

VOLUME 35

FATE

FATE IN REVIEW

2013-2014

**FOUNDATIONS IN ART:
THEORY & EDUCATION**

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ISSN: 1090-3372

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This volume of *FATE in Review* showcases the increasingly critical dialog among us. The articles support our mission to explore the breadth and depth of our disciplines and contribute to the theory of foundation pedagogy while offering practical tools. Thank you to our colleagues who have made significant contributions to this volume.

The editor of *FATE in Review* is grateful for support of The Pacific Northwest College of Art and the thoughtful work of our Associate Editors and readers, especially past editor Kevin Bell, whose ongoing assistance was indispensable.

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FATE in Review welcomes manuscripts and book reviews addressing all aspects of foundational art education including expanding the practicum, flexing the core, and re-visioning visual culture. Conference papers and/or presentations, as well as papers written solely for publication may be submitted throughout the year.

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ARTICLES

The Troubling Metaphor of Foundations in Art Education: What Foundations Affords or Limits in High School and College Art Programs

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We recently attended the FATE (Foundations in Art: Theory and Education) postHaus conference in Savannah, GA. Many presentations focused on whether to return to Bauhaus tenets of skill, craft, and formalism within a project-based pedagogy, or to shift to more conceptual, performative, post-production, inquiry-based approaches. College level foundations courses were discussed, as well as the character and aims of the Advanced Placement (AP) Portfolio for high school students. The presence of high school teachers made us wonder how the metaphor of foundations might constrain their work with students by keeping it too focused on laying a foundation for some distant future.

At the FATE conference, sessions were diverse, but most remained solidly within the discourse of foundations as described by the Bauhaus. Some believed that we should firmly remain or return to foundational basics since there are universal truths that all should know to be able to create within the arts. Others attempted to call forth a new foundations vision that looked to contemporary artistic practices, drawing from other disciplines and new genres of relational aesthetics. Several presenters took a more cautious or skeptical approach, warning that we shouldn't throw the Bauhaus out in the exploration of contemporary art practices. It is worthwhile to inquire what experiences might fit into a foundations program. For instance, should courses highlight observational drawing and color theory, or bring in new technologies and contemporary approaches into the freshman experience we question what is afforded and what is limited by residing within the metaphor, foundations. The impact of the metaphors we live by, including this particular metaphor of art education as a building, largely directs the way we think about and then enact artistic education.

The idea of a foundation, derived from the Bauhaus, among other places, asserts there are universal, abstract principles that underlie all art making. Artistic education is a "house of construction," with the need for a strong foundation upon which to build. This metaphor remains firmly entrenched in the minds of art educators. But, the rapidly changing world of art has caused many to wonder what should be included in foundations programs.¹ We ask a more radical question, wondering how the metaphor of foundations constrains teaching and learning. How might the goal to prepare students within or for the initial phase of a college program be limiting? When are students ready to move beyond skills-based exercises toward authentic experiences in artistic inquiry or practice? Should foundations expand to include the practices of contemporary artists? Or, is the metaphor of foundations itself somehow problematic? A

solid foundation might be a good way to think about constructing a building. It is grounding, it is stable, and it supports an edifice. However, what if one wanted to build an airplane, hot air balloon, boat, or rocket? In this case, an architectural foundation would be irrelevant. And, if one firmly imagined constructing a foundation before building anything else, such an imagining would be detrimental to these more mobile structures.

THE BAUHAUS QUEST FOR FUNDAMENTALS: I HEART MODERNISM

The ghost of the Bauhaus haunts art foundations. Art pedagogues continue to be obsessed with the quest for fundamentals. The Bauhaus was a sustained, fourteen-year, cross-media conversation about the nature of art that sought to re-imagine the relationship between fine art and design. The result was a number of different positions and ideas about art and the teaching of art. Its approach to pedagogy was based on the workshop, where an understanding of materials and technical experience was complemented by aesthetic ambition. The workshop included both a craftsman and an artist. The perceived need for a preliminary course led to the search for fundamentals that would be universal to all visual expression and that would erase boundaries between fine and applied arts. This fundamentals course became one of the schools defining pedagogical features. It reflected modernism's embrace of abstraction and embodied a quest for a pure and clean future, a utopian art city. The primary metaphor for the course of study in the Bauhaus was the building. Art was to be built upon a foundation of abstract principles, and ultimately would function within a fully designed environment.² The idea of Bauhaus structure and fundamentals multiplied and diversified, both in the school and in the telling of the legend of the school.³ Its defining feature is the metaphor of a foundation built upon timeless abstract principles of form, color, and materials.

The longing for universal fundamentals that is so evident in university art programs is echoed in the AP in Studio Art program, which is designed to emulate first-year college art and design courses. High school art teachers, however, do not know if their students are going to become studio artists, sculptors, designers, illustrators, photographers, architects, performance artists, ceramicists, videographers, or something else altogether. Similarly, the purposes of university art programs also range from personal development to pre-professional preparation, to developing a work ethic, to weeding out students who lack the necessary motivation or dispositions to continue as visual artists.⁴ The usual response to this uncertainty of intention or desti-

nation is to create a foundation course to prepare students for whatever they might choose to do or whoever they might become.

COLLEGE ART FOUNDATIONS AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT IN HIGH SCHOOL

The Advanced Placement in Studio Art program creates an explicit and influential definition of what a first-year college foundation course should look like in drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design. Thousands of students take these courses and more than 48,000 AP portfolios were evaluated in 2013. This program is significant because of its size and because it represents the rare place where the concerns of secondary teachers overlap the concerns of college level art teachers. Ideally, these teachers would talk about art curriculum and teaching and work together to fashion a rich art education experience for students. This does happen during the AP Reading and during meetings such as the National Art Education Association (NAEA) or FATE conferences. High school teachers want to know what college teachers value, and what they should do to prepare their students for college art programs. And college art teachers want high school students to be prepared for college; they want them to have a strong foundation of composition, technique, and concept. But, the metaphor and traditional content of foundations can be as limiting as it may be preparatory.

The AP Portfolio is designed to parallel the structure of first-year college courses in drawing, 2D design, and 3D design. It emphasizes purposeful decision making using the elements and principles of design.⁵ Because it is based on surveys of college art curricula, the program provides one measure of what is considered to be art fundamentals at the initial level of a college program. In addition to the elements and principles of design, the portfolio also describes other important attributes of student artwork. These include technique, experimentation, intention, confidence, sustained investigation, concept, expressive qualities, and student voice (see the AP scoring rubric for more details). The portfolio does not consider critical engagement within a community of practice or collaborative work. It does not consider participation in a variety of artistic discourses beyond the making of images or the ability to connect artistic inquiry with other fields of study. It does not consider how the student might work relationally, culturally, and critically, within multiple forms of representation and presentation.

The AP assessment as a framework for curriculum and teaching can be debated from many angles, however it does have value in establishing art as a rigorous and credible discipline at the secondary school level.⁶ It is a consequential and posi-

tive influence in advocacy, assessment, and policy in art education. The AP Program also provides an important bridge between first-year college courses and secondary art programs. Nevertheless, a foundational approach to teaching art encourages a specific range of results. We wonder how this approach might limit students, and what it might afford students.

The artistic capabilities of adolescents is often underestimated and unappreciated. We, the authors of this article, were both high school art teachers who taught AP Art Studio courses. We observed that our students were capable of highly nuanced personal exploration that went far beyond what might be contemplated by a “fundamentals” course. For example, Daniel’s AP class did an exploration of dress that would hardly fit into a traditional foundations art course. In this curricular example his students each responded as independent artistic inquirers to concepts of dress.⁷ Although his primary concern was to value individual responses to a conceptual prompt, he also wanted his AP students to have a working knowledge of formalism because it is still a convention used by many artists and has such an important place in so many art institutions. However, he also wanted them to understand the limits and pitfalls of the convention. For example, in other “assignments”⁸ he was not concerned that students solely balanced the use of elements and principles of design within contemporary practices, but that they scrutinized the historical, political, and cultural significance of their choices within visual culture production and consumption.

