriculum an interesting puzzle or maze with multiple routes that lead to multiple exits for students to explore, rather than obvious and direct routes. This process of exploration and discovery is inspiring but has implicit hints to guide students, so they will not get lost. The students’ journey is just like the metaphors and expressiveness in the artwork, which are implicit but offer insights that sometimes cannot be conveyed by language; therefore the aesthetic experience is precious, and I want my curriculum itself to be an aesthetic experience. My curriculum is a work of art, which I have experienced. Students can acquire a similar experience through the curriculum as they would in experiencing a work of art. Through this kind of exploration, students will notice aspects of art or life that they might have ignored before the class, so their perception, awareness and understanding will be expanded.

Self-reflective experience. By the end of each unit, every student needs to submit reflective feedback, in which each student thinks about his/her experience in the unit and reflects on three memorable concepts or experiences they have learned from course content, group work,
and from other groups. Students also may give suggestions. The reflection requires students’ introspection on their own personal and cultural beliefs and how those learning experiences bring insights into their beliefs. The feedback needs to be two pages long and double-spaced. It encourages each student to self-examine and evaluate his/her own learning experience in the unit. In turn, the teacher examines the advantages and disadvantages of the unit design and adjusts the curriculum appropriately according to students’ needs and interests.

**Assessment**

To determine which assessment strategies to adapt, one must consider how the assessment is related to the objectives of the lesson because “assessment strategies measure how well the objectives of each lesson are being met” (Gruber, 2006, p. 49). When coming to the issue of assessing students’ understanding in art and culture through constructivist teaching and learning, *summative assessment* can hardly show a comprehensive picture of students’ understanding. Therefore my assessment is based on the idea of *formative assessment* (Beattie, 1997), and in particular, *authentic assessment*, which is process-oriented and contains various forms (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005). More importance is placed on how far students have come than where they are (Gruber, 2006). Authentic assessment includes the final product of students’ learning, but emphasizes ongoing evaluations in the process of learning. The teacher’s role is more like that of a coach or facilitator than an authority figure. Students need to constantly reflect on their experience of learning and also take part in setting up assessment criteria (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005).

Based on the idea of authentic assessment, the proposed assessment strategies include visual journals, reflective feedback, critique exercises, responses in an online-forum, an art project, a group presentation and a research paper. The rubrics are presented in detail in
Appendix C. All the assessments are judged on individual or group efforts and progress. Other criteria for each assessment are addressed in the rubrics. The developed rubrics are flexible and can be adjusted to students’ needs. The final rubrics will incorporate students’ suggestions and will be revised during the progression of the course.

Syllabus

The class time of the proposed curriculum is designed according to that of the art appreciation course in the fall semester 2010 at the University of Georgia. The 75-minute class meets on Tuesday and Thursday each week, and lasts 15 weeks, for the duration of semester (see Appendix A). In this dissertation, there will be three fully developed units (see Appendix D, E, and F) and brief descriptions for the other two units. The course content and its organization are responsive to the theoretical framework and are open for further adjustments to meet students’ needs and interests. For an in-depth understanding of cross-cultural issues in art, the content is structured in a thematic and comparative manner. It is inter-related for students to build knowledge based on what is learned. To arouse students’ interests and enhance their construction of knowledge, the content also encourages connection to students’ life experience. A reference list will be provided for an extension of the types of interrogations—such as the complexity of culture—pursued in this course.

First, drawing on the constructivist idea of building knowledge based on existing experiences and Nussbaum’s (1997) idea of achieving cross-cultural understanding by first understanding one’s own culture and enhancing the understanding by comparison, the discussion of Western art comes before student encounters with the more familiar forms of Eastern art. They are then placed next to each other to generate comparisons.

Second, the main focus of the content is on Japanese art because it is easier for me to be
objective towards this culture. As a Taiwanese, I have complicated cultural associations with China, Japan and Holland, due to the relationship of my people’s history to these political and social entities. However, China is the main source of influence. As I am too intimate with the culture, I might be more subjective in examining it compared to Western culture. On the other hand, Japanese culture is both foreign and familiar to me, so it is on a similar stance as that of Western culture in my perspective. However, as previously stated, because it is the main source of influence on Far Eastern culture and therefore on the Japanese tradition as well, Chinese culture needs to be seriously discussed in the beginning of the tradition section.

Third, culture is a complex idea, which can hardly be merely superficially generalized, even to suit the purposes of an introductory course. An unsubtle generalization will only result in an oversimplification of cultural content and can hardly generate any critical thinking (Nussbaum, 1997). Therefore, the proposed curriculum is constructed on themes in historical and cultural expansion, so students can compare the relationships between two cultures using a set of specific issues that promote depth of analysis and emotional response. This way students will not merely gain a rough impression about each culture or be at risk of getting lost in a variety of directions, but will be motivated to study further.

Fourth, in order to connect to students’ experience, the course starts from their everyday visual background. Mundane life inspires street photographers, and their use of visual language can be traced to the cultural influences. Unit 1 serves as a hook that leads to a series of discussions about visual culture. Therefore, its purpose is to arouse students’ desire to explore and show them that visual language tends to subject to personal or cultural contexts. This “hook” is followed by the more in-depth discussion of cultural philosophy and aesthetics, starting from the ancient tradition to the modern time. Notions of culture and art keep evolving along with
history, so a cultural concept can be more fully grasped by understanding the source from which it comes. This is why the sequence of cultural content after Unit 1 follows the historical timeline. Unit 2 provides a basis for understanding certain essential cultural traditions of visual expression and subject matter, like symbolism and suggestiveness, the nude and landscape, traces of which can be seen in other units, too.

However, historical and foreign art is usually alien to us. Therefore, while talking about tradition, the teacher will show some contemporary examples that address similar concepts that apply to similar situations. Not only will the teacher make these connections, but students will have activities where they will associate their experiences to tradition in creative ways. For example, in describing the social context of the Edo period in Japan, the teacher will compare it to life in Las Vegas today to address its entertainment aspects. To help students creatively apply the aesthetics of the flatness in Japanese woodblock prints at that time, students will use a variety of colored papers to create a full-length or half-length self-portrait.

Fifth, the units are inter-related, and the sequence reflects on the building of knowledge. By the end of the course, I hope to call students’ attention to the contemporary art world and understand the issues that contemporary artists care about. Therefore, the last unit focuses on contemporary art, and in particular contemporary Pop art, for it represents our post-modern sense of what constitutes the world of pleasure, a construction which extends from the art of the Rococo and Edo periods. The same kind of relationship is applied to the unit on minimalist architecture, extending from the discussion of traditional architecture in Unit 2. Therefore, students can see how tradition was incorporated or adapted into the contemporary context and brings new insights to today’s works of art.
Last, to further demonstrate the complexity and diversity within a culture, the teacher will provide a reference list of images or artists for extended study, which shows different aspects from the teaching content in the syllabus for each unit. For example, the extended study for Unit 2 includes John Constable’s landscape paintings, *The Haywain* (Constable, 1821, see Fig. 4.1), and Zhou Fang’s Tang figure painting, *Court Ladies Wearing Flowers in Their Hair* (Zhou, 780-810, see Fig. 4.2). The selection of works was chosen to demonstrate the achievements in landscape in Europe and in the prominent figure tradition in China, though they were not as popular as the mainstream artistic forms discussed in class. Students will be encouraged to explore both works of art further after class and compare each of them to its counterpart in another culture.

For the purposes of this dissertation, Unit 1, Unit 3, and Unit 5 are fully developed to present the planning necessary for each of these units. Units 2 and 4 are sketched out to provide a complete vision of the curriculum. As the units build on each other, I present them in order in the following chapters.
CHAPTER FIVE

Unit 1 Every Day Visual Experience

Objectives

The first lesson leads students to be attentive to the daily visual experience, where artists often draw inspiration, and helps students’ awareness of the richness and possibilities of culture. Those goals will be achieved through the art critique exercise and art-making.

Through examining how artists seek the meaning beyond the mundane, students can be inspired to see the world with an artistic vision. Since the use of digital cameras has been widely popular among youth to record life events, it is a familiar medium for students to explore how one can turn a plain record of events into a meaningful expression of art. Art is the embodiment of life experience. Artists’ experiences are not different from ours. It is vision that makes the difference. The vision is subject to cultural and historical context. Therefore, students will study modern and contemporary photographers’ works from Western and Eastern cultures.

Since most college students are already used to the abstract way of thinking, the first lesson will especially emphasize the study of visual language and how meanings might be conveyed through it. The variety of visual expressions shows the ambiguity of the idea of culture or nationality, which might be due to growing globalization.

The idea of photography originally came from the West. Japanese photography was influenced by the Western idea but developed its own unique language in the modern era. The dialogue between East and West has been growing increasingly since the end of the 19th century.
Cartier-Bresson himself thought he was influenced more by the Far Eastern thought and experience than the Judeo-Christian one (O’Byrne, 2001). Therefore, to discuss modern and contemporary art, one can only refer to potential traces of culture but cannot entirely attribute a work to a particular cultural influence. For the novices of art and culture, the first class aims to arouse their curiosity by showing a wide range of possibilities of culture. The class is designed to encourage them to explore cultural richness.

To build a link between visual language and its meaning, the teacher will guide students through the method of art criticism as addressed in the curriculum objectives. In the first class, the students will be guided through the art critique exercise and will have more time to practice. Because the appreciator’s experience should connect to the artist’s one (Barrett, 2003; Broudy, 1972; Dewey, 1934/1959), students will practice photographing in order to grasp the artist’s way of seeing. They will start from observing common objects or events happening around them, examining them and finding what is beyond what they see.

**Exemplar Artworks**

I choose street photographers because their work involves direct and sensitive ways of responding to daily experiences that we normally ignore. Being able to see normal events in a meaningful way makes us live in the present with a vivid mind. Two photographers from Japan and the West were selected for their significance as well as the cultural implication reflected in their works. Henri Cartier-Bresson’s idea of the decisive moment is influential to modern photography, and many of his works reflect, to some degree, the surrealist atmosphere of Parisian café culture at that time. William Eggleston is considered the pioneer of color photography, and his works convey the American mundane life with an alienated sense.
On the other hand, Daido Moriyama re-examined post-war Japanese society, expressed the trauma, and rebelled against its traditional values. Unlike Moriyama’s roughness and energy, Hiroshi Watanabe showed the other side of the culture, which is tender and ambiguous. All the selected works connect to spontaneous life experience and involve historical and cultural interpretations in a thematic manner.

**Western photographers.** Releasing photography from realism and practical functionality, the father of modern photography, Henri Cartier-Bresson, proposes the idea of the decisive moment (Chalifour, 2004). This idea is based on intuition, sensitivity, a sense of form, a receptive and alert attitude and love for life. Cartier-Bresson is attentive to his surroundings and keeps a receptive attitude of what is happening. “You have to be receptive, that’s all,” he keeps on saying, “it is a matter of chance…If you want it, you get nothing. Just be receptive and it happens” (O’Byrne, 2001, Part 2, 1:02). To catch the decisive moment, one needs to recognize and feel simultaneously and intuitively in a second both the fact itself and the geometry—the visual relationships—which gives meaning to the fact (Cartier-Bresson, 1976). The photographing process requires “concentration, a discipline of mind, sensitivity, and a sense of geometry”27 (Cartier-Bresson, 1976 p. 7). Such un-intentionality, alertness and spontaneity are likely to come from the Surrealist idea of “destination-less walks of discovery” (Nolan & Slaughter, 1999, para. 7). This idea refers to wandering around in the street without destination but with an alertness for “the unexpected detail that will release a marvelous and compelling reality just beneath the banal surface” (Nolan & Slaughter, 1999, para. 7). In addition to Cartier-Bresson’s focus on time and timing, his works reveal a Surrealist sense of sub-consciousness. Regardless of his emphasis on the perception of form, he suggests his way of seeing is based on

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27 A sense of geometry relates to the divine proportion. Cartier-Bresson addresses the importance of the divine proportion in the video by O’Byrne.
a plain love, a love for life (O’Byrne, 2001). Photographing is an intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual activity. Cartier-Bresson’s idea responds to Broudy’s (1972) philosophy of aesthetics, in which perception and a love of objects are emphasized.

All his works address sensitivity to and intuition about form. *Behind the Gare St. Lazare, Paris* (Cartier-Bresson, 1932, see Fig. 5.1) and *Hyères, France* (Cartier-Bresson, 1932, see Fig. 5.2) show different angles of looking and the notion of the decisive moment. Students can learn the modern perception of formal beauty from these photographs. However, appreciating the beauty does not mean to follow it. Students need to find their own visual expression, which conveys their ideas. In addition to form, Cartier-Bresson is also good at interpreting people. The subject matter of the figure adds humanistic content to his work, such as *Roman Amphitheatre, Valencia* (Cartier-Bresson, 1933, see Fig. 5.3).

Working with a similar idea of the decisive moment and holding the concept of the “democratic camera,” Eggleston further combines color and form in a cold and aloof way to render ordinary everyday objects or situations with another level of meaning. They are visual metaphors, which portray the psychological state of American middle-class daily experience, especially in the South (Weski, 1998). The mundane in his photos usually carries a sense of danger, which “renders visible the cracks in the surface of the American dream. We all know its manifestations—alienation, loneliness, and desire—as they can be found everywhere in Western civilization, and we all suffer from them” (Weski, 2003). Weski (1998) cites Eggleston’s words: “I am at war with the obvious” (para. 20). Students can learn from his work that it is not the subject matter that determines the artistic value of the work, but it is the meaning conveyed through visual expression that really matters. The familiarity with the subject matter can further connect to students’ experience and arouses their memory.

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28 The concept of the “democratic camera” regards every object as worthy of portrayal (Weski, 1998).
The three selected works convey mundane scenes with various sensibilities and meanings, which add diversity. *Memphis* (Eggleston, 1976, see Fig. 5.4) from *William Eggleston’s Guide* gives a surrealist sense with an unusual shooting angle. *Untitled* from *Los Alamos* (Eggleston, 1965-68, see Fig. 5.5) catches a moment of the mental state of the young market boy. *Greenwood, Mississippi* (Eggleston, 1973, see Fig. 5.6) translates the language of red into a menacing sign, which might embed sexual hints.

**Japanese photographers.** Moriyama and Watanabe both work in an intuitive process as street photographers in the West do. However, their works show very distinct visual styles as well as content. Moriyama’s photos are raw and dynamic and usually give a sense of uncertainty and aggressiveness. He portrayed the gloomy and alienated atmosphere in post-war Japan, and researched the people’s deep pain during the time they had their best economic growth.

Due to his childhood experience of moving around with his family, he likes to wander around the town without a plan and follow the smell of things like a dog (Segell, 2006). His famous photo of stray dog, *Stray Dog, Misawa, Aomori* (Moriyama, 1971, see Fig. 5.7), conveys a sense of defeat and rebellion against traditional Japanese values, which include social rule, rank, and ethnic differences. The stray dog, as the artist’s alter-ego, symbolizes the outcast and the half-breed: the pariah, which is usually suspected and disliked by the society (Rubinflen, 1999). Japanese attitude toward an outcast is contrary to a Westerners’ positive view of an outcast as having characteristics of authenticity and morality (Rubinflen, 1999). Moriyama’s photos convey a kind of trauma. This trauma, as Rubinfien (1999) states, might resort to Japan’s defeat in the World War II and the Americanization that followed, although his subject matters are too personal to directly identify those causes. The artist’s shouting against the existing social
value expresses his pain and drives us to examine the system of beliefs and values in Japan and historical scars that might still haunt the society.

Unlike the roughness of Moriyama’s photos, Watanabe’s works are delicate, lyrical and usually highly suggestive, which are all sensibilities of Eastern visual traditions and represent certain aspects of cultural aesthetics. Watanabe depicts even the simplest thing with multiple layers, which gives “a sense of seeing through mist or shadows to something beyond” (Redding, 2008). Like a woman with veil, the seductiveness comes from the ambiguous beauty, like *Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona* (Watanabe, 2005, see Fig. 5.8) and *Coliseo Gallo de Oro 2* (Watanabe, 2001, see Fig. 5.9). Each of his works is like words (Bannon, 2007), or, in particular, “a framed haiku” (Redding, 2008, para. 3). It is a single moment in a film, which is meditative and bears silence beyond time (Bannon, 2007). The artist also works with processes other than street photography, but I choose the photo from his visual travel journal, “Findings,” as the main exemplar to accord with the theme of street photography.

Through Moriyama’s and Watanabe’s works, students will learn that there is no single “cultural” or “national” visual expression. This allows students to appreciate the variety that constitutes the richness of culture. Thus, when making comparisons between Western and Japanese photography, the teacher needs to derive meanings from the observable quality of the works instead of referring to photos’ meanings as a representation of the whole culture.

Several visual languages are interesting to call to students’ attention: Cartier-Bresson and Eggleston’s emphasis on the perception of form and geometrical proportions; Eggleston’s more explicit and detailed ways of expressing subject matter; Watanabe’s suggestiveness and tenderness; Cartier-Bresson’s romantic expression; and Moriyama’s roughness, aggressiveness and dynamic energy. They all reflect certain social or cultural influences (in terms of subject
matter or visual expression) from modern or more ancient settings. From the visual language, we learn a nation’s history, people’s life and attitude, joy, pain or uncertainty for a particular culture at a particular time in a tender and alluring way.

**Teaching Procedure**

As world citizens, students need to understand their own culture (Nussbaum, 1997). Thus, the teacher will introduce the Western photographers first, and start from Cartier-Bresson’s idea of the decisive moment since this concept influenced the development of street photography. Students will learn to appreciate photo works from multiple perspectives by taking part in in-class and group discussion based on a critique exercise, making a presentation, and conducting research. Finally, they will apply what has been learned to the actual art-making process, which in turn gives new insights to the concepts.

**Lesson 1: the decisive moment.** The pre-class shooting activity aims to let students compare their original way of viewing with the new way of viewing they have learned by the end of the class. It will also inform the teacher and students of their interests and tastes. Students are encouraged to take a picture of whatever they respond to in life. It is part of the learning process, so they will include it in their personal visual journal without needing to show it to others. The photographer searching assignment should let them be more aware of their own preferences and the purpose of the online-forum. They are not expected to make a professional comment. They are just encouraged to briefly express their direct thoughts on at least one of their peers’ postings and take a look at others’ interests. Three students will briefly show and discuss their postings with the class during class time.

Henri Cartier-Bresson’s works will be introduced first to offer another thought on the perceived functionality of photography. The process of leading students to appreciate his works
follows that of the critique exercise, which has been justified in the section of teaching strategy. As the teacher introduces his works, the teacher will not mention the fact that the works were created by a master. Thus the students’ intuitive response will less likely to be influenced by the fame of the photographer. Since Cartier-Bresson mainly concerns the sense of geometry in the picture, the teacher will further elaborate on the formal analysis and challenge the students to consider how meaning might change according to different compositions and other visual qualities like color and tone. Therefore, some of the contextual information will be briefly introduced here, and a graphic demonstration made by Photoshop will be used.

Next, the class will hear the artist’s philosophy and how he approaches his work through clips of video. The more in-depth discussion of the context and concept of the work, which are the idea of the decisive moment and the impact of Surrealism, will follow. This discussion tries to answer students’ questions about their earlier encounters with the works while still keeping their ideas open. The teacher will briefly introduce surrealist ideas and visual expressions for students’ personal response. Students will be encouraged to explore further by referring to the exemplar works and articles posted on eLC.

In the homework assignment, the students need to critique in groups the work Roman Amphitheatre, Valencia or other Cartier-Bresson’s works of the students’ choice. Each group needs to post their critique on eLC before the next class. Different from the distanced analysis of geometry in Behind the Gare St. Lazare, Paris (Cartier-Bresson, 1932, see Fig. 4.3) and Hyères, France (Cartier-Bresson, 1932, see Fig. 4.4), the close-up of a man’s face Roman Amphitheatre, Valencia (Cartier-Bresson, 1933, see Fig. 4.5) impels students to pay attention to the human psyche, which is further strengthened by forms. So they can practice approaching works of art.
with different concerns. Further guidance and interpretations will be provided in the beginning of
the next class to inspire more sophisticated way of seeing and thinking.

**Lesson 2: daily visual experience in cultures.** William Eggleston’s photography
concerns the everyday American life experience and the value reflected in it. Therefore, before
they see the works, I would like to let students think about their own perceptions toward
American life and value, or those of their parents or grandparents, because his works for today
are from the 60s and 70s. Next by letting students practice the critique exercise on their own with
little contextual information, they can form their own opinions toward the work and later
compare them with the contextual knowledge offered by art experts. The presentation is the
collaboration between the students and the teacher. Students share their own ideas, and the
teacher further comments on their thoughts with the aid of graphic analysis and contextual
information. The contextual information includes Eggleston’s idea of the democratic camera, his
process of shooting, and how he portrays the American life. The teacher’s comments not only
take the form of lecturing but also involve questioning and interaction with students.

Although the critique method is important to practice, students need some variety in how
they practice it. In the section of Japanese photographers, the critique exercise will be combined
with the students’ research after-class. During class time, the teacher will show the students a
group of works from either of the artists. Students can learn more effectively while the work is
shown with other related works (Koroscik et al. 1992), but they will only concentrate on one
work from each artist. Students will be guided through the first three steps of critique: immediate
response, description, and formal matters. The teacher will ask some key questions to make
students to think about what its visual language might mean personally and socially. To find the
answers, each group needs to do research on one of the artists after class. Without being limited
to only one work introduced in class, each group will choose two more works they are interested in from online or other sources. Based on their analysis of the three works and their research on the chosen artist, each group will complete the critique exercise and post it on eLC for other peers to comment on. To enhance cross-cultural understanding, students will be encouraged to compare their chosen artist’s works with Cartier-Bresson’s and Eggleston’s works.

**Lesson 3: presentation.** To comment on the research findings and conclude the Japanese section, the teacher will randomly select six groups to present six works on stage and make sure they present different works. The ideal distribution is three groups for Moriyama’s work and three for Watanabe’s. The teacher will make in-depth comments after three presentations for an artist. The comments, as in the previous lessons, involve questioning and lecturing. However, it is important not to post a fixed conclusion, but to leave ideas open to many other possibilities and interpretations. Especially in the comparison between Japanese photographers and Western ones, the complexity of culture needs to be brought to students’ attention instead of letting students have a general impression about each culture. As the first unit is for beginners, it is not suitable to make the discussion complex. Presenting questions and leaving ideas open can bring the awareness of the complexity of culture. This unit aims to arouse students’ curiosity and desires to explore more in the future. This unit is an important hook that should impel students to actively participate in the exploration of cultural issues in the following units.

Nothing can be fully grasped without experience. To connect art to life and to understand the street photographers’ processes and concepts, students need to actually practice shooting photos as the street photographers do. This street photo project aims to let students be attentive to daily life experience and to find and experiment with their personal visual translations. Experimentation with various perspectives and visions and sharing of the shooting process are
much more important than having a masterpiece. Therefore, students are encouraged to keep shooting and experimenting. Each of them needs to bring at least ten photos for group critique next time. The form of presentation can be either printed images or digital ones shown on the laptop.

Although the technique is not an essential point for taking a good photo as most street photographers think, it does help to know some basic functions of the camera. Thus, the teacher will briefly introduce certain important technical functions (e.g. aperture, f-stops, and focus), and the students will practice them with their cameras in class.

**Lesson 4: critique exercise.** Each student will share the process and experience of shooting. Other group members will critique his/her works and write down their comments in a critique sheet. The amount of photos that each student needs to bring to class not only encourages him/her to experiment but also shows the student a variety of the peers’ opinions toward different works in order to expand the student’s artistic vision. However, it is the artist that makes the final decision, though others’ opinions serve as invaluable aids. The artist needs to pick three works from the ten that he/she thinks have the most artistic potential, and tries to write down his/her experience and feelings toward the scene at that moment of shooting. Each group needs to hand back all the critique sheets, the selected works of each member, and the written descriptions.

The purpose of critique is to improve and expand students’ ways of seeing in a polite manner. It needs to be critical as well as encouraging. Thus, the students will be informed before the critique that the evaluation of their photo works does not depend on the comments from the critique exercise, but depends mostly on the teacher’s judgment according to the rubrics. The rubric of the critique exercise emphasizes keen observation and the link between visual language
and experience or concept. The evaluation of all critique sheets of a group will become the group grades, but each student gets his/her own grades for the photo project.

Finally, to build a bridge between this unit and the next one, Eastern and Western traditions, the teacher and the students will review and also compare the characteristics of visual expressions and cultural meanings found in Cartier-Bresson’s and Eggleston’s works with those found in Moriyama’s and Watanabe’s works.
CHAPTER SIX

Unit 2 Nude and Landscape

Unit 2 will be addressed to inform a general scope and sequence of the curriculum but will be further developed before instruction begins. This unit introduces two of the essential Eastern and Western traditions and their manifestations in art. Eastern philosophers look for the harmony between humans and nature while the Western philosophers seek the divine form. I will use paintings and architecture in particular to demonstrate these cultural philosophies. Paintings have been a great visual tradition in both cultures, and architecture shows the functionality of art. How people in each culture design their dwelling spaces reflects their attitudes toward life and their interaction with their surroundings. Therefore the architecture section serves as a sub-theme under the theme of the Nude and Landscape, and strengthens the ideas implied from painting.

The painting section has four classes and the architecture section has three classes. The exemplar paintings include Sandro Botticelli’s *Calumny of Apelles* (Botticelli, 1494, see Fig. 6.1), and the Chinese Song landscape painter, Hsia Kuei’s *Pure and Remote Views of Streams and Mountains* (Hsia, 1190-1225, see Fig. 6.2). They demonstrate the different choices of subject matter, nude and landscape; the distinct visual expressions, suggestive and symbolic means; and the cosmic and philosophical views that influence the visual manifestations. As addressed in the Eastern and Western aesthetics section, the divine had been viewed as the highest form of beauty and had been pursued by artists through art. The nude was viewed as a platform that communicates the sensible form and the divine form. *Calumny of Apelles* addresses
the symbolism of the nude. The work shows a dramatic contrast between the graceful young nude pointing to the sky, who represents the “naked truth” (Jullien, 2007, p. 108), and the heavily wrapped old woman, who looks at the nude but also shies away from her.

On the contrary, without the notion of form, Chinese tradition regards the world as a transforming process and pursues harmony between humans and nature. Therefore, the landscape painting has been popular and highly developed since the Song dynasty. The figure in the landscape painting often seems to immerse into nature, and the human dwelling becomes part of nature instead of standing on its own. *Pure and Remote Views of Streams and Mountains* conveys the passage of time, which responds to the notion of transitional stages. This work also reveals the suggestive expression of space (the psychological space of void and solid), which responds to the emphasis of spirituality. On the other hand, *Calumny of Apelles* shows the representational and dramatic impact, which respond to Aristotle’s praise of the dramatic form of expression.

It is hard to discuss Chinese painting without reference to calligraphy and poetry, just like it is hard to discuss the nude in the Western art without mentioning the sculptural works. Chinese painting, calligraphy and poetry are tightly combined as one discipline because they share similar techniques and philosophies and are usually practiced together. Therefore poetry will also be introduced to address the lyrical and indicial tendencies in Eastern culture. On the other hand, Michelangelo’s *David* (Michelangelo, 1501-1504, see Figure 6.3) will represent the Western sculptural exemplar to address the classical ideal of beauty.

The architecture section will further strengthen the idea of the human form through *Capitoline Hill* (Michelangelo, 1537, see Figure 6.4), and the notion of harmony with nature through the *Katsura Imperial Villa* (1620-1663, see Figure 6.5) in Japan. Michelangelo once
said, “For it is an established fact that the member of architecture resemble the members of man. However neither has been nor is a master at figures, and especially at anatomy, cannot really understand architecture” (Clements, 1961,p. 320). He sought the harmonious relationship between the whole and its parts like that of the human body. In *Capitoline Hill*, Michelangelo placed a new building and made the plan trapezoidal in order to balance the arrangement of the old Senators’ and Conservators’ palaces (Gardner, et al., 2005; Paoletti & Radke, 2002). This architectural design also carries a cosmological meaning from the pattern of the pavement under the center statue, which has symbolic significance to Christianity (Paoletti & Radke, 2002). The emphasis on the geometric order and mathematical proportion was carried to the modern concept of architecture in the 20th century.

In contrast to symmetrical balance and manipulation of the environment in the *Capitoline Hill*, Japanese housing usually reveals an organic order of balance and integration between dwelling place and nature. The exemplar, *Katsura Imperial Villa*, is a prominent example of 17th century Japanese architecture. The use of wood and the sense of time passage in the interior design reveal the notion of impermanence. The integration between interior and garden, such as the design of veranda and the use of translucent paper on the door, demonstrates the harmony between humans and nature. The interior and garden designs show the aesthetics of simplicity, understated beauty, and the spirit of Zen (Yoshida, 1969). In contemporary minimalist architecture, especially the works by Japanese architects, the Eastern visual traditions is integrated into the modern notion of architecture.

Finally teaching strategies include class, group and online discussions, sharing of findings and related activities. Two activities in class or after class will be assigned after the discussion in the painting section to reinforce the ideas discussed. The activity for the nude topic
might emphasize an examination of how the nude is portrayed or symbolically portrayed in the media in the contemporary U.S. An alternative emphasis might be placed on a comparison of how the meaning of the nude has changed through different time periods. The activity aims to relate the idea of the nude to the contemporary context for further discussion or let students examine how the same subject matter has been given different meanings according to different historical contexts.

The activity for the Chinese painting and poetry focuses on creating a personal poem in an indicial mode or creating a poem in response to a Chinese or Japanese traditional painting of their choice, so students can creatively practice the idea of understated beauty (suggestiveness) in poetry. In terms of architecture, an after-class assignment might be given to students to investigate one of the historical buildings in the nearby areas and reflect on its potential cultural influences. Another option might be to encourage students to find understated beauty in the Western architecture, though symbolic significance appears to be more prominent in the Western architecture. The examination allows students to consider other perspectives, which might deviate from the authoritative notion.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Unit 3 The World of Pleasure

Objectives

Japanese Ukiyo-e prints have been one of the main traditional forms of art that familiarize the Western world with Japanese culture. They also influenced some of the modern Western art movements. However, appreciating the formal beauty of art without understanding the culture that nurtures it will not likely result in a meaningful understanding. Therefore, this unit aims at investigating the social context, the world of pleasure (from which Ukiyo-e grew up), and comparing it to another world of pleasure around the similar time frame in France (in which Rococo taste was popular).

While Ukiyo-e culture represents the tastes of common people and their enjoyments of pleasures of life, Rococo culture represents the aristocratic tastes (good tastes) and their embracing the fantasy of life. In the two cultures, women play essential roles in creating the cultural atmospheres, forming the tastes and subject matters of art. Therefore, the social taste and role of women in particular will be examined and compared in different social contexts. To make historical and foreign art meaningful, we need to make a personal and contemporary associations (Barrett, 2003). The students need to compare and critique the contemporary roles of women and social tastes, and also compare them to those of the Rococo and Edo periods. The comparison involves cross-cultural and cross-historical perspectives. However, the teacher still needs to be

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29 Edo is the old name of the Japanese capital, Tokyo. The Edo period refers to a historical period in Japan running from 1603 to 1868.
careful not to turn a visual cultural study to a social study, so the teacher needs to strengthen the link between visual expression (artistic practice) and social context. Finally, in order to encourage explorations and creativity, enhance engagement in the class and apply the class content innovatively, the students will be guided to create personal works of art.

**Exemplar Artworks**

**Rococo art.** The Rococo art with its feminine and intimate style placed emphasis on the tastes of women. Women with high social status were influential in the refined taste of 18th century Paris, in which the Rococo salon was its center. The noble taste was viewed as good taste and was cultivated through social conversations confined to etiquette in the salon. The etiquette was artificial, articulate, urbane and full of wit. Sincerity was considered bad taste. The Salons welcomed rich and intellectual people, not necessarily the noble class.

The Rococo style originated from the interior design, so a typical French Rococo room in the *Salon de la Princesse* (Boffrand, 1737-1740, see Fig. 7.1) will be introduced first to familiarize the students with the main characteristics of Rococo art and how the interior served the *salon culture*. The space of *Salon de la Princesse* is ambiguous and not as defined as earlier architectural style. With the organic, complicated decorations and the use of mirrors, it is flowing and full of movement, which enhances the interaction between the middle and upper class guests. Here the architecture, painting and sculpture form an integral whole for the celebration of the festival of life (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005). Unlike the grandness of Baroque, it is personal and intimate (Minor, 1999).

The joyful, elegant, luxurious, dynamic and feminine sense is reflected in the painting. Three works were selected because they represent the common themes in Rococo art, sentimentality, love, sensuality and Arcadian happiness. The themes demonstrate the emphasis
on feelings, the enjoyment of a pleasant life and the function as a viewing pleasure (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005; Minor, 1999). Carriera’s Allegory of Painting (Carriera, 1720, see Fig. 7.2) captures the feminine sensibility and intimacy and reflects the “cult of sensibility” of the 18th century intellectual classes (Minor, 1999, p. 242). In contrast to the Catholic doctrine of sinfulness, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley-Cooper (1671-1713), proposes that humans have “an innate capacity for discernment, taste, sensible judgment about right and wrong, and apperception of beauty” (Minor, 1999, p. 230). Carriera might not have been the best painter at that time, but due to her extreme popularity among the upper and intellectual classes, the students can learn the popular psychology and tastes of the 18th century. This portrait was also selected for its comparison to the feminine sensibility of the Ukiyo-e print Reflective Love by the Japanese artist, Utamaro, in the later lessons.

On the other hand, Boucher’s Pan and Syrinx (Boucher, 1759, see Fig. 7.3) and Fragonard’s The Swing (Fragonard, 1767, see Fig. 7.4) address the “sensual playfulness” (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005, p. 801). Pan and Syrinx demonstrates a viewing pleasure for men: the vulnerability of the nude and man’s chasing of his own invisible desire (Minor, 1999). The Swing conveys the fun and carefree life of a noble pastime. The outdoor scene portrays the Arcadian happiness. It is also full of a secreted atmosphere of peeking into this immediate sensual and carefree love event.

The Rococo paintings usually have a sense of sweetness and decorativeness. The characters have gentle and elegant attitudes and gestures. Those paintings not only show the pleasurable life the noble seeks but also evoke one to contemplate the “good taste” and the roles of women in art and in society. The women with high social status influenced the cultivation of the noble taste. They are also the inspirations for the artists, who are usually men. Although with
the dominance of feminine sensibility, one cannot help to ponder what the sensual depictions of women in love scenes might mean. Do the sensual depictions suggest women still fall into the prey of men’s desires while they have the power to initiate a social style? Or do the depictions just reflect women’s own desires?

**Ukiyo-e prints.** Similarly, some Japanese women in the Edo period led the fashion and taste of the time, and a few of them even had the power to determine actors’ or publishers’ careers. They are the celebrated courtesans in the main pleasure quarters around the end of the 18th century (Calza, 2005). Like the stylized and elegant manners and intellectual abilities of the French noble women, the grand courtesans practiced etiquette with extreme formality, cultivated wit, and demonstrated ability in literature and art, in addition to their expertise in love (Calza, 2005). However, they were not born with power, as were the aristocratic women in France. Rather, most of them had no choice except to be exploited for the pleasure of men, at least at the beginning. They were objects to be controlled, but in turn, they eventually used their ability to lure as a weapon to control. They lived in the Floating World, where life is shallow, flashy and precarious. The sensual world was built by extravagant fashion and show business and was enjoyed by the wealthy, regardless of social stratification. The embrace of materialism, the cult of beauty, and quickly attainable pleasure relate to contemporary capitalist sensibility (Calza, 2005). Such ephemeral pleasure was one of the favorite themes in the Ukiyo-e (pictures of the floating world) prints for the viewing delights of common people.

With diverse subject matters depicting daily life and scenes, these prints often spotlighted the stars of the day, like courtesans, geisha and actors (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005; Tadashi, 2005). The prints were a commercial product rather than a work of art. They reflected the people’s taste and need. The development of printmaking techniques and the collaboration
among publishers, artists and printmakers, made the prints widely available and affordable for common people (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005; Masato, 2005; Newland, 2004).

Although the subject matters of Ukiyo-e were diverse, the selected prints for this unit are all about beauties: their daily lives and interactions with men. This is to investigate how the Ukiyo-e prints address the popular images of women and how they imply the gender roles of women and popular tastes at that time. Kitagawa Utamaro, as one of the most celebrated Ukiyo-e designers, imbues the elegant beauties with “passion, immediacy, and a degree of psychological nuance,” as described by Timothy Clark of the British Museum (Art Institute of Chicago, 2006).