Every June, Mark participates in the annual evaluation of AP Portfolios and reviews the work of thousands of high school art students from all over the world. Many of these students go far beyond foundational exercises in abstract principles or technique. The diversity and sustained investigation of some of the work reflects engagement with conceptual issues and significant personal exploration. These students are making sophisticated and provocative images as if they were already artists. Fitting students into an entry-level college art course seemed to be a minor concern for both teachers and students. In the work of other high school teachers, the imposition of foundational ideas is more constraining than liberating. The argument that students need these fundamentals in order to progress can lead to artwork that has a feel of academic pedantry. The goal to prepare students for the initial level of a college program can limit them to a reductive view of art making that may not have much to do with contemporary practice or with their own artistic development.

In our experience, AP Studio Art, even though

designed to conform to college foundations basics, often becomes more exploratory and expansive than college art foundations programs are designed to be, even as college foundations courses often push at the boundaries of their own prescribed curriculum. In the hands of some secondary art teachers, the AP course, purported to be a college fundamental course, becomes something that goes far beyond elementary concepts and is often more daring and innovative than the college courses it is intended to emulate. This seems to happen when the teacher forgets about building foundations.

METAPHOR

Metaphors structure what we do and how we understand what we are doing. Ideas about foundations are metaphorically structured. Metaphorical grammar simultaneously constructs and limits our understandings of the world. As mentioned previously, the term foundation implies art education and artistry are like a building. A metaphor is not simply the language we use, it contains important, often taken for granted assumptions about the concept that frames a comparison. Metaphors are about relational qualities that help us understand and imagine. How we structure metaphors has important implications for how we think and act.⁹ We think metaphorically, and metaphors play a crucial role in the construction of reality. Metaphors shape what we know and believe. They pervade our everyday conceptual systems and allow one domain of experience to be understood in terms of another domain. The metaphor of foundation implies a building created on top of a secure base. A different metaphor can provide a new conceptual understanding of the experience of making art. What if art is not a building, but rather a journey, a flight, a love relationship, an escape, or a game? These are only a few alternatives that might be explored in terms of a new art education.

OTHER WAYS TO THINK ABOUT ART FOUNDATIONS

Foundations within college and high school art programs have many different purposes and often include a composite of critical thinking, technical skills, formalist principles, and conceptual skills.¹⁰ Nevertheless, there is a strong, taken-for-granted sentiment that students should develop functional competence in manipulating the basic elements, principles, and vocabulary of visual art.¹¹ There is also a distinction between design disciplines and fine art disciplines that the Bauhaus sought to erase, but which seems to be deeply entrenched in both the thinking and practice of many art programs. Critics of traditional fundamentals in art education have suggested that the formalist agen-

da ignores important contexts of culture and post-modern practices. New technologies have challenged definitions and functions of art and in turn challenged a foundations program that was, to some extent rooted in a response to traditional artist materials.¹²

Olivia Gude suggests that the elements and principles of design are insufficient for 21st century art making and only a weak reflection of an avant-garde that was inspirational 100 years ago.¹³ She describes postmodern principles of art-making including appropriation, re-contextualization, layering, and hybridity. Her approach includes development of expanded self-awareness, self-forming ideas, empowered making, and community themes as a basis for art making. According to Gude, a good art project encodes complex aesthetic strategies, gives students tools to investigate and make meaning, and uses the actual methodologies of artists. In contrast to abstracted, universal principles, it may include post-studio practices that emphasize concept and repurposing of forms and materials that are culturally situated. Similarly, Terry Barrett, suggests that postmodern approaches such as working collaboratively, layering, mixing codes, and collapsing boundaries are generative ways to frame art education.¹⁴

The content of art education is being re-imagined in contemporary practice and teaching. For example, visual culture, critical pedagogy and the discourse surrounding art-making are important components of creating an image. This is a shift from the quest for abstract form to a focus on historical, political, and understanding of visual culture and social responsibility. Paul Duncum describes seven principles of visual culture education that focus on critical theory and the deconstruction of images.¹⁵ Both Gude and Duncum want to ground art making in the practices of contemporary art, including performance art. This is a shift from an emphasis on materials, techniques, and objects to a focus on concepts, problems, and ideas about social engagement. Student artwork is not seen so much as an aesthetic object, but as a platform for learning or evidence of learning. Art becomes a kind of research text that is framed by critique, analysis, theory, and documentation.¹⁶ Writing as a way to articulate personal interpretation or critical analysis may also become an important part of art education.¹⁷

Rather than trying to create an artificial distinction between formal elements of design and post-modern approaches, it might be useful to consider balancing conceptual fluency with acquisition of formal conventions of art-making. Perhaps skill acquisition and opportunities for conceptual creative application can have a productive co-existence. For

example, drawing can be used a means to engage with critical issues, including the issues of post-modernism and visual culture.¹⁸ Particularly in the design disciplines there is a high regard for basic foundational skills based on formalist principles that supports the idea that fundamental skills are needed as a prerequisite for more advanced work.¹⁹ However, our concern is that a specific tool, metaphor or “grammar” largely determines what can be written or created by such tool or grammar. The metaphor is a tool, like a hammer. A hammer is made for pounding in nails and removing those nails. It can help join and help pry away... but it isn’t very good for sawing, fusing, cleaning, baking, etc.

IN PRACTICE OF ALTERNATE METAPHORS

What if the foundation metaphor was abandoned? What would this first-year course or ultimate high school course be called? What might this course look like and what metaphor might be employed to describe it?

Richard Rorty, in talking about philosophy, states that rearranging the walls of the building will not bring necessary change, but radical change means that the entire building, including the foundation be demolished. Rorty’s concept of redescription may help us to articulate alternate metaphors that are not about firming up, resistance, static immobility, and grounding. He calls for a metaphorical redescription that allows him to use “familiar words in unfamiliar ways.” He explains that this is not done for novelty’s sake, but “to enable us to see something differently for the first time, to cast something familiar in a new light.”²⁰ The word foundation, comes from the Latin fundare, ‘to lay a base for.’ In such a metaphor, the foundation is largely invisible, but provides an important construct of stability, which might not work with more divergent intentions. Clay Shirky argues that we actually need as much chaos as we can stand if we want to truly develop innovative and fluid responses.²¹

Instead of trying to fit our notions of art education into a foundational metaphor, what would happen if we try thinking about art education without any foundation at all? Instead of trying to answer the question of what is universally fundamental, grounded, immovable, rooted, and permanent, we should try thinking of an art education that is exploratory, disruptive, relational, or transformational. What conceptual metaphors might replace a foundation in such cases? In the examples cited above by Gude, Barrett, and Duncum, art and design foundations are replaced by approaches such as layering or critical discourse where art making is situated in an exploration of ideas and culture. Students do not build on these approaches, but rather, these approaches pervade the process. Why

not skip foundations and jump right into advanced art, and give students opportunities to learn the skills they need for 1) what they want to contribute 2) to the audiences that matter to them 3) in relation to art as a community of practice. Foundations courses might shift to become advanced explorations of art and media.