The vibrant and dynamic aspects of daily life make the Ukiyo-e full of energy. Unlike the naturalistic look of Western paintings, the graphic composition dematerializes the subject. The graphic layout is close to a modern sense of design. Geisha and Attendant on a Rainy Night (Utamaro, 1797, see Fig. 7.5) catches a spontaneous moment of life, in which a geisha and her attendant, with a shamisen case, hurries through the rain at night. The lantern illuminates the faces (Art Institute of Chicago, 2006). It looks like they are either hurrying toward a performance or leaving a performance. The elements of graphic design are strong with its dynamic disposition of form and colors. Lovers in an Upstairs Room (Utamaro, 1788, see Fig. 7.6) portrays the pursuit of sensual pleasure and the emotion in a spontaneous moment with unusual compositional design, which suggests the allure and the expansion of the figures (The British Museum, 2011). The drapery, fingers and the nape imply the tenderness and the aesthetics of female beauty, which was appreciated in the Edo period. Although focusing on women’s lives in the red light district, the image of a married woman in Reflective Love (Utamaro, 1793–94, see Fig. 7.7) will also be included to provide another point of view of women. This work looks into

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30 A Shamisen is a traditional musical instrument in Japan.
the female psychology of a married woman with its depiction of the nuance of facial expression and elegant gestures (Calza, 2005).

One might notice that different from the emphasis on the depiction of individual features in Western paintings, Ukiyo-e has standardized features, which conform to each artist’s model. The interests of the artists, who are mostly men like in Rococo art, are not in portraying facial characteristics but in “developing a way of depicting beautiful women of the period” or satisfying the clients’ preferences (Tadashi, 2005, p. 17). Stylized visual expression has been a Japanese tradition since the ancient times. The stylization might be interesting to let the students further explore, outside of class, how it might suggest the cultural psychology of Japanese society.

**Teaching Procedure**

This unit is composed of three parts: a discussion of Rococo art and Ukiyo-e prints, a self-portrait art project, and a discussion of contemporary issues of women’s roles and social tastes. The central focus throughout the unit is to lead the students to examine women’s roles and social tastes in a cross-cultural and cross-historical term. Therefore, the teaching emphasizes how the visual language conveys messages regarding those issues. Further cross-cultural and historical comparisons are made in group or class discussions. This unit starts from the Rococo to the Ukiyo-e due to the students’ relative familiarity with the Western culture. On the other hand, the students need to feel connected to and interested in the class content for active engagement. Thus, a personal art project will follow the discussion of Rococo art and Ukiyo-e prints for giving the students a chance to change their mode of thinking and also to apply what is learned in a creative way. Finally, to conclude this unit, the teacher will associate the issues
discussed in historical and contemporary time in order to make the learning experience more meaningful and personal.

**Lesson 1: Rococo.** One cannot comprehensively understand art without referring to its context. It is expected that the students should not just see the Rococo art as charming, but they need to understand the psychology of the society that made its feminine look. Therefore they need to read an article about the 18th century noble life and taste in France before class. To cultivate the students’ thinking, bring the focus to tastes and women’s roles at that time, and ensure they did the reading, they need to respond to the prompt questions on eLC.

During class time, the teacher first shows a clip from the movie *The Affair of Necklace* (Shyer, 2001) to let the students have a reference for visualizing the typical noble manner and social interactions at that time. Combining the reading and the movie clip, the teacher facilitates the students to talk about their ideas of the aristocratic life and taste, and also to think about the kind of art that might satisfy the noble taste. This is to organize their understandings around the context and to build the first link between the context and the visual expression. The students will interpret the noble criteria and further think about their own criteria for judgment. The comparison helps them to re-examine the two sets of criteria, which will be used in the discussion of the exemplar works later. Thus, they can understand how criteria influence the judgment of art.

With the basic understanding of the noble taste, the teacher will introduce the exemplar works. Since there is a firm connection among Rococo style, interior design and salon culture, the teacher will first have a class discussion about *Salon de la Princesse* to introduce the salon culture and how the interior design meets the practical purposes of salon for enhancing social interactions and cultivating artful taste with the enjoyment of the fanciful world. The teacher will
facilitate the students’ use of imagination to mentally experience the space of *Salon de la Princesse* with the social events and music, for which the room was designed.

Building on the understanding of Rococo interior style, the students are ready to have a group critique on one of the listed paintings of their choice. The characteristics and functions of the design of *Salon de la Princesse* will further inform the discussion of the painting. To enhance the later discussion on social taste and women’s role, the students are encouraged to observe carefully how they are manifested in painting and also interior design.

**Lesson 2: Rococo and Ukiyo-e art.** To encourage the involvement of each group and to enhance the exchange of information, the teacher will randomly select three groups to present their findings from the last class. The teacher will encourage class discussion and offer in-depth comments from new or associated perspectives with one or two visual references to generally address the ideas. The teacher encourages the students’ questions and will further post questions based on class discussion of the presentations and encourage the students to further explore them.

After reviewing what is learned in the Rococo lesson, the teacher will lead the students to another world of pleasure around the same time in Japan, from which the Ukiyo-e were born. Due to the students’ unfamiliarity with the cultural tradition in Japan, the social context around the 18th century Edo will be introduced from broad to narrow perspectives. The teacher first shows a general picture of the diversity of Japanese art, from the more highly regarded form of art (literati painting) to the commercial form of art (Ukiyo-e prints), especially the prints of beauty, which relate to the main focus of this unit. The images will be shown briefly because they only aim to give a rough impression. The demonstration, discussion or lecturing is always accompanied by art exemplars, mostly visual form with some examples from literature. The two
art forms complement each other. The informal study demonstrated the importance of artistic stimulus in keeping students engaged.

Second, the teacher will introduce the social condition of the world of pleasure by reading the poem of Hanaogi IV (see Appendix E), one of the most celebrated courtesans, and the writing of Asai Ryo, a writer in the Edo period. To associate the life and women’s images in art in the Edo context to the students’ own experience, the teacher will show the similar contemporary Western examples, such as Las Vegas (see Fig. 7.8) and contemporary advertisements of female images (see Fig. 7.9). The teacher will compare these contemporary examples to the Edo life and images of women in the prints.

Ukiyo-e prints were commodities rather than works of art (Gardner, Kleiner, & Mamiya, 2005). To address the commercial function, the printmaking industry and process will be discussed after watching an instructional video. This industry was influenced by the entertainment culture, and in turn the industry made the culture wide spread. The video of the multi-colored printmaking (nishiki-e) shows this popular printmaking process, which relates to the visual appearance of the works, the efficiency of the industry, and the popularity of prints.

At this point, a print needs to be introduced to respond to the contextual discussion. Kitagawa Utamaro’s *Geisha and Attendant on a Rainy Night* depicts one of the most popular subject matters: beauty in the pleasure quarter. In leading a class critique, the teacher will (in addition to visual response and analysis) post questions about the choice of the subject matter; how it relates to market demand; as well as aesthetics of women’s gestures and behavior in comparison with that of the Rococo women in the paintings or movie clip shown earlier. Gestures and behavior suggest not only women’s psychology but also typical expectations from society, which can imply the roles of women.
To better prepare the students for group discussion, the students need to examine more about the entertainment culture. Therefore, after class, they need to read and respond to a related article posted online, and they will be encouraged to watch the movie *Sakuran* (Ninagawa, 2006), which tells a story of courtesans’ life. Some of the clips will be shown in the next class to address the contradictory roles of women, in which they are displayed and exploited as objects but at the same time a few of them may eventually be viewed by people in Edo as ideal role models to pursue.

**Lesson 3: Ukiyo-e art.** To lead the class in further understanding of the social condition of the entertainment culture and prepare them to have a group discussion, the teacher will provide pre-class readings. The movie clips shown in the beginning of class will also promote in-depth discussions on the social background and aesthetics of the culture in the brothel district. The students are encouraged to bring their own interests and ideas for the questions concerning the role of beauty in society or the social expectations for women. For an active class, this portion would be an open discussion with the whole class. For a more quiet class, the teacher might ask the class to briefly write down their responses to the movie clips and then hold a class discussion.

With further understanding, the students will criticize the two prints in groups: Kitagawa Utamaro’s *Reflective Love* and *Lovers in an Upstairs Room*. They will focus on how the works reflect cultural context, cultural taste, and the role of women. To bring a cross-cultural understanding, the students will also compare the Ukiyo-e to the Rococo art in both visual expression and social content. In addition to courtesan and geisha, Kabuki culture is also an important component of urban experience. Although focusing on women’s issues, the students will be encouraged to extend their studies to the Kabuki theater after class through the articles,
images and videos posted on eLC. The depiction of male Kabuki actors in Ukiyo-e also serves as an important reference for the male students to plan their next art project, which is a self-portrait.

To conclude the Ukiyo-e and Rococo section, in the next class, two groups are selected to present the findings, which teacher and peers respond to and comment on. Each student will also do a self-portrait art project to apply their understanding of the Edo prints and re-interpret its style and sensibility creatively with contemporary and personal concerns.

To prepare for the sketch development for the project, after class, the students need to do more research on the Edo figure prints and plan general ideas for expressing their self-portraits. Since the Ukiyo-e figure prints have a variety of subject matter other than beautiful women, the research helps the students search for their favorite styles and content, which will inform how they want to visually interpret their portraits. The prints are featured for the use of graphic elements to convey the spirit of the figures, so the students need to pay attention to the relationship between them. Then the students will think about how they want to compose their self-portrait and take some photos to experiment with different compositions, postures or clothes, and different ways of expressing the self-images. Ukiyo-e’s focus on overall graphic expression suggests the simplification of facial features, which makes the self-portrait more design-oriented and less intimidating for a non-art major. However, if an individual insists on addressing the facial features, they can also experiment to express them in a graphic form.

Finally, the students will record and organize their research results, develop a general plan for the self-portrait in the visual journals, and bring them to class for group discussion. They need to choose at least three photos for further development and provide written reasons for their choices. The photos will be printed in black and white in the same size as that of the final art product, A4, so the students can consider the actual visual effect with cheaper prints than color
ones. The photos also need to be printed in color in a smaller size as a reference for color consideration.

**Lesson 4: presentation and sketch development.** The presentations and the following class discussion not only serve as a conclusion for the Ukiyo-e section but also as a comparative study of Ukiyo-e and Rococo art. The comparison will focus on the social taste and the role of women, which have been the central theme of discussion throughout the unit.

Next, the development of the art project will be initiated with group discussions of individual research results and plans for the self-portrait. By contemplating their peers’ suggestions and his/her own ideas, each student needs to choose a photo as a template to sketch different color compositions and be attentive to how they address the ideas. Developing different plans with sketches helps an individual to brainstorm various possibilities in a visual way, which is usually what artists and designers do. It helps the artist come up with a better plan. As they have already considered diverse choices, each student is ready to narrow down and focus on one sketch and think about the kinds of color papers they want to use for the studio class next time. The required materials listed for art-making need to be prepared before the next class.

**Lesson 5: studio day.** The use of photos as a template to work on is to make the art-making easier and less intimidating and to make the students feel more accomplished. They can also extend this art-making project to the appreciation of *Cubism*, whose information will be offered on Facebook. Due to their different individual working paces, the students can work more after class if needed. It is expected that the teacher will create a relaxing and creative atmosphere for art-making but not make art-making a “task” for the students. For the purpose of online discussion, each student needs to take a picture of the work and write a short artistic statement to post on eLC. Each student also needs to comment on others’ works.
To make a meaningful conclusion, students will associate the content of this unit with the contemporary context. There will be a group discussion on contemporary social tastes and women’s roles in American and Japanese culture. Due to the complexity of the issues, the students will gather in a bigger group. The discussion in a bigger group allows for a richer exchange of ideas, which can provide rich content for the students to have formal presentations later. To make the discussion student-centered, each student is responsible for doing research and bringing an example that demonstrates contemporary social tastes or women’s roles from either culture. Each group needs three examples from America and three from Japan, and the members need to coordinate about the distribution of the examples. The limit of the number of examples is due to the size of the group and the time constraints of class. Stone (1997) advises that spending more time on fewer examples leads to a more in-depth discussion than browsing through many examples. It is encouraged that each group can have various forms of examples to discuss. The diversity makes discussion interesting and more comprehensive. To facilitate the discussion, each student needs to prepare to talk about his/her example.

**Lesson 6, 7 and 8: the hierarchy and roles of contemporary women.** Before getting into formal group discussion on contemporary issues, the teacher will lead the students to review the comparison of social tastes and women’s roles in the Edo and Rococo periods to refresh their memories. Building on their historical understanding, the students will further examine the same issues in contemporary contexts and compare them to the historical references. The examination of social issues across historical times will expand the students’ social awareness and make them more objective in looking at today’s issues. To make the discussion more focused and organized, the teacher will offer prompt questions. However, the teacher will also encourage the students to expand the discussion beyond those questions and provide new insights.
Every group needs to organize their findings and questions accompanied by supporting images or short videos, and present them in a PowerPoint. To save the time it takes to load files and to facilitate the teacher’s preparation for the following class discussions, the PowerPoints need to be posted on eLC before noon on the day before class. The teacher would read through the presentation content, and prepare proper materials for either supplementing ideas or providing different insights for class discussion after presentations. The last twenty minutes in the last lesson will be used as a flexible time for delayed discussions and for final open conclusions and questions with the students. This section of discussing contemporary issues is more self-directed. The teacher posts a problem to focus on, and the students need to research and collaborate to induce possible answers. Students are the ones that direct the content of learning, which the teacher further facilitates.
CHAPTER EIGHT

Unit 4 Less is More

Similar to unit two, unit four will be tailored to inform a general scope and sequence of the curriculum but will be further developed before teaching. As in the discussion of the section of Western modern aesthetics, the Bauhaus developed the principles of art and design that have built one of the important aspects of the modern artistic tradition. Its simple and geometric aesthetics show the concerns of ideal form and proportion in the Western tradition. Bauhaus’s aesthetics also make us recall the simplicity of Japanese traditional architecture. Although their philosophies are quite different, the two cultures started a dialogue in the early 20th century and are said to have influenced each other indirectly in terms of architecture. The exemplar architectural works provide a cross-cultural dialogue and also extend the traditional aesthetics of architecture from unit two to modern contexts. In this unit, students will discuss the historical and cross-cultural significance in the exemplar works from modern Germany and Japan.

The exemplar works include minimalist architecture in German and Japan: Mies van der Rohe’s *The German Pavilion in Barcelona* (van der Rohe, 1929, see Fig. 8.1) and Tadao Ando’s *Vitra Conference Pavilion* (Ando, 1993, see Fig. 8.2). Mies van der Rohe, the director of the Bauhaus, created the international style and proposed the notion of “less is more” (Gardener, 2005, p. 1011). His architectural theory was influenced by European classicism—primarily that of Karl Friedrich Schinkel (Blaser & Malms, 2001). Schinkel felt that ornamentation is secondary and stated, “The task of architecture is to make something practical, useful and
functional into something beautiful” (Kruft, 1994, p. 299). His thought of functionalism is similar to that of the Bauhaus, which advocates that form follows function, emphasizes the universality of form, and shuns away from ornamentation.

In addition to the influences of European classicism and the utopian ideal, *The German pavilion in Barcelona* also reveals the Eastern thoughts of integrating building and nature. As Western architects traditionally regard the building as a geometrical body, Eastern architects in China and Japan traditionally view buildings and nature as a whole organism. In the Eastern tradition, buildings and nature freely flow into each other and blend into each other’s form and function. van der Rohe’s architecture also reveals the concerns of the void: the invisible space in which transformation takes place in the teachings of Lao Tze. Solidity and flexibility both exist in van der Rohe’s architecture (Blaser & Malms, 2001).

On the other hand, Japanese architecture had experienced a dramatic change by the end of the 19th century. Japanese architecture as well as the Japanese people’s lifestyles had been Europeanized. Many contemporary Japanese architects reflected on their ambition of combining Western and Japanese ideas of architecture. Tadao Ando is one of the prominent contemporary architects, and he successfully demonstrated such a combination. His work, *Vitra Conference Pavilion*, uses the contemporary material of concrete and shows the modern idea of geometric order and functionality. However, the use of the geometrical form and space design conveys deep philosophical premises of the ancient East—-the transience, simplicity and naturalness of Zen (Blaser & Malms, 2001). The free and dynamic spatial design carries the sense of continuity and lightness, and the beauty of the void. The design shows time passage through the phenomena of light and shadow, seasons, and human perception. The pavilion harmonizes with the nearby
surroundings. Those features demonstrate Ando’s concern for a dialogue with the natural environment, human movements, and access (Asensio Cerver, 1997).

Based on the understanding of architectural traditions in the East and West, students will be able to bring more insights into the contemporary application of traditional ideas, such as how traditions were modified by the contemporary social conditions and concerns of functionality. Students will also notice cross-cultural influences while they study the works and examine how the Eastern and Western traditions are integrated to generate a new artistic language in contemporary settings.

There are only three classes for this unit, so students will focus on discussing the two exemplars. A group critique exercise will take place in class or after class as an assignment. An online-forum is especially useful when there is a time constraint. The teacher will provide one or two related articles online for students to read before class, so the teacher can hold a more in-depth discussion. Students might need to respond in a short essay to some prompts regarding the class content in the online forum and later respond to at least two peers’ essays. Another option might be to assign a creative project to the students. The students will need to investigate modern influences (or even Eastern influences) on architecture in the nearby area and use photographs and writing to explain the influences. Finally, the students can post their photographs and writing online for peer discussions.
CHAPTER NINE

Unit 5: Pop art in America and Japan

Objectives

Art is an experience. We feel intimate and connected when we see images and objects that relate to our life experience. We are also attracted to the world of pleasure, which makes us happy. Seeing beyond the shallowness, the mundane objects or objects of fantasy reflect a contemporary mindset in a culture. For example, Americans are familiar with birthday balloons and children’s plastic toys and feel connected to them; however, the meanings of those objects are frequently neglected. They reflect a kind of mindset, maybe the enjoyment of life that is shared by Americans. Therefore, to bring this intimacy and consciousness of life to art and extend the theme of the world of pleasure in the Rococo and Edo era, this lesson focuses on an examination of contemporary pop visual culture in the U.S. and Japan.

Criticizing and analyzing works of art can bring a deeper and broader understanding of pop culture that they reflect. The teacher needs to emphasize the relationship between visual expressions and the cultural phenomena. Many Japanese products or images are dominated by their cuteness. This almost naïve expression might provide a pleasing zone to which people can escape the harsh reality of daily life. Such cuteness might also represent an effort to reach to female audiences or strengthen certain ideologies of the female role in Japanese culture.

The exemplar works provide students with insights about how the artists use everyday objects and images from mass media to examine and reflect their own cultures. Students also
need to question and examine their own life experiences. They will search for personal and social meanings embedded in the mundane visual world and use those objects or images to create their own artwork. Creating art provides insight into what artists try to achieve and convey through their works. Therefore, an art-making project serves as both a fun as well as meaningful learning experience in which students can achieve a deeper understanding toward the content they have learned.

**Exemplar Artworks**

Since my target audience is American students, and the U.S. is one of the origins of the Pop art movement, Andy Warhol and Jeff Koons will be the Western exemplars. Many of Jeff Koons’ works are based on everyday or child’s objects, and are altered to monuments with social and historical references to Baroque or Rococo art, especially in his Versailles project.

He addresses the enjoyment of life, which Americans embrace, and creates a contemporary world of pleasure, which has an interesting link to that of the Rococo time. His works possesses an ambiguous quality, in which the use of symbols and adaptability to context inspire multiple interpretations. The discussion focuses on how material, scale, subject matter and interaction with context determine the meaning of a work and also its context. It is also important for students to see the original ideas that initially created Pop art, so they can understand how Pop art acts as a fresh reaction toward concepts of fine art that existed in an earlier period. Thus, Warhol’s work will be briefly discussed before Koons.

The world of fantasy and the traditional aesthetics of the Ukiyo-e have been revived in the contemporary Japan through manga and anime, which have greatly influenced Japanese Pop artists. As a leading figure in the contemporary Pop art world in Japan, Takashi Murakami searches for the meaning of Japanese art and Japanese identity through its undisguised bare
reality. He also blurred the boundary between fine art and merchandise. By investigating the
*otaku* culture and pop visual culture today and the *Ukiyo-e* in the Edo period, he proposes the
notion of *Superflat*, which he thinks addresses both Japanese sensibility and what the future
world might be like. To offer a variety of aspects of investigating identity, two other artists are
included. Yohitomo Nara creates portraits of little girls who reflect anxious feelings, and Hideaki
Kawashima makes portraits of incomplete faces with ambiguous genders.

To further investigate the idea of Japanese identity in pop culture, I select a famous anime
series from 1995, which is considered “the bible for contemporary *otaku*” by Murakami (2005, p.
113). It addresses the anxiety and uncertainty the Japanese felt after the bubble economy, and it
also questions the meaning of war, which they constantly pondered since their defeat in WWII.

**Andy Warhol.** Pop art originates from Britain and U.S. in the 1960s, and later became
popular in Japan where it was transformed into a unique Japanese style. Andy Warhol, the key
initial figure of the early Pop art, blurred the boundary between fine art and commercial art. The
three works selected are those among the most famous: *Green Coca-Cola Bottles* (Warhol, 1962,
see Fig. 9.1), *Marilyn Diptych* (Warhol, 1962, see Fig. 9.2), *Gold Marilyn Monroe* (Warhol,
1962, see Fig. 9.3). These works represent how Warhol reflects consumer culture through
commercial and celebrity images (Fineberg, 2000; Gardner, et al., 2005; Lee & Richard, 1994). They
also show how Warhol turns those images into art.

Coca-Cola was a major icon of consumer culture in the 1960s. Warhol’s seemingly endless
repetition of images of Coca-Cola was produced with printing techniques, and it shows the
dominance of this brand in U.S. society (Gardner, et al., 2005; Lee & Richard, 1994). The Coca-
Cola brand has progressed beyond the actual product. It represents values, which attract youth:
freedom, accessibility to an enjoyable moment, and fashion. In addition, Warhol’s process of mass production\textsuperscript{31} in his artwork makes his works popular and controversial.

Similarly Warhol’s repetition of Marilyn Monroe’s image reflects the overwhelming presence her image had in the mass media, which numbed the U.S. public, after her death. The flat and saturated images reflect the commodity status of her personal image. Monroe’s own existence as a real person was erased by her image as commodity (Gardner, et al., 2005; Lee & Richard, 1994). Warhol seems to question our own existence in mass culture. The two works of Monroe imply similar but also differing interpretations toward Monroe. They both show depersonalization through a plastic look. However, one conveys the feelings of being overwhelmed, and the other conveys a sense of emptiness. Warhol’s work shows students that a bunch of pop images with some aesthetic adjustments do not automatically yield Pop artwork. The process of making Pop artwork can be fast but a great work of Pop art, many times, conveys retrospections toward personal experience or criticisms toward social phenomenon.

\textbf{Jeff Koons (Versailles project).} Jeff Koons’ works might look kitschy at first sight. I once wondered if he simply was making fun of art. I did not come to an answer, but I found something valuable and worth contemplating beyond the kitschy appearance of his works. They are important for redefining the concept of art and calling our attention toward rethinking our mundane lives. Because of his controversy, we can initiate a more inspiring discussion concerning his subject matter, process, and his dialogue with art history. I focus on his Versailles project, in which he initiated an interesting dialogue between his works and the French Baroque. We can examine our mundane experiences not only through contemporary interests but also through historical references.

\textsuperscript{31} Warhol established his studio, “The Factory,” where he hired other artists to work for him to produce multi-copies of his works by the printmaking technique.
With a different commercial sense from Warhol’s, he deals with pleasures of childhood, such as toys, food, and games as well as the pleasure of the adult world, such as sex. He created this fun world to show “childhood and adult indulgences and fantasies” and intended to “communicate with the masses” (Breuer, Krens, & Sylvester, 2000, p. 10). His paintings drew images from personal photographs, advertisement, brochure and magazines. His sculptures are usually inspired by everyday ready-made objects as we can see in Split Rocker (Koons, 2000, see Fig. 9.4), Balloon Dog (Magenta) (Koons, 1994-2000, see Fig. 9.5) and Rabbit (Koons, 1986, see Fig. 9.6). He examines the celebrity and the commercial, such as in the work of Michael Jackson and Bubbles (Koons, 1988, see Fig. 4.32), but more often he calls the audience’s attention to what we usually ignore in life, such as the party balloon. He further makes us re-think about what mundane objects might mean to us. Koons thinks that we feel connected with and interested in what we are obsessed with. Life is embraced through finding wonder in things. Therefore, he wants to address people’s involvement with and passion toward their own lives.

On the other hand, Koons uses symbols to address meanings that go beyond the optimistic character of his work. Rabbit might represent a Playboy bunny or Eastern resurrection. Self-Portrait shows a dialogue with power while being placed next to the portrait of Louis XIV. Balloon Dog looks like a usual balloon for a child’s party, but it also symbolizes a Trojan horse (Breuer, Krens, & Sylvester, 2000). By enlarging its scale and using stainless steel, Koons turns something temporary, light and movable into something everlasting, solid, still, and monumental (Siegel, 2005).

Similarly, he also makes both an innocent and threatening statement in Split-Rocker. In Split-Rocker, the use of plants (uncontrollable) in contrast with the defined form (controllable) triggers a dialogue with power in the Baroque. His emphasis on material contributes much to the
meaning of his work. The golden porcelain of *Michael Jackson and Bubbles* (Koons, 1988, see Fig. 9.7) represents the iconic power of the star and also connects to the power of the king (Koons, 2008).

Inspired by both contemporary kitsch and the Baroque and Rococo art, Koons’s work is ornate, overly delightful, and sensuous. His work is especially interesting when placed in the setting of Versailles. A dialogue has ensued between the Baroque and Rococo and the contemporary Baroque, which Koon creates (Breuer, Krens, & Sylvester, 2000; Koons, 2008). The interactions between them re-contextualize both Koons’s works and Versailles. The symmetrical design of the garden further addresses the issue of power in *Split-Rocker*. The juxtaposition of Koons’ *Ushering in Banality* (wood) (Koons, 1988, see Fig. 9.8) and Bernini’s statue of Louis XIV (marble) (Bernini, 1665, see Fig. 9.9) represent different types of materials and joy, and creates an interesting dialogue (Koons, 2008).

Most importantly his works carry an “indeterminable” quality, which makes them open to different interpretations and adaptable to different cultural contexts. Koons says: “my interest has always been to create art that can change with any culture or society viewing it” (Breuer, Krens, & Sylvester, 2000; p. 49). In *Rabbit*, the rabbit holds a carrot to its mouth. Its meanings are ambivalent. It could have sexual hints, or it could suggest a politician who is making a statement (Breuer, Krens, & Sylvester, 2000). This sculpture also reflects different content when it is connected to different people or a different medium. For example, it possesses commercial content in the hand of the mass medium while it reflects the ego of the monarchy in the hand of Louis XIV. His *Self-Portrait* (Koons, 1991, see Fig. 9.10) with a classical posture and placed on a tall base shows the transcendental power physically and spiritually as Bernini’s statue of Louis XIV. It creates a dialogue about personal identity and power with the portrait of Louis XIV on
the next wall. This adaptability enriches the work’s interaction with history and context and therefore enriches our views of the past and present.

Koons’s works are selected based on the variety of materials, scale, subject matters and settings, in which the works were presented. The subject matters include toys, celebrities and classical portraits. The materials include stainless steel, wood, plants, and marble. Each of the factors above greatly influences the meaning of each work. Students can therefore gain a more comprehensive understanding of Koons’s concepts through studying the variety within his work.

**Takashi Murakami.** Japanese anime and manga are important elements of Japanese pop culture and have prevailed world wide, especially among youth. Anime and manga create a world of fantasy and illusion, in which nothing is impossible. This creative spirit satisfies the imaginative mind of youths in Japan\(^32\) and the U.S. Anime and manga carry a playfulness and fantasy, which were also characteristic of the Edo art and life.\(^33\) A powerful subculture was developed from this phenomenon: *otaku* culture. *Otaku* refers to a group of people who obsess with anime, video, games, manga and science fiction and create their own fantasy worlds. Their virtual reality cannot be easily entered by outsiders. But today *otaku* entered mainstream.

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\(^32\) Matsui describes Tsuji's assertion that “the playful and bold stylization of nature embodied in *manga* epitomizes the vitality and freedom of the Japanese popular imagination, arguing that even after its marginalization by modern institutions of art, *manga*’s playful spirit survives in postwar Japanese comics and animation” (Matsui, 1999, p. 23-24).

\(^33\) There are certain main characters found in Japanese visual tradition: the decorative style, humor, playfulness, stylization and exaggeration. The Japanese desires to decorate in life and to use decoration to fulfill their aspiration and celebrate the joy of life as can be seen in not only functional objects but also in screen paintings, such as *White and Red Plum Blossoms* (Korin, 1710-1716). In addition, sense of humor and playfulness is expressed through distorting, exaggerating forms and stylization, especially in caricaturesque drawings, paintings or woodblock prints, including *A Dragon in the Cloud* (Shohaku, 18th century), *Otani Oniji III as Edohei* (Sharaku, 1794) and *The Old Plum* (Sansetsu, 1645). Exaggeration and distortion of lines, forms and designs set the works apart from “realistic representation and narrative continuity” and therefore create “an autonomous aesthetic space” (Matsui, 1999, p. 23). This visual tradition and playful atmosphere in the Edo popular culture have been carried to manga, anime and otaku culture today, though in a different format.
Due to the influences of *otaku* culture on many Japanese Pop artists, students need to have a basic understanding of it to understand Murakami’s works. To allow students to actively experience the dazzling visual sensibility of this culture, the teacher will show a short video, “*Akihabara Majokko Princess*” (Murakami, 2009), which was a collaboration between Murakami and McG, a Hollywood director. The film stars Kirsten Dunst, who sings "Turning Japanese" by The Vapors and dances across the street of Akihabar. It was made for the exhibition “*Pop Life: Art in a Material World*,” at the Tate Modern museum in London (Schuker, 2009). It shows the overwhelmingly visual phenomenon in the Akihabar: manga, anime, games, the people, their dress, cosplay, behaviors, and materialistic attachment, which are all Japanese-specific.

As a result of growing up in a technologically and materially rich era and being trained as a *Nihon-ga* painter (Matsui & Friis-Hansen, 1999), Murakami is interested in examining Japanese pop culture and also traditional aesthetics. He tries to search for the authenticity of Japanese identity today as many of young people in Japan do. He attempts to revive national and historical identity (Matsui, 1999 & Friis-Hansen, 1999). He initiated the Superflat project in an effort to answer the questions: “what concepts or viewpoints would truly guide an inquiry into the meaning of art in Japan?” (Murakami, 2005, p. 151). The Superflat notion addresses the characteristics of traditional Japanese pictorial art: the decorativeness, stylization, humor and playfulness, which have survived through Westernization and are embodied in the subculture: manga and anime (Murakami, 1999). He further expanded the idea of Superflat as features of technology: the flatness of a computer monitor, computer graphics, and any data or information.

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34 Akihabar is a business district in Tokyo. It is famous for selling video games and electronics and is known as a home for *otaku*.

35 The category of *Nihon-ga* was invented in the 1890s as a protest to the devaluation of traditional Japanese paintings and also as a representation for cultural continuity. It combines both Eastern and Western art, such as 12th century Chinese paintings and impressionist paintings.
we can easily access over the computer screen. Superflat reflects what the future world might look like (Murakami, 2005, p. 153).

Drawing inspiration from otaku and anime culture, Murakami created a little figure, DOB, and its series of paintings and sculptures. He also examines the kawaii\textsuperscript{36} phenomenon, which is prevalent in Japan. DOB is a cute and silly looking icon and very popular in Japanese advertisements and merchandise, such as Hello Kitty and yuru chara.\textsuperscript{37} The wide marketing of “cuteness” might be viewed as a way to escape the harsh reality of the 90s in Japan after the bubble economy (Friis-Hansen, 1999). On the other hand, Siegel (2005) describes Sawaragi’s claims that cuteness “can be a mask of power and control in contemporary culture” (Siegel, 2005, p. 286) as in Murakami’s DOB in the Strange Forest (Murakami, 1999, see Fig. 9.11) and Nara’s In the Deepest Puddle II (Nara, 1995, see Fig. 9.12). Both artworks associate cuteness with aggression or threat.

In The Castle of Tin Tin (Murakami, 1998, see Fig. 9.13) and 727 (Murakami, 1996, see Fig. 9.14), Murakami metamorphoses and transforms cute figures, DOB, into threatening and aggressive forms. Metamorphosis of the figures and the ambiguous space in The Castle of Tin Tin (Matsui, 1999, p. 27-8) appears frequently in science-fiction anime or anime with supernatural themes. In 727, the aggressive DOB flies with or is carried by a cloud-like or water-like object, which is a traditional stylization of a cloud or water in Chinese and Japanese paintings. Its ambiguous background shows the elegance of the traditional screen painting and Nihon-ga. The position of DOB with the cloud-like object might also suggest a divine-like figure in traditional Chinese and Japanese painting.

\textsuperscript{36} Kawaii is Japanese for cuteness.
\textsuperscript{37} Yuru chara are the cute characters designed for promoting private companies or governmental organizations in Japan.
With *DOB’s* naivety in *DOB in the Strange Forest*, the multi-eyed mushrooms create an uncomfortable atmosphere, which represents a sense of surveillance. The installation examines the individual in society and *otaku* networks at night (Friis-Hansen, 1999). These three works exemplify how Murakami transforms the anime and *Nihon-ga* ideas to examine Japanese identity, the *kawaii* culture, and *otaku* life.

Although focusing on Murakami’s works, I also want to provide some varieties that address Japanese identity. So I choose Yohitomo Nara’s *In the Deepest Puddle II* and Hideaki Kawashima’s *! (Kawashima, 2003, see Fig. 9.15)*. Nara is famous for his portraits of little girls, which turn the naive stereotype of the little girl into an annoyed, anxious, evil, and aggressive figure. *In the Deepest Puddle II* causes one to wonder why such a supposedly naïve girl would have a bandaged head and walk or be trapped in a puddle of uncertain depth. The image reminds us the innocence of our childhood and conveys “the pain of loneliness and the quiet strength to live though it” (Matsui, 2005, p. 219). It is about the theme of life and death.

On the other hand, Kawashima’s recent works usually show an incomplete face with an irregular form that floats in the emptiness as in the work, *. The face seems to be forming or dissolving. There is no fixed face. Perhaps the painting demonstrates the artist’s alter ego or Japanese social ego? Might we ascribe the uncertainty and ungroundedness of Kawashima’s face and Nara’s girl to the deteriorated norms and traditional values in the consumer society as Matsui (2005) refers to in Yoshimoto’s novel?38 It can inspire students to discuss the personal and social psyche that is hidden within these images.

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38 Banana Yoshimoto is a contemporary Japanese novelist, who is popular among the public who may not be familiar with literature, especially the youth.
In a society dominated by consumer images, many Japanese Pop artists convert commercial images into art, and merchandise their art, especially Murakami. I think Murakami’s communication with the public on social issues through the idea of “creating and distributing works that are understood by all” is encouraging (Cruz, 1999, p. 16). He searches Japanese identity that is created from the reality of life. The reality is not composed by, as Murakami (2005) cites Sawaragi’s words, “high and noble materials” but by “the massive amount of meaningless and unorganized junk aimlessly produced daily in Japan” (p. 161). Rather than arguing about the justification of those artists’ works, I will focus on the study of visual culture, and discuss the fantasy world and the superflat notion in contemporary Japan in relation to a similar kind of artistic sensibility and life attitude in the Edo period.

**Anime: Neon Genesis Evangelion.** While art functioned as a means to heal wounds and scars in postwar Japan, many themes of movies or anime or manga involve the trauma of the war, imagery of mutation, and the questioning of the righteousness and meaning of war and our own existence, such as in the anime: *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995) and *Howl’s Moving Castle* (2004) (Murakami, 2005). The last episode of *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Gainax, 1995-96) is an exemplar work of anime because its inner drama in ways of psychological analysis reflects the struggle and conflict of the director and also that of the society. It also challenges the traditional storytelling and visual expression of anime (Murakami, 2005, p. 33).