For example, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago teaches core courses that combine art and design in an exploration of surface, space, and time. It is designed to promote transdisciplinary thinking and diverse definitions of the artist. This first year program includes research methods, themes, and practices of contemporary artists. The Spiral Workshop for high school students at the University of Illinois at Chicago does not mention foundations at all. It envisions the creation of new styles of art, based on the experiences and communities of the students and using the practices of contemporary artists. They think of their projects as interventions, designed to change how students think about culture and art. The kinds of formalist exercises that pervade art education can separate meaning and context from technical or formalist methods in order to gain foundational skills. In the process, students may lose track of myriad other artistic possibilities. The foundations metaphor may also limit the kinds of exploratory experiences that art students need in order to focus on concepts, ideas, and to critically examine and respond to social, cultural, political, and spiritual issues. Students do not “start from zero” and there is no clean and pure future of artistic form. They always enter an artistic conversation somewhere in the middle. To think that everyone must start at a foundational bottom before serious investigation takes place is misguided and oppressive. Although the Bauhaus ideals of architectural foundations are an important and influential construct, many artists do not need to live in that building.

ENDNOTES

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The Case for Drawing in the 21st Century

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INTRODUCTION

This paper began with a conversation about a common problem between two very different art programs, Pratt Institute (a private art and design school in Brooklyn, NY), and Winthrop University (a state university in South Carolina). In both institutions, conflicting conceptions of and attitudes about drawing raised questions in foundation programs and provoked school-wide conversations with serious implications for how—and whether—drawing is taught in each program. Evidently similar debates about the position of drawing within art and design education are occurring in schools of art, design, and architecture nationally and internationally, indicating the need to make a case for drawing in the 21st century.¹ Here we make that case by defining drawing as a vehicle for cognition (thinking through drawing) applicable to all art forms and linking them to other disciplines, including STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). This concept is being verified by recent research.

The following sections summarize three approaches to thinking through drawing, based on our presentation at postHaus, the 2013 FATE conference in Savannah, Georgia. The first approach, presented by Andrea Kantrowitz, outlines some findings from cognitive science. Seymour Simmons then gives an overview of philosophical perspectives on drawing instruction. The third section, presented by Kim Sloane, describes what “thinking through drawing” looks like in a foundation classroom.

REVIEW OF RECENT RESEARCH IN COGNITIVE SCIENCE

Andrea Kantrowitz

To make a mark or trace a single line upon a surface immediately transforms that surface, energizes its neutrality; the graphic imposition turns the actual flatness of the ground into virtual space, translates its material reality into the fiction of imagination.

David Rosand, *Drawing Acts*²

What does it mean to think through drawing? Drawing creates an external physical space to interact with our thoughts and observations. We see and manipulate perceptions and ideas in visible form. The drive to make a mark, to leave a trace, is found across almost all known human cultures. Its past stretches back into the caves of prehistory. When there is no paper, we draw in the dirt or on stone.

Today, artists, designers, architects, engineers, and others think through drawing in a variety of

contexts. They draw to inquire into the world around them, and to generate and test new and established ideas. They also draw to communicate their ideas and observations to others. In all these ways, the accessibility and diversity of materials that can be used make drawing a very direct externalization and exploration of thought and perception. Thinking through the drawing process facilitates metacognition, thinking about thinking, which is both situated in and extended through drawing. As marks accumulate, the drawer begins to respond, not only to a perception or preconceived idea, but to new sights and insights generated by what is happening on the drawing surface.

Traditionally, drawing skill was understood as the ability to faithfully depict what is seen, using pencil or pen on paper. Today, with digital photography as accessible and ubiquitous as our cell phones, that is no longer a sufficient justification for the inclusion of a substantial drawing component within art and design education. Yet, as John Berger has written, “a line, an area of tone, is not really important because it records what you have seen, but because of what it will lead you on to see.”³ So how do we see? Prior knowledge from past experiences is compared in milliseconds to patterns of neural excitation or inhibition in retinal cells, which capture patterns of light from the outside world. If learning to draw is learning to see, it is about learning to negotiate between what we know and the world as it presents itself to our eyes and bodies.⁴

The central role of motor development in overall cognitive development also has bearing on drawing, and has recently been given new prominence in the field of cognitive neuroscience. Scientists are understanding how our brains have evolved to help us move through an ever changing, and sometimes unpredictable, world.⁵ We learn by “feeling our way” into new physical and intellectual territories. Drawing takes advantage of this innate learning process. Through the coordination of eye and hand, the movement of the arm and shoulder, and the mental projection of our bodies in space, we can see more accurately and in more detail; we can visualize what has not yet been seen and invent that which has not yet been imagined.

Related to this topic, artists have paid a great deal of attention to capturing gesture: it makes their work vivid and alive. Kimon Nicolaides, in *The Natural Way to Draw*,⁶ reported that his beginning students were often surprised at the success of their gesture studies, that somehow they were able to capture more than they were actively conscious of noticing. Artists, by learning to trust their hands, make new discoveries and inventions. Nicolaides’ observation strikingly coincides with the latest scientific understanding of the role of the hand

gestures that accompany speech. Susan Goldin-Meadow's groundbreaking work demonstrates how gesture not only helps others understand the spoken word, but helps the speaker extend his or her own conceptual reach.⁷ Goldin-Meadow has found that when there is a mismatch between the level of understanding expressed in speech and gesture, it is almost invariably the gesture that reflects more advanced understanding.⁸

Goldin-Meadow proposes that gestures, which externalize thinking in a less structured form than words, can assist a learner to "feel" her way through a difficult problem or concept. Regardless of any response from others, the gesture itself helps to form new understandings for the learner; hands sometimes know what words may not yet be able to articulate. Goldin-Meadow contends that our gestures help us imagine and invent, and may open new possibilities ahead of our conscious verbalizations. Drawing requires instantaneous coordinated movement of mind, eye, and hand. Relatively strict rules (grammar, definitions, categories) govern the ways in which words may be used. The relatively unstructured improvisational nature of gesture may explain why hand gestures and gestural sketches can exhibit more advanced understandings than the words that might accompany them. Moreover, drawings can also capture the fleeting gesture, to be examined later in the visible trace left behind.

In investigating this topic over the past 20 years, cognitive psychologists have studied how and why professional architects, designers, and others draw. More than a mere aid to short term memory, not just about lightening cognitive load, or even making new combinations, drawing supports the radical restructuring of percepts and concepts, stimulating new analogies and leading the way to innovation and invention.⁹

This is especially evident in the sketches used by experts in art and design as an essential part of professional practice. In contrast to the finished image in photographs or renderings, which often seem to discourage revisions, they intentionally use indeterminacy in their sketches to surprise themselves with novel interpretations of both the features and configurations of their own drawings and of the subject/referent of their work.¹⁰ Without instruction or experience, novices tend to fixate on solutions early in the process, failing to explore alternatives.¹¹ But, even in beginners such as those found in many foundation drawing classes, it is possible to cultivate habits of inquiry and a passion for discovery through drawing.

It is impossible to prepare students fully for their future working life simply by teaching technical skills. Today's newest technology will be obsolete tomorrow. Education must therefore empower

students to become their own teachers. Cognitive science research suggests that art and design schools should explicitly emphasize and develop students' abilities to use drawing as a tool for thinking. We, as educators, should offer a broad menu of contemporary drawing practices that artists, designers, and others can and do use to gather information, generate and develop their ideas, solve problems, and communicate with others.

Teaching observational drawing skills is only the beginning. It is at least as essential to teach the skills and thinking strategies students will need to ideate and envision across art and design disciplines. Toward that end, students should learn to engage in prolonged exploration and iterative development of alternative scenarios. Metacognitive capacities should be cultivated, which means thinking reflectively and strategically, developing a repertoire of skills and techniques, and learning to choose the right tool for the job. In addition to solving pre-defined problems, learning how to find and define problems for oneself can be taught through drawing. Beyond this, alternative methods, such as collaborative drawing, can teach metacognitive skills, such as the ability to learn from and directly incorporate fellow students' approaches.

PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR DRAWING AS THINKING

Seymour Simmons

Complementing the research in cognitive science and neurobiology outlined above, philosophy provides another way of understanding relationships between drawing and thinking. In fact, a review of historical and recent methods of teaching drawing suggests different formulations of thinking in and through drawing, which, in turn, align with particular philosophical systems, each with its own conception of what knowledge is and how it is acquired.¹² An early instance of this seemingly unlikely alliance was in the early Renaissance academies, where drawing practice was combined with the study of Neo-Platonic philosophy.¹³ In Italian, the English words, 'drawing' and 'design', are united in the word *disegno* a term which, for Renaissance artist/theorists like Vasari and Zuccari, defined drawing as ideation and invention, as was suggested in the research previously considered. Yet to this idea, they added another dimension, divine inspiration, suggested by reading into the word *disegno*: *segno di dio in noi*, meaning something like 'the sign of God in us.' This idea was based on the Platonist and Neo-Platonist assumption that ideas exist a priori in the mind and so only need to be 'drawn out' by reflection, dialogue, and, in this case, drawing. Then as later, drawing instruction reflected philosophical

assumptions in its subject matter, curriculum, style of drawing, and association of drawing with other disciplines.

One example of this cross-disciplinary association in drawing instruction was the so-called “academic method” taught in the French royal and national academies and elsewhere. Inspired by Cartesian rationalism, academic instruction connected drawing with mathematics through the study of linear perspective, copying classical artworks that exemplified ideal proportions, and using geometric shapes to draw organic objects like the human figure. Drawing was thus considered the intellectual dimension of art; that explains why it was the focus of instructions in schools called “academies.” Without this philosophical justification, however, similar approaches continue today in how-to-draw books, and, of course, math and art necessarily combine in architectural and design drawing.

Opposing the academic method, observational drawing from nature was associated with the philosophical school known as empiricism, where knowledge is assumed to derive, not from a priori ideas, but directly from perception and sensation. Drawing instruction that reflected this philosophy was initially formulated by John Ruskin,¹⁴ for whom learning to drawing meant learning to see with an “innocent eye.” The concept is parallel to Locke’s depiction of the mind as a blank slate. In terms of alignments with other disciplines, thinking processes in drawing based on a perceptual approach connect drawing directly to research in natural science in which accurate observational drawing has long been used for biological research and illustration. A similar conception of drawing as seeing without interference by pre-existing thoughts is found today in Betty Edwards’ *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*.¹⁵

A third school of philosophy with possible influences on the teaching of drawing is pragmatism. Here, as defined by William James and John Dewey, knowledge is acquired not by pure reason or direct perception, but by experience interacting with objects, and the process of forming and testing hypotheses. This conception of knowledge acquisition is, of course, essential to the experimental sciences, but according to Dewey it also applies to art making¹⁶ as well as to everyday problem-solving through what he called “reflective thinking.”¹⁷ I see the influence of this theory in Nicolaides’ *The Natural Way to Draw*. Following upon the reference to this approach in the previous section, Nicolaides’ depiction of gesture drawing exemplifies the process of thinking by forming and testing hypotheses. As Nicolaides describes it, the artist must capture in the first five seconds, a sense of the figure as a whole based on an em-

pathetic identification with the model. These initial marks become a hypothesis, which is then tested, corrected, and developed through ongoing comparisons between drawing and model. Again, following the research on sketching discussed above, this same process is used in the many compositional sketches leading up to a finished drawing, painting, sculpture, building, product, etc.

A fourth philosophical framework with implications for the teaching of drawing comes from semiotics, the branch of philosophy that deals with signs and symbols, their use and interpretation. Under this formulation, drawing is understood as a symbolic system, like written language, musical notation, and others, in which marks, individually and in combination, convey meanings of various kinds. This particular vision of drawing, sometimes referred to as ‘the language of drawing,’ seems particularly applicable to conventional systems such as those used in architectural drafting where specific symbols stand, in a standardized way, for specific elements. Comic book artists and graphic novelists also use common elements to represent actions and even states of mind¹⁸ and fine artists like Keith Haring invent their own visual vocabulary for conveying ideas. Besides that, semiotics provides a way of understanding non-representational imagery as conveying meaning through qualities of line, mark, tone, texture, etc. Yet, semiotics broadly conceived applies to art of every style, for, as Carl Goldstein says, “the artist [with his or her first mark] is already operating in a semiological field.”¹⁹ This is especially true in drawing where lines that, as often is said, do not even exist in nature can stand for (signify) objects and experiences of every kind.

In terms of implications for teaching, here as above, drawing is presented as potentially encompassing a variety of ways of thinking, many of which reflect thinking processes used in other domains. Teaching students not only to use this kind of thinking but to do so consciously and with understanding will facilitate their abilities to select thinking through drawing strategies appropriate for different types of tasks and help them make their own connections across disciplines. For example, studying theories of semiotics, especially more comprehensive systems like those of C. S. Peirce²⁰ and Nelson Goodman,²¹ can help students understand more fully how marks convey meanings. It may also enable them to integrate drawing with other symbolic systems such as those used in graphic design and music.

THINKING THROUGH DRAWING IN FOUNDATION CLASSES

Kim Sloane

If, following the previous discussions, drawing is seen in the light of cognitive development, as a vehicle for visual thinking and habits of mind, rather than solely as a skill- and craft-based practice that might be considered an obsolete holdover from the academy, the discussion of its preservation in the curriculum can shift (as it should) to a different and more compelling set of criteria.

Further, assuming that drawing is recognized as a primary and central locus of cognitive experience, as current research is revealing it to be, can we make this explicit in the curriculum in ways that will benefit the development of drawing skills while making clear to students not only what they are learning, but how and why they learn? In other words, how do we design instruction to maximize the cognitive aspects of drawing?

One approach would be to teach skills in ways that also help students learn thinking strategies such as structure mapping—the ability to see, understand, and build new structures based on ones already known—that have been shown to be the basis of innovation in the STEM fields (science, technology, science, and engineering). Another way would be to make explicit the relation of drawing to analogical reasoning, based on the central premise that all drawing is an analogy. Echoing the reference to semiotics above: a mark, a smudge, a line, is, in drawing, an analog to some other event or idea. As such, it is an abstraction, and abstract thinking is necessarily involved in making any kind of drawing including the most apparently realistic. Analogies in drawing can exist on many levels, such as outline, texture, or structure. These levels must first be learned separately, as in foundation classes, while, in advanced or expert drawing, they will exist simultaneously and inseparably.

The following is a sketch of how a curriculum can be based making explicit the cognitive in drawing. I will use as the primary example figure drawing, though the strategies are employed throughout the drawing curriculum. I have used Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains²² as a reference for the design of the sequence of assignments, as well as for in-class presentations, discussion, and critique of student work.

To begin, and to make the cognitive and analogical process explicit, the student is asked to see the figure as something else. Closely linked to analogy is metaphor. In drawing we can call this aspect of drawing seeing as, or seeing as if. We begin with the coil, or slinky. The directive is clear: interpret the figure you see before you with a single coil.

We establish a base of knowledge that we can operate from. Knowledge is the first cognitive domain. What do I want the student to know? To begin, I ask that the student knows that the figure is a volume. It exists in space in three dimensions. Second, I want the student to know that the figure possesses energy and life; then I need to help students see that the slinky can share some of these qualities. While not alive, we can use its qualities to suggest life; this is, of course, the analogy or metaphor. To understand this they need to recognize the common structural and affective characteristics that the slinky shares with the figure. Can we identify and map these? Can we create a volume that exudes energy and life, like the figure? This is enough for day one.

This then leads to the second and third of Bloom's domains, the comprehensive domain and the domain of application. The student is able to comprehend the knowledge base we have established, make the analogy from figure to slinky (as ridiculous as it may at first seem), and summarize the figure through the coil (see Figure 1). The act of drawing is the application of their knowledge and the result, if successful, is proof of their comprehension.