Through the psychological dialogue within the individual and between surroundings and the individual, the main character is wondering about and searching for his value of existence as a person and as an Evangelion pilot: a human empowered with a supernatural power by the aid

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39 Murakami founded Kaikai Kiki Co., where he hires assistants to produce his artworks, and he also gathers other artists with similar mindsets and interests to promote their works as a group through exhibition and commercial distribution. Like Warhol, Murakami sells his works to the high art market and also to the general public. He further pushes the commercial strategies by turning his works into commodities like T-shirts and distributing them widely through stores.
of a humanoid weapon. This episode conveys the theory of existentialism. The anxiety, psychological dilemma and uncertainty about the future might be linked to the rapid rising and vanishing of the bubble economy from the end of 80s to the early 90s; and the Sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway in early 1995; and might also be traced back to the trauma caused by the atomic bombs in 1945. The teacher can also bring up the recent tsunami tragedy in Japan and let students contemplate how the tragedy affects the interpretation of this episode. This episode is a great example of how issues of significance can be raised through popular culture.

Moreover, changes in visual styles and incorporation and editing of various visual languages: anime, video footage, drawing, and writing, make this anime almost like a contemporary video artwork. The visual strategies of the anime well address its psychological content.

**Teaching Procedure**

First, Warhol will be introduced to let students have a general understanding of the origin of the idea of Pop art. Due to the somewhat similar idea of blurring the boundary between art and commercialization, Murakami will be discussed after Warhol in the second lesson. From the 60s in the U.S. to the 90s in Japan is a bit of a jump, so I will inform students that like the rising of U.S. Pop art in the 60s, Japanese Pop art arose from a capitalist society around the 80s and 90s, when life was easy, comfortable, and convenient, and when consumerism offered pleasure and satisfied desires.

Finally, the unit will conclude with a discussion of Jeff Koons. His work will prepare students to examine their own culture and daily lives in comparison with Japanese pop culture and also inspire them to create their own Pop art project in the last two lessons. The Pop art project aims to impel students to creatively apply their understanding of the Pop art concepts of
the two cultures to visual language, so students can examine and transform their daily life experiences.

**Lesson 1: Pop art in the 60s U.S.** Warhol’s art is bound tightly with the social examination of American capitalism and consumerism in the 50s, 60s and 70s. To show students the contextual factors, which greatly influenced his art, they need to do a little research on the social conditions in the 1950s America to grasp a general picture of the main social phenomena. Next, they need to write a brief identification of the important phenomena and post their writings on Facebook for the teacher to read.

Further discussing students’ findings, in the beginning of class, the teacher briefly discusses media and advertising influences on the public and life in a capitalist society. Americans are so accustomed to the capitalist lifestyle—as I am—that we probably think this is the way life should be. However, life was different before the 1950s; also other countries have different economic systems such as China. Warhol’s works help us, from a distance, to re-investigate cultural impacts, which have become parts of us. This discussion intends to create an awareness of the influences of consumer and media culture.

To guide students to be sensitive to important aspects of Warhol’s art, such as the commercial subject matter, the repetition of the images and the use of colors, the teacher will first hold a class discussion about *Green Coca-Cola Bottles* before the students begin group discussions. The class discussion will also include Warhol’s process of mass production. In the group discussions, students will compare two works of Monroe about how Warhol conveys various messages concerning the same figure through different visual manipulations. The two images are shown on the screen for easy viewing and comparison in a group of six, which allows for a richer exchange of ideas.

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40 China has been practicing communism since 1949 and gradually becomes more capitalistic in the recent years.
Since student presentations can foster their involvement in class and encourage dialogue among students, students are encouraged to volunteer to share their thoughts. If no one volunteers, the teacher will randomly select one group. After the presentation, the teacher will comment on it and present questions, especially concerning the characteristics and influences of current mass media. The influences, which relate to otaku culture in Japan, will only be briefly discussed for now.

To prepare for the topic of Japanese identity and otaku culture in the next class, students need to search for a manga or anime character that represents their impressions of the Japanese, then write down the reasons for their selection briefly, and post both the image and description on eLC. This process allows students to relate their popular interests in manga and anime and think about their own notions of the Japanese. For those who are not interested in manga and anime, they can search for any other contemporary image that conveys their notions of the Japanese.

**Lesson 2: Japanese Pop: Takashi Murakami’s superflat world 1.** Murakami draws inspiration from both the Ukiyo-e prints and otaku culture, which are uniquely Japanese and might be foreign to many Americans. As they already have a basic understanding of the Ukiyo-e prints, students will be introduced to otaku culture in general terms through viewing the video, “Akihabara Majokko Princess” that conveys the otaku sensibilities and atmosphere. Following the video, an open discussion with the class will focus on what they think about otaku, cosplay, what characteristics otaku has and how it might represent and influence the lives of youth in Japan. During the discussion, the teacher might introduce the business strategy of the manga, using *Bleach* as an example, to further address otaku obsession in Japan.

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41 *Bleach* is a popular Japanese manga, which began publication in 2001, and later was made into anime until now.
With a basic understanding of otaku culture, Murakami’s, Nara’s and Kawashima’s works are introduced focusing on the discussion of the Japanese identity. To refresh students’ earlier reflections on their impressions of the Japanese, the teacher will briefly show some of the students’ postings of manga images and ask questions. With the danger of misunderstanding Murakami’s works as shallow, such as what might happen with Koons’ works, the teacher needs to give a hint of a general direction, which includes the symbolic significance of DOB and the kawaii culture it reflects. This general discussion intends to arouse students’ curiosity about the kawaii phenomenon in Japan and what mindset this phenomenon might suggest. By introducing and questioning those seemingly childish images, the teacher initiates further group discussion about a more complex series of works derived from DOB and other artists’ works that reflect a similar theme. This discussion should be very open and does not need to lead to any conclusions. The motivation of this discussion is to encourage questioning and exploring.

Each group chooses one work from the five listed and posted on eLC for discussion by viewing it on a laptop computer. Following the critique exercise, the students write and save their findings in a word processing file and post it to eLC. Five groups with different works will be selected to share on stage. The sequence of presentation is organized according to the artists. The teacher will comment after each presentation by reinforcing the important points mentioned or offering new perspectives, such as showing other related works or comparing with the Edo prints and screen paintings, and contemporary manga images.

Finally, the teacher and students will draw some general conclusions about the visual characteristics found in those works and how the works relate to manga or anime today as well as to the Edo visual traditions they studied previously. The students will also explore what identities or social meanings those visual qualities might imply. These conclusions are not fixed,
and will reflect a variety of interpretations of the visual characteristics. Those interpretations might come from students, the teacher, artists or scholars, and might evoke questions for further contemplation. Aesthetic experience is a live and evolving journey, which cannot be settled to a fixed end but can only be enjoyed as it goes along the way (Dewey, 1934/1959).

Though Murakami’s business strategies are not included in class discussion, it would be interesting for students to see how a Pop artist crosses the line between fine art and commercial art. Thus the teacher offers an extended study on Murakami’s famous Louis Vuitton store design and the animated feature *Superflat First Love* (Murakami, 2009), which Takashi Murakami made to accompany his installations in the LV store in Omotesando, Tokyo.

**Lesson 3: Japanese Pop: Takashi Murakami’s superflat world II.** To further address contemporary Japanese identity and mindset, a unique anime episode, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, #26, will be shown to inspire open class discussion. Since it has a complicated story setting and interrelationships among the characters, a basic introduction about the outline of the story and backgrounds of central figures is needed before showing this last episode. Certain key ideas will be addressed before this episode, such as the young figures’ attitude toward the humanoid weapon, Eva; their family backgrounds; and how they relate to the psychological struggles that occur in this episode.

After the viewing, the class will engage in free-writing. This will help students to feel refreshed and interested in different activities other than the group discussion. Although group discussion is beneficial to gain various thoughts, students sometimes need to have some quiet time to think by themselves and record freely their flow of thoughts. Free-writing is appropriate for this occasion. In addition, group discussion usually involves presentations, which are more intense. The atmosphere of the following class discussion is relaxed and extends the sense of
freedom that free-writing brought to the students. Students need some relaxed class time in this curriculum to form a nice rhythm that moves from intense to relaxing and back to intense. The class discussion focuses on visual strategies, psychological meanings, and contextual backgrounds.

Finally, the teacher will announce two assignments. To prepare to discuss Jeff Koons’ Versailles project in the next class, students need to read an article about Versailles’s history posted on eLC, and respond to the prompt questions online before the next class. For the preparation of the final Pop art project, the students are required to start keeping a visual diary each day to record and reflect on what they see and how they feel and think about what they see. Their reflections can be anything from mundane objects of little importance to a popular advertisement. The students may reflect on things in physical reality, on the Internet or in any kind of media—regular, irrational, funny or not self-conscious. These reflections can be the things that are loved, hated or rarely noticed. Visually recording is strongly encouraged in this activity. This assignment seeks to respond to the very first and essential question for designing an art project: what do you often see in daily life? But this question will not be shown until the lesson for designing the project because students might explore more without a defined question. The teacher only mentions the diary relates to the art project. The process of researching and reflecting is an important part of the purposes of the art project. This project serves as a closure of the course and highlights the idea of art as experience—the central spirit of the proposed curriculum.

**Lesson 4: Jeff Koons’s Versailles project 2008 I.** Many of Koons’s sculptures are based on children’s objects and evoke our memory of childhood and show the life of pleasure. I want students to briefly think about and share their own world of pleasure, which they cherish before
we begin studying Koons’s works, so they can be more empathetic to the question of why Koons created the works and what he tries to express through them.

Since the Versailles project emphasizes interactions between Koons’s sculptures and Versailles, we need to have a basic understanding about each side, which is discussed initially with the class. Several points are called into attention: Koons’s choices of subject matters and scale, how they reflect his view of daily life, the material he used, his craftsmanship and the ideas behind the work; and what Versailles symbolizes in French history. Those points will be refined in a later group discussion. Students should have rough knowledge about Versailles from the pre-class reading, which prepares them for a general discussion. Next, the teacher will show a short video about Versailles (plagalcadenze, 2010) to address its history and its spatial design.

Since students already have a general idea about Koons’s intentions and history of Versailles, they are ready for a more sophisticated discussion in groups about the dialogue between the two. Koons’s works are contextually-adjustable. In this show, he re-creates the meanings of his old work by putting them within a historical symbol of France.

To extend the contemporary investigation of the interaction between sculpture and context, students will choose one favorite sculpture from ancient or contemporary times and try to find a contemporary setting to re-address the meaning of the sculpture. This assignment also gives them a rough concept of installation art. The project will be done through Photoshop. The teacher will do a simple demonstration before students start the project. The proposed curriculum assumes that students will have access to computer software.

There are two sections in this group work: the critique of Koons’s project and contextualization of other sculptural works. By midnight, the students are required to post the
critique of Koons’s work and the project of contextualizing sculpture (with image and writing)\textsuperscript{42} to eLC for their peers to comment on before next class. By the end of the class, the teacher will randomly select five groups to share their group works on stage in the next class.

**Lesson 5: Jeff Koon’s Versailles’ project 2008 II.** The group presentations and teacher’s comments focus on what Koons tries to convey in the original piece; how Versailles might change the meaning of the piece; how the piece might alter the meanings of Versailles; and how students’ choice of setting might influence their selected work. Koons’ work helps students think about the redefinition of Baroque and Rococo in contemporary terms and call their attention to the influences of the context and the way of presentation on the interpretations of the work.

**Lesson 6, 7 and 8: Pop art project.** Inspired by how contemporary artists examine pop culture, students will try to draw from their personal experiences and examine their pop culture and daily life experiences through their own visual language and expressions. Therefore, the teacher will briefly review American and Japanese Pop artists’ works and their key ideas, which have been previously discussed.

The teacher then guides students to design their Pop art project (see Appendix F) by asking essential questions, such as what do you often see in daily life; how do you feel about what you see; do they have special meaning for you; and what do you recall first? The diaries the students have kept will function as a useful source to help them answer the questions. They can either review their diaries to find out the answers, or they can engage in free-writing before they refer to their diaries to get more inspirations. They will write down a list of nouns, adjectives or even verbs, and then think carefully about what those thoughts or mundane objects might

\textsuperscript{42} The writing for this project is a short description of why students choose this setting and how their selected sculpture and setting influence each other’s meaning.
possibly mean for them. The use of mindmap will be introduced to facilitate this brainstorm process. To refine their ideas, students need to narrow their targets. They will choose three objects or symbols and develop three ideas and sketches for each object. Developing different plans for the same object impels students to brainstorm and stimulate their creativity. This is usually the process designers and artists go through to develop their ideas.

The teacher walks around, checks the students’ progress, and answers questions. Finally everyone needs to choose his/her favorite plan and determine the choice of material. The teacher announces what the teacher can prepare for art-making in the next class to give students ideas in considering their choices. If the students have ideas that involve a medium that goes beyond what the teacher can provide, students need to talk to the teacher first and prepare independently, especially if they want to create three-dimensional work or video work. Those students need to make an appointment with the teacher after class to further discuss the feasibility of the plan. The openness to different media choice might be troublesome for some teachers. But I want students to consider a wide variety of options to express their ideas because many Pop artists and contemporary artists experiment the use of media to express ideas.

The next class is a studio day. Students need to bring their sketches and actually work on their ideas. Due to the fact that some students might want to or need to work more on their projects, they can keep working after class outside of the classroom. But everyone needs to photograph their work, write a short artist statement and post it on eLC for their peers to comment on. People working three-dimensionally need to photograph the project from various perspectives to show how the work is presented in the environment.

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43 The materials prepared by the teacher are drawing paper, glue, scissors, watercolor and drawing gear including colored pencils and markers.
Due to the size of the class and the fact that many presentations with similar topics are likely to bore or burn students out, there will be only ten presentations available in the last class. I want to hold the presentations of students’ artwork to preserve the exciting and encouraging process of an artist. Students are usually excited in seeing and discussing their peers’ work, too. As students become more experienced in art-making and art critique, they should develop a more sophisticated sense for art and be more confident in discussing their own work in public. Thus students are encouraged to present. However, if there are not enough people who want to share on stage, the rest of the available seats will be chosen by the teacher.

In the presentation, the artists share their ideas about their work and what they tried to convey through the work. The teacher and the class will comment on meaning, visual expression, material choice, presentation of artwork, and possibly connections to current or historical exemplars. The focus of the discussion is on how the visual elements and the meanings address each other. If the relationship is not obvious, what might the artist be able to do to make the relationship stronger? The teacher and class will offer various suggestions in a constructive manner. This dialogue will be an excellent learning opportunity for all to see how changes might imbue a work with different meanings. The teacher will remind the class that all of the comments are subjective, and no fixed standards for judging art exist.
CHAPTER TEN

Conclusions, Implications, and Future Research

To bring the needed insights to the design of my proposed cross-cultural curriculum for an art appreciation course, I expected to carefully study related theoretical frameworks, research empirical studies and conduct an informal study of art appreciation classes. The research questions that guided me were

- How can art appreciation facilitate cross-cultural understanding?
- How does a constructivist pedagogical method apply to college-level art appreciation courses?

During the journey of researching, I personally experienced the process of coordinating the cultural conflicts between West and East, reflected on my own biases toward both cultures, acknowledged the negative sides of each culture, and learned from their positive sides. This journey has been full of conflict, excitement, enlightenment, and also feelings of loss—it produced mental conflicts, due to the disparities of thinking and aesthetic considerations reflected in cultural difference. This research process has helped me contemplate the meaning of world citizenship and how to achieve being such a citizen through the study of art and culture. The journey has also further encouraged and inspired me to bring such an awareness to the public and other disciplines within and outside of art. The proposed curriculum needs to be taught and researched to further test its effectiveness. In addition, because the scaffolding of the curriculum is primarily based on Western pedagogical theories, this approach could be further
developed by conceptualizing the audience as a non-Western group. For example, Eastern academic traditions could be applied to this curriculum on a broad scale in the future. My experience has been that both Eastern and Western traditions have strengthened this curriculum and increased my enthusiasm for sharing art with others.

**Inspiration from Western Thought**

As my cultural background comes from the Far East, one of the best benefits of pursuing my doctoral study in the U.S. was to learn another way of thinking. This new understanding can infuse my existing mode of thinking with new “nutrients,” thereby helping me re-examine my own cultural origins from an altered perspective. The American spirit and the ancient Greeks’ soul have deeply moved me. Their essential elements are the realization of individual freedom and social welfare, the cultivation of independence and systematic thinking, and respectful, equal and open attitudes toward the known and the unknown.

These elements are also the main characteristics of constructivist methods. Those aspects of Western thought helped me understand the relationship between teacher and students differently from my comprehension of that relationship in the Eastern tradition. Interactions are characterized by open bi-directional communications. At the center, students are constructors of knowledge. The teacher is a facilitator who helps the constructive process. The democratic attitude and the focus on individuality in education results in the realization of individual freedom and humbleness toward other ideas. This open attitude further makes me aware of the complexity and organic nature of culture. It leads me to be cautious about my biases, which are likely to let me fall into some fixed and simplified ideas. Such a mindset also drives me to share this awareness with students. It is important for achieving cultural understanding and being a responsible world citizen.
The Western theory of education motivates me to re-contemplate the purpose of education, which, I believe, is to embrace students’ vibrant visions and to encourage their diverse and independent thinking. These goals allow them to acquire crucial meaning-making tools that can help them through a lifetime of real world experiences.

From my perspective, a humble spirit is the result of an open mind trained in the systematic and analytic scientific method. This frame of mind was practiced in the informal study, which helped me make inferential judgments from what was observed rather than basing my decisions on my subjective preconceptions. In addition, the reading group for the curriculum development taught me the power of open communication, the art of listening, and the mindset of self-analysis and self-criticism. In terms of curriculum content, the systematic, analytical and constructivist methods have driven the development of the thematic comparison and the interrelated structure in content, which helps students to build on their previous knowledge.

As I received most of my professional art training in the United States, my artistic focus has been on self-expression and conceptual expression. I am used to subjective and emotional ways of seeing and thinking. The informal study and the reading group have given me a lesson on rationality. Even if subjectivity cannot be avoided, it is consciously informed. This experience also helped me examine the contexts of my views toward art and think about meanings in a more critical and introspective way.

**Inspiration from Eastern Thought**

Studying in another culture helped me re-examine my own culture in a more objective way. With comparison to the Western mode of thinking, I started to look at the value of ancient Eastern traditions from a new perspective and realized how modern Western thoughts have impacted the present Eastern mindset.
Confucian and Taoist thought are a part of Taiwanese education from childhood. However, the pedagogical style of lecturing in Taiwanese schools limits interpretation. We can hardly grasp the deep meanings in the ancient thoughts. As students, we lose interest in these important concepts, for these philosophies seem to confine individual freedom. This turning away from tradition has become the main trend in Asia as it has been westernized.