Analysis, the fourth domain, then enters the process. We analyze the drawings in light of our new knowledge and ask which drawings have the most volume? Why? The answer will be clear that those with a range of light and dark have the greatest volume. Now we have more knowledge, and become able to apply this knowledge for greater volume in the next round of poses. Which drawings have the most energy and life? Those with greatest variety. What kinds of variety? A range of dark and light, narrow and wide coils, tight and open coils, for starters. Even more knowledge is gained that can be analyzed and applied for greater effect. Suddenly, what seemed simple, even perhaps mundane, becomes quite complex and subtle—another great lesson about drawing!

The student can then look at the figure, see it as a whole that can be broken down into parts where the coils may narrow, widen, tip, tighten, and even see two or more of these variations occurring at once. The drawing can then attain a maximum of variety and of compression and release. At this point, the student becomes able to evaluate, the fifth cognitive domain. They know the objectives and they know the criteria. They are able to ask, and see in critique, which drawings have some, more, or most of the qualities we seek. As a result, the drawings improve dramatically in a very short time so that, at the end of the day, everyone has mastered the coil and is able to create a form with volume, energy, and the suggestion of life.



Figure 1. Coil Schema: Student Drawing, Pratt Foundation Archives

Other schema, or metaphorical models, follow the coil or Slinky: the atomic ball of string, the box, the roll of toilet paper (see Figure 2), the prismatic/planar. A similar sequence is followed to maximize different aspects of the figure and the various metaphors the schema suggest. Worth expanding on is the prismatic/planar. As others tend toward the organic, this schema draws on our capacity to see geometry and our knowledge of its forms. The students begin by making ten dots on a page, then with straight lines, connecting every dot to every other. They are asked what they see. Some will say, eventually, a crystal; others will simply say it looks three-dimensional. Then they are asked to make it more three-dimensional. They know how to do this through dark and light. They find the point that is closest to them and darken it to pull it forward. In the process, powerful evocations of transparent three-dimensional crystalline forms appear. Finally, they are asked to imagine a light source, and apply flat, even tones to the planes they have created to increase the sense of form.



Figure 2. Roll Toilet Paper Schema:
Student Work Pratt Foundation Archives

Simultaneous to this exercise, the students have been given photocopies of the flattened shapes of the Platonic and Archimedean solids from Albrecht Durer's *A Painter's Manual* (the shapes are easily found on the internet).²³ They have cut them out, folded them into three-dimensional forms, unfolded them, then arranged them into still-lives and drawn them (see Figure 3).

During the figure session the ten-dot method is then applied to the figure. The student finds ten points on the figure, makes ten corresponding dots on the page, then quickly connects them. Next, they are asked to repeat what they have already done, but to pull out the volume. The objective is not resemblance, but again, volume and life. The result is always the generation of surprising and expressive form. Gradually, the student is allowed to become more independently strategic with the dots and connections, and given more time to complete the drawing. They can become more complex, develop an increased resemblance, or both.

Finally we arrive at the last, or "highest" level of cognitive domains, synthesis. Though occurring in many ways all along, it now becomes explicit. Toward that end, the student is asked to bring schema together in individual drawings to best express the different parts of the form: its appearance, volume, direction, or relation to other parts. Entirely new structures are in this way developed for each drawing and each pose. Then the characters of the individual schemas are combined and recombined in larger structures that are increasingly effective analogs for the structure of the figure (see Figure 4).

In this practice, I believe a very complex cognitive process is operating. I take as a given that analogical reasoning is ubiquitous and central to human cognition, and that analogical mapping is the core process of analogy. When schema become synthesized, students must rapidly choose and combine, purposely "mixing metaphors" in order to find correspondences between the structure of the figure and their representation of that structure. Structurally consistent representations are the result of complex structure mapping. This is the very process that has proven to be the basis of innovation in science; I see no reason why it should not be so in art and design.

CONCLUSION

The act of and practice of drawing in the classroom/studio should, of course, teach skills and knowledge that will benefit the students in their professional lives, whether they become illustrators, graphic designers, industrial designers, or fine artists. As digital tools become more and more sophisticated, however, many traditional skills may be seen as no longer necessary for the development of artists and designers. It is the argument of this paper that drawing should not be so narrowly conceived.

The primary role of drawing, as is being uncovered by current research and as is also indicated by relating philosophical principles to the subject, may, in fact, be not so much the production of beautiful, or accurate, or communicative representations of

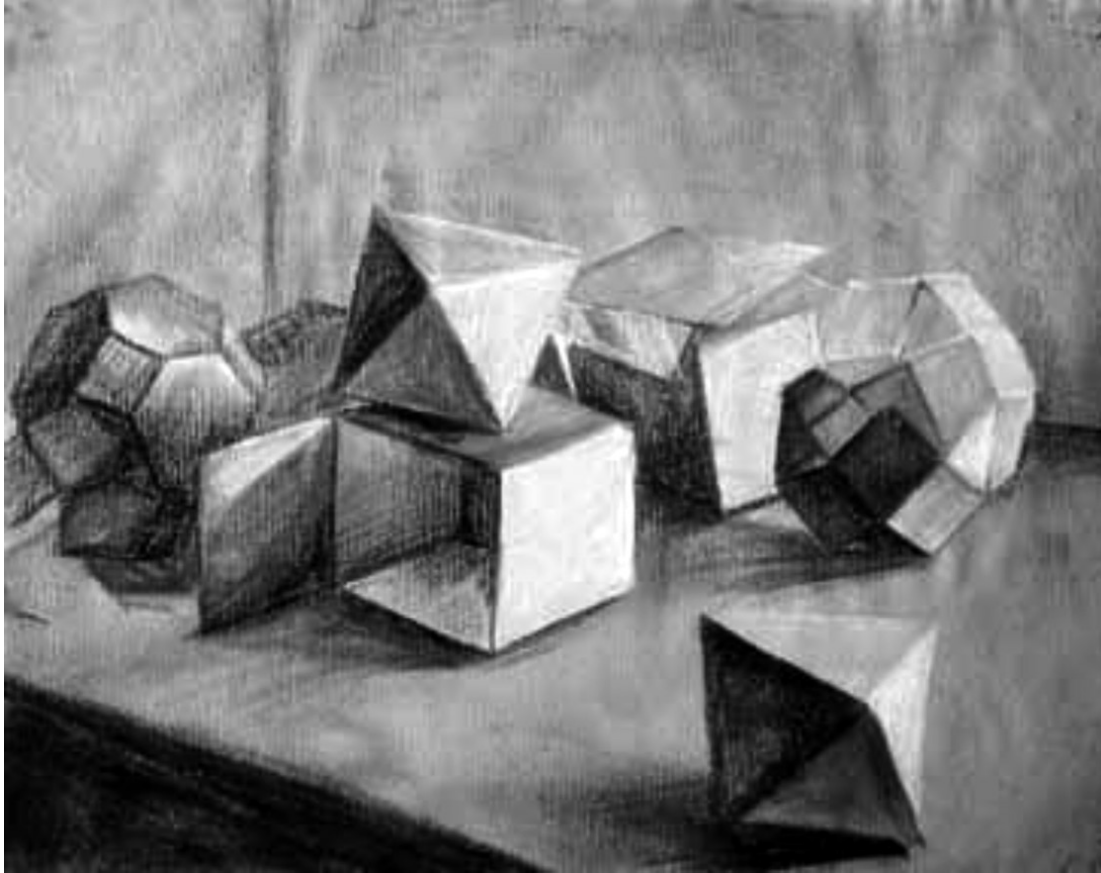


Figure 3. Folded Forms: Student Work Pratt Foundation Archives

facts and feeling, but the thinking strategies that are engendered in the process. This is not in any way to discount or diminish the importance of the well-crafted product. But what may be even more important is the development of cognitive skills through drawing, such as analogical reasoning and reflective thinking, that students will take with them and use to form the basis of all future work in art and design practice.

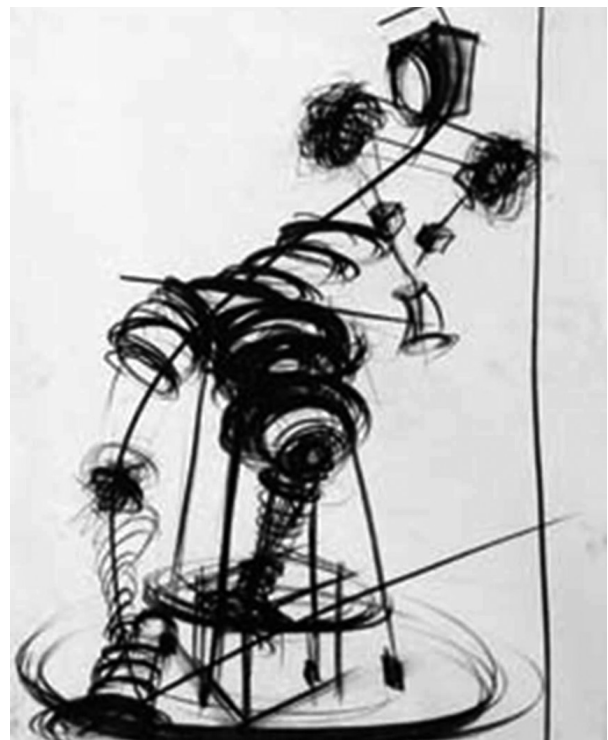


Figure 4. Synthetic Schema: Student Work, Pratt Foundation Archives

ENDNOTES

¹ The decline in drawing instruction is, of course, hardly a recent phenomenon. It actually began over a century ago as modernist trends in art and art education challenged the then predominant “academic method,” which involved, almost exclusively, rigorous rendering from classical models. A modernist alternative is proposed, perhaps tongue in cheek, by Ad Reinhardt in his “Twelve Rules for a New Academy,” published in Carl Goldstein’s *Teaching Art: Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers*, [Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 291-293. On a more serious note, the history and severity of concern about drawing’s decline and potential demise are reflected in two medical analogies issued around fifty years apart. In his introduction to Robert Beverly Hale’s *Drawing Lessons from the Great Masters*, [New York: Watson Guptill, 1964], Stewart Klonis, Executive Director of the Arts Students League in New York, said about the situation in previous decades that it was as if “[a] kind of fever had attacked even the best known art schools. In many places where art was taught, drawing was slighted and even neglected completely.” Klonis then went on in a more optimistic vein, announcing renewed interest in drawing due to the resurgence of representational imagery (i.e., the ‘new realisms’). Nonetheless, a medical metaphor resurfaced in 2012 when an international symposium at the Yale School of Architecture asked the ultimate question, “Is Drawing Dead?” Along with similar concerns raised in several sessions at this year’s FATE Conference, postHaus, concerns about drawing’s future were expressed on an international scale at two 2013 symposia: The third annual “Thinking Through Drawing” symposium held at Teachers College, Columbia University and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and “Drawing in the University Today,” held at the University of Porto, Portugal.

² David Rosand, et al., *Drawing Acts: Studies in Graphic Expression and Representation*, [Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002], 2.

³ John Berger and Jim Savage, *Berger on Drawing*, [Cork: Occasional Press, 2005], 7.

⁴ Andrea Kantrowitz, “The Man behind the Curtain: What Cognitive Science Reveals about Drawing,” *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 46, no. 1, [2012]: 1-14.

⁵ Karen E. Adolph and Sarah E. Berger, “Motor Development,” chapter in *Handbook of Child Psychology*, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2006).

⁶ Kimon Nicolaidis, *The Natural Way to Draw* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941).

⁷ Susan Goldin-Meadow, *Hearing Gesture: How our Hands Help Us Think* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 243.

⁸ Goldin-Meadow, 27.

⁹ Manolya Kavakli, Stephen Scrivener, and Linden J. Ball, “Structure in Idea Sketching Behaviour,” *Design Studies*, 19.4 (1998): 485-517.

Masaki Suwa and Barbara Tversky, “What do Architects and Students Perceive in their Design Sketches? A Protocol Analysis,” *Design Studies*, 18.4 (1997): 385-403.

Masaki Suwa, et al., “Seeing into Sketches: Regrouping Parts Encourages New Interpretations,” *Visual and Spatial Reasoning in Design* (2001).

¹⁰ Jonathan Fish and Stephen Scrivener, “Amplifying the Mind’s Eye: Sketching and Visual Cognition,” *Leonardo* (1990): 117-126.

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¹¹ Manolya Kavakli, et al., “Sketching Interpretation in Novice and Expert Designers,” *Visual and Spatial Reasoning in Design*, 99 (1999): 261-274.

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¹² Seymour Simmons, “Philosophical Dimensions of Drawing Instruction,” chapter in *Thinking Through Drawing: Practice into Knowledge*, Andrea Kantrowitz, Angela Brew and Michelle Fava, eds., [New York: Teachers College, 2012] 39-44.

¹³ Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art, Past and Present* (New York: De Capo, 1973).

¹⁴ John Ruskin, *The Elements of Drawing & The Elements of Perspective* (London: Dent 1912).

¹⁵ Betty Edwards, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* (Los Angeles: Tarcher, 1979).

¹⁶ John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Penguin, 1934).

¹⁷ John Dewey, *How We Think* (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1933).

¹⁸ Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1993); Mort Walker, *The Lexicon of Comicana*, (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2000).

¹⁹ Carl Goldstein, *Teaching Art: Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 160.

²⁰ Tony Jappy, *Introduction to Peircean Visual Semiotics*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

²¹ Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976).

²² Benjamin S. Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*, (New York: David McKay Co. Inc., 1956).

²³ Albrecht Durer, *The Painters Manual*, translated with a commentary by Walter Strauss, (New York: Abaris Books, Inc., 1977).

Biophilic Design, a Pattern Language and the Education of Artists

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In recent years sustainable design initiatives have taken center stage at many universities. For instance, where I teach at Appalachian State University, a public institution of 17,000 students in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, sustainability will be the centerpiece of the university's new strategic plan.¹ While at most institutions (mine included) sustainable design education has understandably focused on maximizing low environmental impact in such areas as architectural infrastructure, waste management, and energy efficiency, much less attention has been devoted to applying principles of sustainability to studio art education. Sustainable design initiatives that primarily focus on the three E's of energy, economics, and the environment often fail to consider the vital role aesthetics play in human interactions with the environment. As considerations of beauty are fundamental to the vibrancy of any community, it becomes increasingly evident that the culture of sustainability many institutions hope to create will be woefully incomplete without the arts being an integral part of it.

If principles of sustainable design are to take on any meaningful significance in the education of artists, they must become integral to the way art students think about the art they create. Introductory art and design textbooks such as Mary Stewart's *Launching the Imagination* or Otto Ocvirk's *Art Fundamentals*, mention ecological issues, but do little to meaningfully integrate an ecological or sustainable aesthetic into the studio art curriculum. Such a way of thinking does not necessarily mean that art students become land, environmental, or eco-artists. It is not a matter of style or subject matter (though for some this may be the case), but rather a habit of mind deeply rooted in the creative process and manifest at all levels of learning. Among the many possible ways in which such a habit of mind is supported and finds practical application is in the emerging theories of biophilic design and the pattern language ideas of Christopher Alexander. Although biophilic design and a pattern language have been developed to specifically address the needs of architecture and the built environment, the basic principles guiding these orientations are, I will argue, applicable to foundations art and design education.