This dissertation has allowed me to return to the origins of Confucian and Taoist thought and see them as moderate ways of cultivating our minds. Art can be tool to satisfy our desire as it molds our emotions to accord with virtue. In turn, this process can stabilize the society. By standing from a distance in America, I am able to revisit once familiar but now abandoned thoughts and realize their authentic meaning to humankind. This thought is not out-of-date but is misunderstood in contemporary settings. What we need to pass on to students is not the meanings of the words, which confine their usage, but the central spirit, which can enlighten our minds and can be applied in today’s life.

Unlike linear and systematic ways of thinking, Eastern tradition in some ways is closer to postmodernist thought. It is organic and spiritual rather than dualistic and materialistic. It emphasizes internalization instead of expression, and focuses more on social order than an individual freedom. The Eastern tradition is a tender art, which comforts the soul in a rather formless way. However, its emphasis on social order, which still lingers on today, creates a stronger stratification in society and in the school system than in the West. I admire the equality and systematic and independent modes of the Western mind and also admire the spirituality and organic and socially-oriented modes of Eastern thought. However any positive side, when being grasped too firmly, can turn into a negative one. Therefore, I believe Western and Eastern
thought complement each other and can nurture the human soul when properly coordinated. Still they can also be turned into pollution when being used in an extreme way.

The Role of the Artist and Scholar

In addition to the cultural conflict I experienced, I also went through a conflict between the seemingly contradictory roles of the artist and scholar. In my experience, artists are usually more subjective and intuitive and unlikely to examine phenomena from a broad and objective perspective, while scholars are usually more objective but likely to fall into linear ways of thought. To me, this is like the relationship between Eastern and Western thoughts. The two roles also complement each other and strengthen each other’s practice. In the end, the process of this research almost feels like an art-making process, whose product was born from my logic as well as from my soul. The research process opens a wholly new opportunity for me to be an artist and also a scholar. Being able to possess and coordinate both roles helps me see things in multiple ways and helps me adapt different modes of thinking to different life situations.

Future Goals

To further examine the effectiveness of the proposed curriculum in a real classroom, I hope to have a chance to actually practice this curriculum and pursue research on my instruction of the curriculum in the future. I will also apply what I have learned in the process of researching cross-cultural curriculum in art appreciation to other forms of curriculum design, such as a cross-cultural curriculum for Taiwanese or Chinese students and a cross-cultural curriculum for a studio art course. My goal is to not only bring cross-cultural understanding to American students but also to world citizens in general. I hope to use my artistic and scholarly expertise to bring synthesized insights into both art appreciation and studio art course design, or even program design, which can especially inform cross-cultural awareness and even promote multi-cultural
understanding. Moreover, I would like to extend the study to other ages, such as students in K-12 classes and recommend more comprehensive and applicable solutions to the common lack of emphasis on art and cultural education in K-12 education in Taiwan.

A limitation of this study is its focus on Eastern aesthetic content without incorporating its educational philosophy. The proposed curriculum benefits from Western educational thought. Therefore in the future, I hope to study more about the Eastern philosophy of education in ancient and modern times and develop a curriculum which combines the benefits of both Eastern and Western educational systems; hopefully such a construct can give insights into both systems.
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APPENDIX A

Syllabus

Instructor: Ju-Yi Chia

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday; 75 minute each class

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a basic but critical understanding of art in Eastern and Western culture with several focused themes. This course will address the study of art and culture in a cross-cultural context through a historical expansion of time and an understanding of art and culture that embraces a broad approach. We will examine the connection between visual language and the artist’s experience or context through perception, observation, interpretation, examination, criticism, comparison, discussion and art-making. The course will include brief lectures, group discussions and presentations, online forums, assignments and art projects—in and out of class. The class presents a variety of experiences with art and diverse approaches to cultural issues, which should help students expand their awareness and see art and life from new perspectives.

Objectives:

1. Students reflect on how art is a material product, generated within specific groups of people and how it demonstrates systems of beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviors, and ways of discovering the meaning of life. Through these products, ideas are transmitted from generation to generation (Monaghan & Just, 2000).

2. Students have a basic understanding of the complexity and organic nature of culture by examining art from that culture within a historical scope.

3. Students will perceive, observe, interpret, examine, criticize, and compare visual language and cultural phenomena from the East and West.

4. Through a set process of art criticism (Broudy, 1972; Barrett, 2003), students will respond to artwork.
5. Students will perceive works of art and architecture “in the way that artists in the respective media tend to perceive them” (Broudy, 1972, p.60).

6. By incorporating various perspectives arising from contextual study, group study, discussion, formal lectures, and personal art making, students will consider a broad approach to visual culture and expand their awareness by synthesizing their own responses.

7. Students will compare different visual cultures, across time and place, with visual experiences in contemporary life in order to gain cross-cultural understanding.

8. Students maintain an open attitude toward different perspectives and cultures, ask questions, and leave ideas open for a wide range of possibilities, instead of forming fixed conclusions.

9. Students demonstrate original, independent thinking and respect others’ opinions.

10. With understanding of another culture and various perspectives, students can introspectively examine and discover more about “their own beliefs and values as translated through an art object” (Dambekains, 1994, p. 84).

11. Students demonstrate creative abilities to incorporate what they have learned in class and their life experiences into their art projects.

12. Students can cooperate with their peers to complete class activities and assignments.

13. Students comfortably and confidently express opinions and feelings.

Course Schedule:

1st section: (4 classes)

**Unit 1: Every Day Visual Experience**: people and places

- West: Henri Cartier-Bresson, William Eggleston
- Japan: Hiroshi Watanabe, Daido Moriyama

  Recommended artists: Ishiuchi Miyako, Ninagawa Mika, Cindy Sherman

2nd section: Tradition

**Unit 2: Nude and Landscape**:

Painting: (4 classes)

- West: Renaissance painting and sculpture
• China: Song landscape painting and poetry

Architecture: (3 class)
• West: Michelangelo’s *Capitoline Hill*
• Japan: *Katsura Imperial Villa*

Extended study: Constable’s *The Haywain* in the 17th century
  Zhou Fang’s *Court Ladies Wearing Flowers in Their Hair* in the Tang dynasty

**Unit 3: The World of Pleasure: (8 class)**
• West: Rococo: painting and interior
• Japan: *U-kiyo-e* print in the Edo period

Extended study: Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin’s *Grace at Table* in the 18th century
  Hasegawa Tohaku’s *Pine Forest* in the late 16th century

3rd section: Modern time

**Unit 4: Less is More (3 classes)**
• West: Utopian Ideals & Mies van der Rohe’s *The German pavilion in Barcelona*
• Japan: Minimalism & Tadao Ando’s *Vitra Conference Pavilion*

Recommended architects: Frank Gehry and Atelier Bow-Wow

**Unit 5: Pop Art in the America and Japan (8 classes)**
• America: Jeff Koons in Versailles
• Japan: Takashi Murakami

Recommended artists: Pamela Pecchio and Hiroshi Sugimoto

**Required Materials:**
Sketchbook: at least 9’ x 6’ (spiral or hardbound; the tapebound sketchbooks will easily fall apart)
UGA MyID for access to eLC online assignments and course materials.
Facebook Account for access to online forums.

**Optional Materials:**
Digital camera, art supplies (pencils, scissors, glue etc.)
Attendance and Participation:
Your attendance and active participation in group and class discussions, presentations and other class activities are critical to your learning. Therefore, you are expected to attend and participate in every class. Absences are allowed only with proper justification.

Assignments:
Assignments will be discussed in class or posted on eLC or Facebook. You are required to submit assignments in a proper format and on-time. All of the assignments will be graded in terms of your effort and evidence of growth. Each assignment also has its own rubric, which will be addressed when it is assigned. The following is the outline for each form of assignment, and its details will be discussed in class when it is assigned.

Visual Journal
The visual journal is an idea book, in which you record and keep track of your ideas in a visual or written format. It is used for responses in class and reflections on visual culture in daily life. It is also used to plan and develop ideas for the art projects. Therefore, you need to bring your visual journals to class everyday. Please date and title each entry with the relevant unit title. If the entry is for an art project, please use the title of the project for the entry title.

Reflective Feedback
By the end of each unit, you need to submit reflective feedback about your experience in the unit and reflect on three memorable things you have learned from course content, group work, and from another group and also give suggestions if you wish. The feedback needs to be two pages, double-spaced and submitted on eLC.

Online Response
Facebook and eLC are important communication tools for this course. You will be required to post the assignment and make comments on your peers’ work through these online interfaces. Extra reading assignments or other useful resources will be posted on eLC by the teacher, and sometimes, you will need to make comments on them.
Critique Exercises
Critique exercises will constantly be held during group discussion. Each exercise needs to be handed back to the teacher or posted on eLC.

Group Presentation
The group presentation offers an opportunity for you to share your group’s findings with your classmates and also to hear the opinions of other groups. Each group will be randomly chosen by the teacher who will make sure each group presents an equal number of times over the course of the term.

Art Project
There are three art projects throughout the course. They will be fully guided and discussed in class.

Research Paper in Personal Narrative
The research paper serves as another form of final examination. You need to submit a research paper that demonstrates the ability to construct new knowledge and empathetic understanding of a foreign culture. This paper is an opportunity for you to explore a topic you are interested in. The topic is open but needs to relate to the course content in some ways. The paper needs to be 4-5 pages, double-spaced and submitted on eLC.

Assessment:
• Attendance and Participation: 30%
• Visual Journal: 10%
• Reflective Feedback: 10%
• Response Online: 10%
• Critique Exercise: 10%
• Group Presentation: 10%
• Art Project: 10%
• Research Paper: 10%
Academic Honesty:
All students are required to know and obey the University’s policy on academic honesty (http://www.uga.edu/honesty/index/html). All of the academic work you submit must meet the standards described in the page that can be accessed by the link above. The professor is responsible for supporting the University’s policy on academic honesty and reporting any violations of it.
APPENDIX B

Critique Exercise

• **Immediate Response**
  What are your immediate responses? There are uncensored, irrational, un-self-conscious impressions of the work. What do you notice first; what stands out and how does it affect you?

• **Description**
  Describe the work as if you would describe to someone who can’t see it.

• **Formal Matters**
  Formal complaints and praise: Look hard at formal matters of the work: presentation, material choices, composition, draftsmanship, line quality, palette, placement in space, and so on.

• **The Story It Tells** (*Meaning*)
  Does the work tell a story? What association does the work evoke (are these personal, general, or cultural associations)? Try naming the work with one word, then try with one phrase.
  ○ Do the artist’s identity and cultural context affect the reading of the work, and how do those attributes become a part of the story?
  ○ What was the artist trying to achieve with this work?
  ○ How might you associate the meanings of this work to your life experience?
• **The Work in the World** (optional for the first half of the course)
  How does this work connect to the rest of the world? With other works of art? With history? (For certain works: Think about how this work would change if viewed outside of the critique space.)

• **Note:** (for students’ artwork only)
  Do the formal matters successfully convey the story or the concept of the work? Why or why not?
APPENDIX C

Rubrics

Visual Journal

The visual journal tracks the development of ideas as students reflect on class, visual culture, and daily life.

Table 4.1

Rubric for Visual Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record and reflect on a regular basis</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Need improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Record and reflect for this course and also in daily life.</td>
<td>Record and reflect only for this course.</td>
<td>Record and reflect for parts of the course.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflect on daily visual experience and course content</td>
<td>Reflect regularly on class content and daily visual experience</td>
<td>Reflect on some of the daily visual experience and course content</td>
<td>Seldom reflect on the daily visual experience and course content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record intuitive response and observation: Frequency</td>
<td>Frequently record observation.</td>
<td>Sometimes record observation.</td>
<td>Seldom record response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record intuitive response and observation: Quality</td>
<td>Intuitive response and sophisticated observations</td>
<td>Intuitive response but general observation</td>
<td>Poor or light-hearted observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate independent, critical and creative thinking</td>
<td>Often demonstrate independent, critical and creative thinking</td>
<td>Sometimes demonstrate independent, critical and creative thinking</td>
<td>Seldom demonstrate independent, critical and creative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visualizing ideas is highly encouraged and, although not mandatory, can earn extra points. Students need to bring visual journals to every class to reflect on class contents during lecture or group discussion and activity. The journal is also used to plan for art project like what artists usually do in creating artworks. For example, to prepare for the last art project, students
need to keep a diary to reflect on their daily visual experience for at least a week. The journal will be judged on intuitive response, observation, independent, critical and creative thinking.

**Reflective Feedback and Response in Online-Forum**

Reflective feedback serves as a means for students’ self-evaluation and also a reference for teacher’s adjustment of curriculum and teaching strategy. Self-evaluation is stated as one of the assessment approaches that can both assess and promote students’ learning in higher education (Menges & Austin, 2001). On the other hand, the online-forum serves as an aid for a large class. It permits the exchange of ideas and response to teaching and class content. This is important as there are not too many chances for each individual to express opinions to the teacher during class time. It is also where students will respond to prompts for the posted reading, peers’ assignments and comments. It is a communicative platform among teacher, students and peers. The written responses in reflective feedback and in online-forum need to show sophisticated observation and critical and independent thinking.

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Need improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feelings and Observation</td>
<td>Keen and sophisticated</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical and independent thinking</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Critique Exercise and Group Presentation**

There are many group discussions held for examining and criticizing works of art and visual culture in class time. Each group is required to follow the format of critique exercise (see Appendix) to write down the responses and ideas from each member. The exercise needs to show students’ keen observation and original and critical thinking toward a work of art. They will give
the exercise sheet to teacher or post it online. Certain selected groups will present their findings to class. Group presentation serves as an opportunity to share the findings from group discussion with the whole class. Therefore in addition to the clarity of presentation, the assessment is based on the same criteria as that of critique exercise.

Table 4.3

*Rubric for Critique Exercise*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category in the exercise</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Need improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link between visual language and artist’s experience or cultural and historical context</td>
<td>The link is strong</td>
<td>The visual language can be traced back to its idea</td>
<td>The visual language can hardly be traced back to its idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception and observation</td>
<td>Keen and sophisticated</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Light-heartedly or poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>Often show original and critical thinking</td>
<td>Sometimes show original and critical thinking</td>
<td>Seldom show original and critical thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4

*Rubric for Group Presentation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category in the exercise</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Need improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link between visual language and artist’s experience or cultural and historical context</td>
<td>The link is strong</td>
<td>The visual language can be traced back to its idea</td>
<td>The visual language can hardly be traced back to its idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception and observation</td>
<td>Keen and sophisticated</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Light-heartedly or poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>Often show original and critical thinking</td>
<td>Sometimes show original and critical thinking</td>
<td>Seldom show original and critical thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Art Project**

There are at least three art projects for the proposed curriculum: street photography project for the Unit 1 project of reinterpreting Edo figure for Unit 3, and Pop art project for Unit 5. Students need to write artist statement for each project to explain their idea and concept about their artworks. The art project will be judged on efforts, creativity and the link between visual language and the student’s experience or concept.

Table 4.5

*Rubric for Art Project*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Need improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effort and Care</td>
<td>Show concerns and concentration in art-making</td>
<td>Show some concerns in art-making</td>
<td>Treat the work lightly-heartedly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Show some distinct and original ideas or visual expression</td>
<td>Show general ideas and visual expression</td>
<td>Show little sincere ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link between visual</td>
<td>The link is strong</td>
<td>The visual language can be traced back to its idea</td>
<td>The visual language can hardly be traced back to its idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language and experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or concept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Research Paper in Personal Narrative*

By the end of the course, students need to submit a research paper that demonstrates the ability of constructing new knowledge, understanding a culture sympathetically, and the ability of introspection. This paper is for students to explore the topic they are interested in and explore art in cultural and historical context.

Students need to put themselves in the center of the culture to explore its art for a sympathetic understanding of the culture as Tomhave (1992) proposes. Thus, students will pretend they are the artist or the people from that culture and try to write a personal narrative to talk about the work of art. If students discuss an anonymous work of art or a expansive category
like kimono, they need to write from the perspectives of the people in that culture instead of the artist’s perspectives. If they are writing from the artist’s point of views, they will also need to address the artist’s view about his/her own cultural experience. In the conclusion section, students need to return to their own role and reflect on how the understanding of that culture at that time frame makes them critically think about their own personal and cultural beliefs and values.

The topic is open. It can be about Eastern or Western visual culture. But it needs to relate to the course contents in some aspects, so students can critically reflect on what has been learnt from exploration of other works or other forms of art, and then draw new insights into that cultural and historical context. For example, in the unit three: the world of pleasure, we discussed Rococo paintings in Europe and Ukiyo-e prints in Japan, but there are many other forms of art that reflect the spirit of that culture in that time frame like fashions. Therefore except for Ukiyo-e prints or Rococo paintings, students might want to study about kimono aesthetics in Japan or aristocratic fashion in France at that time. No matter what form they choose, they need to further compare it to what they have learned throughout the course and draw new insights to that culture at that time. Moreover the fantasy world, though on an important stance, is just one of many aspects of Japanese culture at that time. Students are encouraged to explore another side of the culture, in the meanwhile, compare to the culture of fantasy world, and think critically about the complexity of culture. They are also welcomed to have a cross-cultural or cross-historical comparison if they prefer.

The paper is four to five pages and double-spaced. Students need to post the outline on the eLC three weeks before the final exam date, which is also the due date. The teacher will give comments on the outline for reference.
Table 4.6

**Rubric for Research Paper in Personal Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Need improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative form</td>
<td>Written in narrative form</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not written in narrative form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories in the critique exercise</td>
<td>Includes all categories</td>
<td>Includes most categories</td>
<td>Includes some categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link between visual language and artist’s experience or cultural and historical context</td>
<td>The link is strong</td>
<td>The visual language can be traced back to its idea</td>
<td>The visual language can hardly be traced back to its idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception and observation</td>
<td>Keen and sophisticated</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Light-heartedly or poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation and analysis</td>
<td>Often show original and critical thinking</td>
<td>Sometimes show original and critical thinking</td>
<td>Seldom show original and critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison to related class contents</td>
<td>Insightful</td>
<td>Logical</td>
<td>Weak logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis of new knowledge with related class contents</td>
<td>Draw new insights into the cultural and historical context</td>
<td>Have a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical context</td>
<td>Seldom provide a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

Unit 1

Every Day Visual Experience

*People and Places (West vs. Japan)*

**Objectives**

1. To guide students to examine how the contemporary Western and Japanese photographers tell stories of life through visual language.
2. To guide students to observe the link between visual language and the artist’s experience or cultural and historical tendencies.
3. To arouse students’ curiosity to explore cultural richness.
4. To encourage students to respond to moments in life and examine people, places and interactions in a critical and artistic way.
5. To guide students to critique the artists’ works and their own works in group discussions.

**Exemplar Artworks**

**West**

Henri Cartier-Bresson:
*Behind the Gare St. Lazare, Paris; Hyères, France; Roman Amphitheatre, Valencia*

William Eggleston:
*Memphis; Untitled; Greenwood, Mississippi*

**Japan**

Daido Moriyama: *Stray Dog, Misawa, Aomori*

Hiroshi Watanabe: *Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona*

**Teaching Procedure**

*Lesson 1 The Decisive Moment*

1. Before class
   - Pre-class shooting activity:
By the end of the previous lesson, encourage students to find what they respond to in life and take a picture of it before this lesson. They do not need to show the pictures in class but will include them in a visual journal.

• Photographer searching assignment:
  The teacher will randomly choose 3 students to share their favorite photographs in class. They need to find one favorite photograph online, post it on Facebook, explain why they like the photographs and respond to at least one peer’s posting. The teacher will ask 3 volunteers to share their favorite photographs briefly.

2. 3 students share favorite photographs. (10 mins)

Henri Cartier-Bresson

3. Immediate response and description: (10 mins)
  The teacher will show Cartier-Bresson’s street photos, *Behind the Gare St. Lazare, Paris* and *Hyères, France*, without letting students know they are his photos. The teacher will ask questions to guide students’ responses to the images, so the students will thoughtfully observe their visual language.

4. Formal analysis and stories told: (20 mins)
  • The teacher will ask the class to attend to the visual elements and ask the students how they feel about the composition and what meanings and stories are expressed and told through it.
  • The teacher will then challenge the students to consider what would happen if the compositions, shapes, tones, colors, viewpoints, or arrangements of the images were changed and how the visual messages would change accordingly.

5. Watch video: *Henri Cartier-Bresson L'amour tout court* (showing 15 minute clip)
  [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6l09YEeEpI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6l09YEeEpI)

6. Contextual information: (20 mins)
  The teacher will introduce Cartier-Bresson’s concepts of “the decisive moment,” his process of shooting, his personal experiences, and the Surrealist movement in France in the 1920s.

7. Home assignment: The students will be assigned homework asking them to critique the work *Roman Amphitheatre, Valencia* or other Cartier-Bresson’s works of the students’
choice. Each group will practice writing a critique and post it on eLC before the next class.
---Step 3 and 5 can be fused together---

Lesson 2 Daily Visual Experience in Cultures

1. Class discussion (10 min)
   Randomly select a group to briefly talk about their findings, which will be supplemented with the teacher’s comments.

William Eggleston

2. Context Overview: Ask students to share their opinions about American values or to talk about what their parents would say about American values. (5 mins)

3. Art criticism practice in groups: The teacher will give each group one photo from the three taken by Eggleston. The teacher will ask students to discuss the photos in groups and write down their immediate responses, descriptions, visual analyses (formal matters), and interpretations (the story it tells). (15 mins)
   - The teacher will hand out a critique sheet for art criticism practice.
   - The sheet will be returned to me after class.
   - The teacher will walk around to make sure the discussion goes well and join group discussion when necessary.

4. Share findings and discussion of contextual information: (25 mins)
   - The teacher will show the photos and select 3 groups to present their findings.
     - Select three groups that have different photos.
     - Each group needs to have a presenter on stage to share their observations and findings about their assigned photos
     - There will be 5 minutes for each group
   - I will further respond to the findings and photos and also offer detailed Contextual information: introducing Eggleston’s idea of the “democratic camera,” his process of shooting and his cultural influences.
   - I will prepare a graphic analysis for the presented photos.

Daido Moriyama & Hiroshi Watanabe
5. Students freely share their personal impressions about Japan, their culture and aesthetics. (5 mins).

6. Partial Critique Exercise: (15 mins).
   First, briefly show a group of works from each artist, and then, use one photo from each artist as an example. Guide students to freely respond to each image intuitively and intellectually. Use questions to encourage class to analyze each work, and throw in questions regarding what its visual language might mean personally and socially. Ask each group to think about the questions, and do some research to find out possible answers after class.

7. Home assignment: Research
   - Each group chooses one artist to research. In addition to the example discussed in class, each group needs to search and choose two favorite works from the artist. Based on the analysis of the three works and the aid of the teacher’s questions in class, which will soon be posted online, each group needs to do a little research to complete the critique exercise sheet and post it on eLC by tomorrow at 5:00 pm.
   - Any type of research sources can be used, including video and film.
   - If students have trouble finding the artists’ works, each group can also choose favorite images from a group of images posted by the teacher.
   - Each group is also encouraged to compare Japanese photographers’ works with those of Eggleston and Cartier-Bresson and write them down on the critique sheet.
   - Each student needs to respond to at least one group’s writing by tomorrow midnight.

8. The students need to bring a digital camera for the next class.

Lesson 3 Presentation

1. Randomly select 6 groups to present their photograph criticisms. (60 mins)
   a. The groups that presented last class will be excluded.
   b. 3 groups present Moriyama’s works and 3 groups present Watanabe’s.
   c. Each group presents for approximately 7 minutes.
   d. After each presentation, I will further respond to the findings.
   e. After the 3 presentations for each artist, I will interact with the class by asking the questions and providing further insights about how personal or social meanings
might be addressed through visual language and make some comparisons with Cartier-Bresson’s and Eggleston’s works.

2. Home assignment announcement: Street Photography Project
   a. Students are encouraged to find moments or scenes they respond to intuitively and to photograph as many scenes as possible in black and white or in color. They are encouraged to observe the surroundings, the people, the interactions and their relationships with them.
   b. They need to pick at least 10 pictures to bring to the next class and share with their group.
   c. They need to either print the image with the longest side being at least 3” or bring a laptop.
   d. During the next class, there will be a group critique exercise about each student’s works.

3. Basic manual instruction for digital camera (15 mins)
   Briefly, introduce the following manual functions by showing slides: focus, aperture, f-stops, close-up, ISO and shutter speed. Students will try to manipulate them with their cameras during lecture.

Lesson 4 Critique Exercise
Critique exercise on the street photography project
1. Group critique for each group member’s works. (40 mins).
   • It is an open discussion. Group members and the artist can interact freely.
   • The teacher will take turns joining each group’s discussion.
2. After the whole group critique is finished, each student needs to pick three works that he/she thinks will show the most artistic potential and will try to recall and write down the feelings toward and experiences about the scene at that moment. (15 mins).
3. Each group gathers all of the critique sheets, the chosen images and written descriptions and hands them back to me after class. For students that have digital photos, they will need to post their works on eLC in a folder and mark their critique sheet.
4. Review the characters of visual expressions and cultural meanings found in Cartier-Bresson’s and Eggleston’s works and those found in Moriyama’s and Watanabe’s works.
The review serves as a prelude for the next discussion of Western and Eastern aesthetic traditions. (20 mins).

Assessment

1. Group critique exercise for artists’ works
2. Critique exercise for students’ works
3. Street photography project
4. Written response online
APPENDIX E

Unit 3

The World of Pleasure

*Rococo and Ukiyo-e Culture*

**Objectives**

1. Students examine, in groups, how the social climates of the Rococo period and the Edo period are associated with artistic practices and expressions.
2. Students compare and criticize the role of women and social taste in the social contexts of the Rococo and Edo periods.
3. Students compare and criticize the role of women and social taste in the contemporary setting of the West and Japan and also, compare the contemporary issues to those of the Rococo and Edo periods.
4. Students apply the understanding of Ukiyo-e art to create personal works of art in an innovative ways.

**Exemplar Artworks**

- Rococo painting
  - Germain Boffrand’s *Salon de la Princesse*;
  - Rosalaba Carriera’s *Allegory of Painting*
  - Francois Boucher’s *Pan and Syrinx*
  - Jean-Honore Fragonard’s *The Swing*
- Ukiyo-e prints
  - Kitagawa Utamaro’s *Geisha and Attendant on a Rainy Night*
  - Kitagawa Utamaro’s *Reflective Love*
  - Kitagawa Utamaro’s *Lovers in an Upstairs Room, from Uta makura ('Poem of the Pillow')*
Teaching Procedure

Lesson 1 Rococo

- Pre-class assignment:
  
a. The teacher will assign a reading about 18\textsuperscript{th} century noble life for students to read before this lesson.
  
b. Students need to respond to the following prompts about the reading on eLC:
    
    i. What were the life attitudes and tastes among the noble class?
    
    ii. How might women have influenced the noble culture at that time?

1. Show a clip of a film that demonstrates the Rococo manner and social interactions among the nobility: “The Affair of Necklace” by Charles Shyer (15 mins).

2. According to the reading and their own impressions, there will be a class discussion with students expressing their opinions about 18\textsuperscript{th} century noble life in general and what kind of art would meet the noble tastes. They will also offer their criteria for judgment. These criteria can then be used in the discussion of the exemplar works (15 mins).

3. Show the exemplar artworks (45 mins).
   
   a. The first work introduced to the class will be Germain Boffrand’s *Salon de la Princesse*, in which the teacher leads the class through the critique process by question-and-response interactions (30 mins).
      
      i. Salon culture is introduced.
      
      ii. Imagination of the virtual experience is added to the discussion of *Salon de la Princesse*: the decorative room with the music playing and with the artful conversations carried on by the aristocratic people.
   
   b. Each group will select and discuss one painting from the listed three in the critique exercise (15 mins).
      
      i. Encourage each group to compare and refer to the characters and meanings of the interior while discussing the paintings.
      
      ii. Encourage each group to think about the role of women in Rococo art, the nobles’ tastes and how the pursuit of pleasure influences the art.

4. Three groups will be randomly selected to present their findings at the next class.
Lesson 2  Rococo and Ukiyo-e art

1. 3 group presentations: The teacher will also respond to the presentations with in-depth comments (with possibly one or two additional images being shown very quickly) with the class (25 mins).
   a. Questions from the class are encouraged.

2. Review what we have discovered in the Rococo art, and lead the students to another context in a similar time frame: the Japanese floating-world picture, Ukiyo-e (15 mins).
   a. Introduce the cultural and historical contexts of the Edo-period in Japan, including the literati art and the counter-culture, while flipping through several literati paintings and Ukiyo-e images.
   b. Read Hanaogi IV’s poem:
      “The croaking of toads in the fields flooded by clear water…I go on living thinking day and night about the moon that, unfaithful, floats from field to field” (Calza, 2005, p.6).
   c. Read Asai Ryoi’s description of the Floating World:
      Living only for the moment, turning our full attention to the pleasures of the moon, the snow, the cherry blossoms and the maple leaves; singing songs, drinking wine, diverting ourselves in just floating, floating; caring not a whit for the pauperism staring us in the face, refusing to be disheartened, like a gourd floating along with the river current: this is what we call the Floating World (Calza, 2005, p. 9).
   d. A contemporary association will be made through showing images of cities like Las Vegas and advertisements of female images.

3. Show a video of the actual printmaking process of the traditional multi-colored woodblock prints (5 mins).

4. Discuss how the printmaking process impacts the visual presentation of the prints, why prints were popular and how they served a commercial purpose in the Edo period. (10 mins)

5. The first work introduced to the class will be Kitagawa Utamaro’s Geisha and Attendant on a Rainy Night (15 mins).
   a. The teacher leads the class to criticize this print.
6. The students will be asked to read an article for homework about the entertainment culture of the Edo period, which will be posted on eLC (5 mins).
   a. Everyone needs to post their responses to the prompts for the article as follows:
      i. Based on the article, please reflect on the role of women in the entertainment world of the Edo period.
   b. Students are encouraged to watch the movie *Sakuran*.

Lesson 3 Ukiyo-e Art

1. Introduce one of the main counter-cultures: The brothel district (courtesans and geisha).
   a. View clips of the contemporary movie *Sakuran*, by Mika Ninagawa, with English subtitles. (15 mins)
   b. Discuss with the class characteristics of the courtesan culture: its social background and aesthetics, including dress and behaviors (20 mins).

2. Group discussion (30 mins)
   a. Each group (of 3) needs to critique the 2 prints: Kitagawa Utamaro’s *Reflective Love* and *Lovers in an Upstairs Room*.
   b. Encourage groups to associate the prints with the characteristics, tastes, aesthetics and social circumstances of their representative cultures, and pay attention to the role of women.
   c. Each group also needs to compare the Ukiyo-e to the Rococo art in both visual expressions and social contents.
   d. Two groups will be randomly selected to present their findings at the next class.

3. Extended study: Kabuki culture and related prints.
   a. Related readings, videos and prints will be posted on eLC.
   b. This also serves as a reference for male students to plan their self-portrait projects.

4. Announcement of the project: “Self-portrait in the Edo style” (10 min)
   Project description for the students:
   a. As we have seen, Mika Ninagawa uses contemporary colors to reinterpret the courtesans and makes the Edo women fairly contemporary. Please try to use the aesthetics of Edo prints to create a portrait of yourself.
   b. Preparation before next class:
a. First, do some research on the Edo prints of men or of women. Select at least three prints that you like, and explain why in writing. Put the images and writing in your visual journal.
   i. Pay attention to the design elements of color, form and composition and how they address the mood and temperament of the figure.
b. Think about how you want to portray yourself, and take some photos of yourself in full- or half-length poses with your preferred posture and clothes. You might want to think about your personality, self-image or the mood you want to express.
   i. Please focus on the overall composition, your posture and clothes instead of facial expression.
   ii. The facial expression will be either simplified with lines or simple forms or in a plain silhouette, depending on individual preferences.
c. Pick up at least three photos you want to further develop for the project, and write down why. Print a pocketsize photo in color and a black and white photo in size A4.
d. Bring your visual journal and your color and black and white photos.

Lesson 4 Presentation and Sketch Development

1. Conclusion of the Edo and Rococo world of pleasure: (35 mins)
   a. Two group sharing: The teacher offers in-depth comments and new perspectives to stimulate class discussion after each sharing and briefly shows one or two relevant artworks to strengthen the ideas.
   b. After all the presentations, the teacher and the class make open conclusions and pose more questions, especially regarding the social tastes and the roles of women in the two cultures.

2. Sketch development (50 mins)
   a. Group discussion (15 mins): In a group of three, students share their research, the self-portrait photos and the ideas. They will make suggestions to each other.
   b. Individual sketch time (25 mins):
      a. Contemplating others’ suggestions and personal preferences, each student settles on one photo and sketches the desired compositions and
color-form arrangements. Students need to pay attention to how the visual language can address their ideas.

- Pencils, color pencils, and markers are provided by the teacher.

b. Each student settles on one plan and thinks about the kinds of color papers to work on in the next class.

c. Ask the students to bring different color paper, a piece of carbon paper to draw on and a thick piece of cardboard as a base, size A4 or a little bigger if the student wishes to have an edge around the piece.

   a. The background color paper needs to be thick and drawable.

   b. Scissors and glue will be provided by the teacher.

3. The next class is studio day. The students’ work will not be due then. If they prefer to turn in the work by the end of the next class, they need to bring a digital camera to photograph it.

*Lesson 5 Studio Day*

1. Art-making time (75 mins)

   Instructions for the students:

   a. Use the carbon paper to transmit the outline of the photo to the background color paper.

   b. Cut the color papers according to the forms of the designed composition, experiment with different arrangements, and finally, paste over the background paper.

   c. Simplify the facial expression with lines, with simple forms or with just a silhouette.

   d. You can work more after class and turn it in at the next class.

2. Announcement of assignment 1:

   a. Students need to take pictures of their work, write short artist statements, and post them on eLC by midnight.

   b. Students need to comment on at least one peer’s work on eLC by midnight of the next day.
3. Announcement of assignment 2:
   a. At the next class, students will gather in groups of 6.
   b. Each group needs to bring examples of current social tastes and women’s roles from both the American and Japanese cultures.
      a. Each student is responsible for bringing an example of either the U.S. or Japan and for either issues of tastes or women’s roles. The group members need to coordinate after class so that it has an equal distribution of examples of the U.S. and Japan and of both issues.
   e. Each student needs to prepare to talk about the example he/she brings in front of the group for peers’ comments.
   f. Any image-related examples are okay, including still advertisements, shop signs, video ads or film clips.
4. Extended study for interest: Cubism

Lesson 6 The Hierarchy and Roles of Contemporary Women I
1. Review of the Edo and Rococo world of pleasure (15 mins)
   a. Briefly review the comparison of the hierarchies, the social tastes and roles of women in the Rococo aristocratic culture and the Edo counter-culture.
2. Group Discussion: (55 mins)
   Based on the examples students bring, each group discusses the questions below:
   a. The current notions of taste and how it represents the hierarchy: do we still promote the taste of the beau monde? Where can we find the values of the upper class, the middle class, or the mainstream culture? How does that impact the ways we view the value of other classes and cultures (as opposed to mainstream culture)?
      i. Discuss it in both contexts of the U.S. and Japan, and compare them.
   b. How are the images of women used today in daily life and in the commercial world?
      i. Discuss it in both contexts of the U.S. and Japan, and compare them.
3. Announcement of presentation: (5 mins)
Every group needs to organize their discussions, questions and conclusions with supporting images or short videos, and in the next class, present them as a PowerPoint presentation. The Powerpoints need to be posted on eLC before noon the day before class. Each group has about 10 mins to present and 7 mins to respond to comments or questions from the teacher and the class.

Lesson 7 The Hierarchy and Roles of Contemporary Women II

1. Group presentation (4 groups): (75 mins)
   a. The teacher and the class offer comments after each presentation, and the teacher shows the prepared images to strengthen important ideas from students.

Lesson 8 The Hierarchy and Roles of Contemporary Women III

1. Group presentation (3 groups): (55 mins)
2. The teacher and the class draw open conclusions and propose questions (20 mins).

Assessment

1. Critique exercise
2. Group presentation
3. Response in online forum
4. Art project: “Self-portrait in Edo style”
APPENDIX F

Unit 5

Pop Art in America and Japan

Jeff Koons vs. Takashi Murakami

Objectives

1. Students examine contemporary pop culture in America and Japan through visual language.
2. Students critique and compare the visual expressions and the cultural phenomena reflected through visual works.
3. Students examine the meanings of the everyday objects or images.
4. Students use everyday objects or pop images to create works that are meaningful.