Sustainable, ecological, or environmental design are terms which often share a common goal of creating designs that rely primarily on renewable resources, have minimal negative impact on the environment and integrate humans with nature. Creating pedagogical principles of sustainable art and design is in large part predicated on cultivating what many have called an ecological consciousness. Ever since Ernst Haeckel introduced the new science of ecology in 1866 as the "study of the re-

lations between organisms and environments,"² there has been considerable interest in applying this holistic, integrated view of humans and nature to all spheres of life, including art and design. The origins of an ecological consciousness in modern art, argues Greg Thomas in his book *Art and Ecology in 19th Century France*, are traced to the landscape paintings of the Barbizon painter Theodore Rousseau and later to the work of Paul Cézanne and Claude Monet, among many others. Thomas defines ecological consciousness as an apprehension of the organic inter-connected relationship between people and the world. The ecological visual attitude, he explains, is one in which people appear to be active participants in an ideal, self-ordering, organic network of interdependent natural processes.

In the early 20th century, the term biocentric was often used to characterize various strands of thought which privilege biology as the source for a paradigmatic metaphor of science, society and aesthetics.³ The result is a biologically based epistemology emphasizing the centrality of nature rather than culture and a concern for "wholeness" as opposed to atomistic reduction at all levels. Biocentrism emphasizes our inseparability from and dependence on nature. Traces of it can be seen, for instance, in Frank Lloyd Wright's "organic architecture," the intimate paintings of Paul Klee, the biomorphic sculpture of Jean Arp, or the expressionist landscapes of Oskar Kokoschka. The ethical dimension of biocentrism inevitably led to environmentalism and sustainable design manifestos such as William McDonough's Hanover Principles from 2000 which insists "on the rights of humanity and nature to co-exist" and "recognizes interdependence; the elements of human design interact with and depend upon the natural world...."⁴ Such views are echoed in Suzi Gablik's influential connective aesthetics when she says, "In the post-Cartesian, ecological world view that is now emerging, the self is no longer isolated and self-contained but relational and interdependent."⁵ Any ecological or sustainable approach to foundations studio art education will need to begin with cultivating an understanding of the intimate, even inherent inter-relationship between art and nature. Biophilic design and pattern language principles help to articulate a coherent understanding of this relationship.

Yale University social ecologist Stephen Kellert coined the term biophilic design, which he defines as "the deliberate attempt to translate an understanding of the inherent human affinity with natural systems and processes—known as biophilia—in the design of the built environment."⁶ He argues that "people's dependence on contact with nature reflects the reality of having evolved in a largely natural, not artificial or constructed world."⁷ Biophilic

tendencies, he claims, can be very strong or weak depending on whether or not they have been stimulated and nurtured. Thus a strong biophilic sensibility is "reliant on adequate learning, experience and socio-cultural support to become functionally robust."⁸ Kellert argues weak, atrophied, or dysfunctional biophilic tendencies are not an inevitable by-product of modern urban life, but rather result from fundamental design flaws. He claims that if we have created designs that degrade our natural systems and increase our separation from the natural world, we can also design a new paradigm for the built environment that prioritizes organic designs rooted to the unique natural and cultural characteristics of a place, or what Kellert calls vernacular or placed based design. Organic design involves creating artistic forms that evoke people's inherent affinity for the natural environment. In place based or vernacular environments, art works are integral parts of the culture and ecology of a geographic area, thus contributing to a sense or spirit of place vital to healthy individual and collective identities. "Our creative constructions of the human built environment" he says, "can be either a positive facilitator or a harmful impediment to the biophilic need for ongoing contact with natural systems and processes...."⁹ Becoming aware of and cultivating strong biophilic design tendencies in studio art education requires enunciating pedagogical principles that demonstrate through theory and practice the inherent inter-relationship between natural processes and the objects artists create.

Kellert postulates three ways humans experience nature: directly, indirectly and symbolically. Direct experience of nature refers to human contact with relatively unstructured, self-sustaining features of the natural environment such as daylight, plants, animals, natural habitats, and ecosystems. Indirect contact with nature requires ongoing human input to survive such as potted plants, water fountains or aquariums and other human made forms containing or shaping natural forms. Symbolic or vicarious experiences of nature are derived from patterns (often of a fractal nature), decorations, ornamentations or pictorial expressions that mimic forms or processes of nature. Although some works created in studio art foundations classes include or refer to direct or indirect connections to nature, most works created in such studio contexts are of a symbolic form in which nature is, if at all, experienced vicariously.

Although symbolic representations of nature such as representations of floral patterns or animal figures can be easily identified, many processes and patterns in nature are manifest in more subtle, not so easily identified forms. These extraordinarily diverse natural patterns and processes are derived

from innumerable sources including but not limited to the complex structures of cellular and microscopic organisms, insects, vegetation, vertebrate creatures, or elements of human anatomy that are often experienced intuitively or even unconsciously. Janine Benyus, for instance, has coined the term biomimicry to describe the process of fabricating designs for human use that are based on the remarkably efficient designs of natural systems in nature. Yannick Joye, among others, has advanced the notion of "biomorphic architecture" based on "designs whose shapes are similar to the formal grammar of living things"¹⁰ "Like other aspects of experience rooted in human genetics, these symbolic forms," claims Kellert, "elusively reflect our affinity for nature."¹¹ Such symbolic expressions, according to Kellert, comprise as well an important aspect of the "pattern language" of timeless creations described by Christopher Alexander.¹² Integrating Alexander's pattern language theories with principles of biophilic design may help bring to consciousness attributes of a sustainable design aesthetic that can be especially useful in introductory studio art classes.

A fundamental belief shared by both biophilic design and Alexander's pattern language is that the beauty of objects, their life, and their "capacity to support life, all come from the fact that they are working as a whole."¹³ Viewing an object as a whole, Alexander argues, means that it is part of an extended continuum in which the "behavior, character, and structure of the local parts are determined by the larger whole in which they exist and which they create."¹⁴ Within the context of the whole there are entities or sub-wholes, the totality of which are created by and contribute to the wholeness of a thing. Alexander calls these local entities, or parts, centers. The term 'center' is more appropriate than 'whole' to describe these entities because the word whole implies a fixed boundary distinguishing where the whole begins and ends. A center suggests a more permeable, inter-connection with other centers that help delineate the wholeness bounding its edge. In a living system all entities such as a door, window, wall or building are centers that exist in relation to other centers in the portion of the space they inhabit. For instance, to call a kitchen sink a whole implies that it is an isolated object. To call it a center suggests that the sink is part of a larger pattern of things. The sink becomes more like a thing which radiates out beyond its borders and takes its place in relation to the kitchen as a whole, just as the kitchen takes its place in relation to the house and the house in relation to the street and so on.

The strength of any given center is not only its internal shape but also the influence of other shapes or entities with which it interacts. Centers do not ex-

ist independently, but appear as elements generated within and gaining meaning from the configuration of the whole. The wholeness of a thing, therefore, is fluid and subject to small or large changes as the configurations within and around it are modified. As one develops a drawing, for instance, each additional line, if accurately placed, modifies the relationship among centers and changes the whole, however slightly. A center is made from interrelated parts that are constantly adapting to the many modifications in the context of the whole as it changes over time. The leaves of a tree, for instance, are never identical but are slightly different because of the multitude of environmental factors attendant to their growth. The tree's growth and ever changing form, however, is partly determined by the inherent structural/genetic code particular to its species. The parts of the tree are shaped by the life of the tree as a whole and the tree as a whole retains its character despite its ever-changing parts. Some spaces have richer and denser configurations of centers and some spaces have very few. The greater intensity of nested, interlocked centers, the greater the degree of life and the more beautiful the entity or whole will be.