Exemplar Artworks

Andy Warhol

Green Coca-Cola Bottles
Marilyn Diptych
Gold Marilyn Monroe

Jeff Koons (Versailles Project)

Split Rocker
Balloon Dog (Magenta)
Rabbit
Michael Jackson and Bubbles
Ushering in Banality
Self-Portrait

Neon Genesis Evangelion (Anime series written and directed by Hideaki Anno in 1995-6)

Yohitomo Nara: In the Deepest Puddle II

Hideaki Kawashima: !
Teaching Procedure

Lesson 1 Pop Art in the 60s U.S.

1. By the end of the last class, ask students to do a little research on the social conditions around the 50s and 60s U.S. and briefly describe the main phenomenon or trend in the society. Students need to post the description on Facebook before midnight on the day before this class.

2. Introducing the idea of pop art in the 60s in the U.S.
   a. Open discussion with the class about the context of the 50s-60s and theirs posts. (15 mins)
   b. Introducing the beginning of pop art and its idea through Andy Warhol’s works:
      i. Have an open discussion with the class about the work Green Coca-Cola Bottles. (15 mins)
      ii. Students get in groups of 6 and compare the works Marilyn Diptych and Gold Marilyn Monroe by using the critique exercise sheet, which needs to be returned in after class. (20 mins)
      iii. Ask for a volunteered group to share the findings on stage or randomly select one. (5-8 mins)
      iv. Comment on the findings and discuss the culture of consumerism and mass media today in the U.S. (12-15mins)

3. Home assignment: ask students to post their responses to the questions on Facebook one day before next class (5 mins)
   Questions:
      a. Do you like Japanese manga or anime? If so, please find a character or image that best represents your idea of contemporary “Japanese” (male or female) in your mind, and write down why. If not, please find any contemporary image you think can represent the idea of “Japanese,” and post it.
4. Announcement: ask each group of 3 to bring a laptop for next class.

Lesson 2 Japanese Pop: Takashi Murakami’s SuperFlat World I

1. The Otaku culture: (15 mins)
   - Show the short video “Akihabara Majokko Princess,” which was a collaboration between McG and Murakami, with Kirsten Dunst starring. It was made for the exhibition “Pop Life: Art in a Material World,” at the Tate Modern museum in London: [http://www.mommo.hu/media/Kirsten_Dunst-Takashi_Murakami](http://www.mommo.hu/media/Kirsten_Dunst-Takashi_Murakami)
     - Briefly show the business strategy of manga, using Bleach as an example.
   - A brief open discussion with the class focusing on what they think about the otaku, cosplay, what characters the otaku has, and how it might represent and impact the lives of youth in Japan.

2. Japanese Identity: (60 mins)
   a. Introducing Murakami’s DOB series: The Castle of Tin Tin, 727-272, DOB in the Strange Forest; Yohitomo Nara’s In the Deepest Puddle II; and Hideaki Kawashima’s !.
      i. Show some of the manga images as a representation of the contemporary “Japanese” students posted earlier. (5 mins)
      ii. Lead the class to discuss the character DOB and the kawaii culture. (10 mins)
         - Some other examples of cuteness will be shown briefly also such as Hello Kitty and yuru chara.
      iii. Group discussion: (10 mins)
         1. The class gets in groups of 3 and picks one work from the list.
         2. Each group uses a laptop to view the images posted on eLC.
         3. Type their findings in the format of the critique exercise in a Microsoft Word file and post it on eLC. Encourage them to try to find some related Japanese visual traditions if there are any.
         4. 6 groups with different artworks are selected to share on stage.
   iv. Group presentation: (35 mins)
      a. The 6 group presenters talk about their group discussions on stage. Anyone is encouraged to share his/her opinions after each presentation.
Lesson 3 Japanese Pop: Takashi Murakami’s SuperFlat World II

1. Neon Genesis Evangelion —“the bible for contemporary otaku” (Murakami, p. 113)
   a. Introduction about the story and the setting of the leading figures with some short clips that address certain important concepts of the story. (15 mins)
   b. Show the last episode: #26 (22 min)
   c. Free-writing: each student spontaneously writes down his/her feelings and thoughts. (10 mins)
   d. Open discussion with the class, particularly focused on how it reflects “identity” in contemporary Japan. Areas of concentration include: (20 mins)
      i. Visual strategies that address psychological retrospection and questioning.
      ii. The psychological meanings.
      iii. Historical and contextual backgrounds: atomic bomb in the 1945, bubble economy from the end of 80s to early 90s, and the Sarin attack on the Tokyo subway in early 1995.

(8 mins)

2. Assignment: Reading a brief article about Versailles on eLC. Students need to post the responses to the following prompt questions based on the reading before next class.
   a. What is the historical significance of Versailles?
   b. How might French people view it in today’s context?

3. Announcement I: each group of 6 needs to bring 2 laptops for next class.

4. Announcement II:
   Keep a visual diary every day to record and reflect on what you see and how you feel and think about what you see. It can be anything, including daily objects, commodities, commercial images and images in mass media or on the Internet etc. They can be of little importance, mundane, meaningless, ridiculous, irrational, funny, shallow…etc., just
whatever you respond to. It can be things you’re interested or you hate or ignore. This diary aims to prepare you for the final art project.

Lesson 4 Jeff Koons’ Versailles Project 2008 I: Dialogue between the Contemporary and the Baroque

- Discussion (5 min): “Thinking about your daily life”
  - Ask students to talk about objects in daily life that are fun and evoke a memory they cherish.
- Discuss Koons’ works and Versailles separately at first:
  a. Koons: (15 mins)
    - Categorize his works into two groups:
      - Figure: *Michael Jackson and Bubbles; Self Portrait*
      - Toy: *Rabbit; Balloon Dog (Magenta); Split Rocker*
    - Open discussion with the class about his choice of subject matters and scale, how they reflect our daily life, the material he used, his craftsmanship and the idea behind the work.
  b. Versailles: (15 mins)
    - Ask key questions about what Versailles symbolizes in French history and for contemporary French.
    - Show a short video of Versailles interior and garden:
- The dialogue between Koons and Versailles (40 mins)
  - Group discussion: Based on the previous general discussions about Koons’ works and Versailles, the class gets in groups of 3, and each group chooses one work in the Versailles setting, which was posted on eLC (For each work, the teacher will post several photos shot from different perspectives).
  - Criticize Koons’ project: (15 mins)
    - Write down the responses on the critique exercise sheet.
  - Contextualizing sculpture: (25 mins)
    - Show one Koons’ work in different settings and post questions about how settings might change the meanings of the work.
Each group can choose one favorite sculpture (one taught in class or not) from either ancient times or modern day, and search for a contemporary setting, in which they would like the sculpture to be located and in the way they’d like to re-interpret the meaning of the sculpture by combining the historical, artistic references and personal views of the sculpture and the content of the contemporary setting.

- Write their reinterpretations down briefly.
- They need to use Photoshop to compose the sculpture and the setting after class, and the teacher will do a simple demonstration before they start the project (10 mins).

- Assignment: Every group needs to complete the critique exercise for one Koon’s works and the composition of the image of the selected sculpture with a short written description.
  - Every group needs post the assignment on eLC by midnight.
  - Every student needs to respond to one group’s project of contextualizing sculpture online by tomorrow midnight.
  - 5 groups, which either volunteer or are randomly selected, need to share the criticism of Koons’ work and their project of contextualizing sculpture in the next class.

**Lesson 5 Jeff Koons’ Versailles’ Project 2008 II**

**Group presentation (5 groups)**

a. Each group presents both the critique exercise and the project.

b. Students are encouraged to respond or ask questions after each presentation.

c. Further comments about Koons’ work and the group’s project will be made after each presentation.

d. The total discussion for each group is about 15 mins, including presentation time, audience question time and teacher’s comment time.

- To bring: the diary they have kept writing or drawing since the end of lesson 3.
Lesson 6 Design your Own Pop!

1. Review briefly the American and Japanese artists’ works we have discussed and their key ideas. (20 mins)

2. Ask key questions to students: (55 mins)
   a. Think about what you often see in daily life. Write the list down in your diary.
   b. What story or meaning do those objects or symbols convey? Or what story do you want to tell through those objects or symbols? Write or draw them in the diary. The use of mind-map and visual expression is encouraged.
   c. Choose three objects or symbols and develop three ideas and sketches for each object.
   d. Settle on one plan and decide the choice of material. The teacher announces the material he/she can provide next class: drawing paper, drawing gear, including color pencils and markers, glue, scissors, watercolor.
   e. 2-dimentional or 3-dimentional:
      i. There are many formats you can choose to create your work. Here are some examples: collage, drawing, painting, installation, or even video work.
      ii. Decide the media you want to use to create your work.
      iii. For 2-D work, the media and paper will be prepared in class. If you want to do collage, please bring your own images from magazines or other media to work from.
      iv. If you want to do installation or video work, please make sure we talk about it before the class ends.
   f. The teacher will walk around to talk to students with questions. If some students finish early, they need to show me their plans before leaving.

Lesson 7 Create your Own Pop!! (studio day)

1. Come to class with the sketches and the objects the students want to work from.

2. Art-making

3. By the end of the class, if the students are finished, they need to take a picture of the work and turn in the artwork. They can also choose to work more after class and turn it in later.
   a. Every student needs to photograph the work and write a short artist statement, and post them (in a folder) on eLC by midnight.
b. The students working with 3-D format need to show me by the end of the class and later take photos of the work from different perspectives.
c. Every student needs to comment on at least one peer’s work by 5:00 pm tomorrow.
d. Students are encouraged to share their works in the next class, and they need to inform me by the end of the class. There will be 9 presentations only. If there are not 9 volunteers, the teacher will choose some interesting works in his/her own opinion and send messages to those students by 5:00 pm tomorrow. The presenters need to be prepared to briefly talk about their works on stage in the next class.
   • Note: The teacher will emphasize that the judgments are subjective. There is not a set of standards for judging art. If they do not want to share the works with the class, they should inform the teacher.

Lesson 8 Talk about your Pop Art!
1. The 9 students share their artworks with the class. Each student has at most 4 mins to talk about the work. The class is encouraged to voice their opinions after each presentation. I will also have a brief comment after each presentation. (75 mins)

Assessment
1. Response in online forum
2. Critique exercise
3. “Contextualizing sculpture” project
4. Group presentation
5. Pop art project
Fig. 2.1.  
*Susannah and the Elders* (Reni, 1620-25)

Fig. 2.2  
*Venus, Cupid Folly, and Time* (Bronzino, 1545)

Fig. 2.3.  
*Sears Tower* (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1974)

Fig. 2.4  
*Piazza d’Italia* (Moore, 1976-1980)
Fig. 2.5.
Reserve of Dead Swiss (small) (Boltanski. 1990)

Fig. 2.6.
Mountain Village, Clearing After Rain (Yü-chien, mid-13th century)

Fig. 2.7.
Kogan (Late 16th century)

Fig. 2.8.
Taian teahouse (Sen no Rikyu, 1582)
Fig. 2.9.
Wang Shi Yuan, Suzhou (Around 1127)

Fig. 2.10.
Garden of the Daisen-in of Daitoku-ji (1525)

Fig. 2.11.
Fallingwater (Wright, 1939)
Fig. 3.1.  
*My Lonesome Cowboy* (Murakami, 1998)

Fig. 3.2.  
*Tights in Shimotakaido* (Moriyama, 1987)

Figure 4.1.  
*The Haywain* (Constable, 1821)
Figure 4.2.  
*Court Ladies Wearing Flowers in Their Hair* (Zhou, 780-810)

Figure 5.1.  
*Behind the Gare St. Lazare, Paris* (Cartier-Bresson, 1932)

Figure 5.2.  
*Hyères, France* (Cartier-Bresson, 1932)
Figure 5.3. *Roman Amphitheatre, Valencia* (Cartier-Bresson, 1933)

Figure 5.4. *Memphis* (Eggleston, 1969-70)

Figure 5.5. *Untitled* (Eggleston, 1965-68)

Figure 5.6. *Greenwood, Mississippi* (Eggleston, 1973)
Figure 5.7.
*Stray Dog, Misawa, Aomori* (Moriyama, 1971)

Figure 5.8.
*Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona.*
(Watanabe, 2005)

Figure 5.9.
*Coliseo Gallo de Oro 2.* (Watanabe, 2001)

Figure 6.1.
*Calumny of Apelles* (Botticelli, 1494)
Figure 6.2. *Pure and Remote Views of Streams and Mountains* (Hsia, 1190-1225)

Figure 6.3. *David* (Michelangelo, 1501-1504)

Figure 6.4. *Capitoline Hill* (Michelangelo, 1537)

Figure 6.5. *Katsura Imperial Villa* (1620-1663)
Figure 7.1.  
*Salon de la Princesse* (Boffrand, 1737-1740)

Figure 7.2.  
*Allegory of Painting* (Carriera, 1720)

Figure 7.3.  
*Pan and Syrinx* (Boucher, 1759)

Figure 7.4.  
*The Swing* (Fragonard, 1767)
Figure 7.5.
*Geisha and Attendant on a Rainy Night* (Utamaro, 1797)

Figure 7.6.
*Lovers in an Upstairs Room* (Utamaro, 1788)

Figure 7.7
*Reflective Love* (Utamaro, 1793-94)

Figure 7.8
*Las Vegas Boulevard* (Purpletwinkie, 2007)
Figure 7.9.
Ad campaign for *Envy me* (Gucci, c. 2005)

Figure 8.1
The German Pavilion in Barcelona (Mies, 1929)

Figure 8.2.
*Vitra Conference Pavilion* (Ando, 1993)

Figure 9.1.
*Green Coca-Cola Bottles* (Warhol, 1962)
Figure 9.2  
*Marilyn Diptych* (Warhol 1962)

Figure 9.3  
*Gold Marilyn Monroe* (Warhol, 1962)

Figure 9.4  
*Split Rocker* (Koons, 2000)

Figure 9.5  
*Balloon Dog (Magenta)* (Koons, 1994-2000)
Figure 9.6. *Rabbit* (Koons, 1986)

Figure 9.7 *Michael Jackson and Bubbles* (Koons, 1988)

Figure 9.8 *Ushering in Banality* (Koons, 1988)

Figure 9.9 *Bust of Louis XIV* (Bernini, 1665)
Figure 9.10. 
Self-Portrait (Koons, 1991)

Figure 9.11. 
DOB in the Strange Forest (Murakami, 1999)

Figure 9.12
In the Deepest Puddle II (Nara, 1995)

Figure 9.13
The Castle of Tin Tin (Murakami, 1998)
Figure 9.14.
727 (Murakami, 1996)

Figure 9.15.
! (Kawashima, 2003)
APPENDIX II

Researcher Request Form
RESEARCHER REQUEST FORM

Request Date: 2010-05-20  Project Number: 2010-10864-0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Dept/Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Richard Singzonund</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Art Education</td>
<td>Lerner DCLA 4102</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rniegf@uga.edu">rniegf@uga.edu</a></td>
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<td>(706) 542-1647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Ju-Yi Chia</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Art Education</td>
<td>325 S. Harris St Unit A4</td>
<td><a href="mailto:juyichia@uga.edu">juyichia@uga.edu</a></td>
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<td>Athens, GA 30605</td>
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Title of Study: Cross-Cultural Understanding Through Art Appreciation

45 CFR 46 Category: Administrative  Renew: No  Change(s):
- Revised Application
- Revised Consent Document(s)

Approved: 2010-06-23  Begin date: 2010-06-23  Expiration date: 2015-06-22

NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end date unless otherwise approved by the IRB is considered non-compliant.

Number Assigned by Sponsored Program:  Funding Agency:

Attention, Principal Investigator!

You must complete and return this form before the expiration date shown above. Failure to receive a notification that it is time to renew does not relieve you of your responsibility to provide our office with a request to renew in a timely manner.

1. Changes
   For approval of changes you must complete and sign the back of this form. (Also attach a copy of any revised instruments or consent forms, with changes highlighted, where applicable.)

2. Renewals
   For an extension of the approval period you must complete and sign the back of this form.

3. Closure
   Data collection has been completed as approved by the IRB, and this file can now be closed. Federal laws & UGA policies require notification of completion of data collection.
IRB CONTINUING REVIEW/AMENDMENT FORM

Principal Investigator (PI):
Co-Principal Investigator (Required, if co-PI is a student):
Project #:
Title of Study:

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS
(Use the text boxes for explanation/additional information or attach a separate cover letter.)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Have you started data collection for this research project?</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>How many total participants have been accrued since the beginning of the research project? (Note: This corresponds to the number of individuals who gave consent; this number should include withdrawals but actual number of withdrawals is reported in #7 below.)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Do you plan to continue to recruit participants for this research project? (If you answered YES, please skip to Question #6.)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>If you answered NO to question #3, do you plan to continue to collect data with previously recruited participants?</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>If you answered NO to questions #3 and #4 above, do you plan to continue to analyze previously collected data that is individually-identifiable?</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Have there been any complaints about the research since the protocol was approved by the IRB? If YES, please provide complete information on the complaints made.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Have any participants withdrawn, dropped out, or were lost to follow-up from participation since the protocol was last approved by the IRB? If YES, please indicate the number and provide detailed information/reason(s).</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Have there been any adverse events or unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others since the protocol was last approved by the IRB? If YES, please contact the IRB office immediately to request an adverse event/incident report form.</td>
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<td>Have there been any changes to the study population? If YES, please explain changes.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Have the procedures changed in any way since the protocol was last approved by the IRB? If YES, please explain.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Have any materials or instruments changed in any way since the protocol was last approved by the IRB? If YES, please explain.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Have changes in the scientific literature, or interim experience with this or related studies, changed your assessment of potential risks or benefits to study participants? If YES, please explain and attach any relevant literature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Have the consent documents changed in any way since the protocol was last approved by the IRB? If YES, please explain and attach copy of the revised document(s).</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>A clean copy of the current version of the consent document(s) must be submitted with the request to continue if you plan to recruit new participants, or if a revised consent document is necessary as a result of an amendment. Have you attached a clean copy of your current consent document(s)?</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Have there been any changes to the members of the research team (e.g., change in PI; addition/deletion of co-investigators)? If YES, please describe personnel change(s). Note: All new personnel must complete the CITI training.</td>
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Principal Investigator’s Signature: ____________________________ Date: __________

For electronic submission, a check in this box is acceptable as a signature: ☐

Important: If research activities involving human participants will continue five years after the original IRB approval, please submit a new IRB Application for initial review. Exceptions: If the research is permanently closed to the enrollment of new subjects, all participants have completed all research-related interventions, and the research will remain active only for long-term follow-up of subjects or if the remaining research activities are limited to analysis of individually-identifiable private information.