Alexander's notion of wholeness is strikingly different from notions of wholeness presented in art foundations textbooks. One leading textbook, *Launching the Imagination* by Mary Stewart, defines design as the organization "of disparate parts into a coherent whole, as in composing a brochure."¹⁵ Yet no distinction is made between brochures that are coherent and those that are not. It also defines design as "an arrangement of lines, shapes, colors and textures into an artistic whole, as in the composition of a painting or sculpture."¹⁶ This notion of the whole gives very little indication of what a whole is except that it is coherent and composed of various formal elements. Another leading foundations textbook, *Art Fundamentals* by Otto Ocvirk, uses the term "organic unity" to describe the process of creating wholeness. "The artist," according to the text, "attempts to make all parts of the work mutually interactive and interrelated—as they are in a living organism." It goes on to argue that,

A television set might be used as an illustration of organic unity because it has a complex of parts intended to function as do the organs in a living body. A television set contains the minimum of parts necessary to function, and these parts work only when properly assembled with respect to each other. When all are activated they become organically unified in the same way as the parts of the human body. Surely Dr. Frankenstein would appreciate this analogy! As in the case of sophisticated engineering, this case of sophisticated "wholeness," is what is sought in art.¹⁷

Any thought of associating the "sophisticated engineering" of a television set with the "organic unity" and "wholeness" of the human body fails to understand that a human life is far more complex and mysterious than the assemblage of the physical parts that go into making it. It is this kind of mechanistic thinking about the processes of natural and artistic creation which have resulted in so much confusion. Although recent advances in nanotechnology and DNA manipulation, among other advanced technologies, have profoundly muddled the distinctions between the mechanical and the organically alive, the reference to Dr. Frankenstein suggests that the mechanistic model of replicating wholeness in nature produces living forms more akin to monsters than beautiful objects.

In general these textbooks, like most studio foundations textbooks, are organized like encyclopedias. They describe, for instance, various properties of line: actual lines, contour lines, gesture drawing, calligraphic lines, organizational lines, and implied lines. They then describe various uses of lines such as to define, enclose, connect and dissect. The same procedure is followed for shape, texture, value, and color. As with any encyclopedic catalog, these brief definitions of the component parts of form provide a very valuable reference, but do nothing to foster a meaningful sense of a living whole. It is an additive process wherein one learns the uses of each property in and of themselves and then adds them together to create more complex forms. Mary Stewart does reference Gestalt theory by saying "visual information is understood holistically before it is examined separately."¹⁸ She goes on to explain, "When presented with a collection of separate visual units, we immediately try to create order...."¹⁹ But even here the holistic order she mentions is focused primarily on the internal organization of the work's form independent of any reference to the world beyond the object depicted. It is a self-contained unit.

In contrast, Alexander argues that the living quality of a form is dependent upon it being thoroughly woven into a dense inter-related web of centers, the generation of which results from active human interaction with and understanding of the infinitely complex web of centers in nature itself. The morphological structures of nature become—whether consciously or not—the model for the artists creations. Identifying such characteristics and articulating their structure is necessary if one hopes to teach them to young artists. Alexander's research led him to identify fifteen properties he believed were present in both human made and natural forms that possess a living quality. By integrating some attributes of Alexander's pattern language with biophilic design attributes of natural

patterns and processes, it may be possible to delineate features of a visual art pedagogy rooted in principles of sustainable aesthetics.

Kellert identifies six biophilic design elements, which in turn are related to 70 biophilic design attributes organized primarily to assist designers in applying biophilic design in a variety of practical settings, including education.²⁰ While the 70 biophilic attributes cannot all be listed here, the six biophilic design elements are:

- Environmental features
- Natural shapes and forms
- Natural patterns and processes
- Light and space
- Place-based relationships
- Evolved human-nature relationships

Attributes of the biophilic design element “natural patterns and processes,” in particular, share in common many characteristics Alexander cites as essential to the existence of living patterns in art and nature. In general, Kellert argues that the six biophilic design elements including “natural patterns and processes,” are deeply rooted in our psychological disposition. For instance, Kellert claims that people generally respond positively to natural and built environments when variability has been united by the biophilic design attribute “integrated and patterned wholes.” In the presence of integrated and patterned wholes, he claims, inchoate experience becomes structured in a manner that fosters understanding and feelings of mastery and control. In another example, Kellert argues, humans generally have a strong proclivity for the biophilic attribute “bounded spaces.” People, he claims, value clearly delineated spaces for purposes of security and orientation. Spaces within and between the built and natural environment such as thresholds, portals, bridges, etc. often foster comfort by providing access from one area to another. These and many other biophilic design attributes Kellert identifies are consistent with, expand on, and often provide evidence to support the fifteen characteristics of centers outlined by Alexander. Both Alexander’s pattern language and attributes of biophilic design highlight not the objects in and of themselves, but rather the patterns of relationships between objects. Alexander’s fifteen attributes of centers are summarized as follows.

- *Levels of Scale Differentiation* of scale within the constituent parts of an object should include jumps in levels of scale that are not too great or too little, yet include some kind of variety. The gradations of scale should formulate humanly meaningful transitions from one part to

the next wherein small centers contribute to intensifying the larger ones.

- *Strong Centers* means that objects possess a center of attention, a focal point wherein the power of the center is created by a sequence of nearby centers leading up to it. In general, there is a principle structure or form with other structures or forms subsidiary to it.
- *Boundaries* help define and focus attention on the center. Boundaries help to produce centers while also uniting them with larger fields of centers adjoining the bounded space. Boundaries at once interlock, connect and facilitate transitions from one center to another while also differentiate and separate.
- *Alternating Repetition Centers* intensify other centers by their repetition. The repetition, however, is not banal or uniformly exact, but is a subtle variation of interlocking and alternating rhythms throughout the whole.
- *Positive Space* in this context means the integration of positive and negative space wherein no part of the whole, whether solid or void, is superfluous.
- *Good Shape* is an attribute of the whole configuration in which the parts are composed of multiple coherent centers. Small or minor centers create potential for a much more complex system of cross-relationships in space.
- *Local Symmetries* In any complex whole there are nearly always complex local or asymmetrical forces at work. The Alhambra, for example, has no overall symmetry, but countless local symmetries that adapt to the irregularities of the site and different stages of construction. Neo-classical and many modern buildings, in contrast, have perfectly rigid overall symmetry in which the numbing uniform repetition throughout the whole results in a lifeless structure.
- *Deep Interlock and Ambiguity* means an ambiguous zone between the center and its surroundings that intensifies the whole while also making it difficult to disentangle the center from its surroundings. The center and its surroundings interpenetrate each other. A good example would be a gallery or arcade surrounding a building.
- *Contrast* emphasizes the differentiation of properties such as light and shadow or void and solid essential for distinguishing centers within the whole. Unity can only be created in relation to distinguishing and clarifying discernable opposites within the configuration of centers.

- *Gradients* describe slow gradual changes or transitions in size and character of objects in response to unique and ever changing conditions in the built and natural environment. Most standardized, mass produced objects, being uniform in character, discourage the presence of gradients in the built environment.
- *Roughness Objects* can possess a quality of being unfinished yet seem to be complete and unified. Designs include subtle variations and irregularities.
- *Echoes* implies family resemblances among all the constituent parts. Each part or center contains an echo of other centers in the whole. Each part is different yet certain characteristics are shared among them.
- *The Void*. The most profound centers possess a void at their heart or center. At the center of the center is a void. For instance, altars of churches or the empty space at the church crossing creates a kind of stillness at the center. It is a psychological rather than a structural requirement of the form.
- *Simplicity and Inner Calm* results when everything unnecessary is eliminated. Shaker furniture is a perfect example: the superfluous is removed, only the essential remains.
- *Not-Separateness* implies a living whole at one with the world. It cannot be discerned where one thing breaks off and another begins. Although objects are well defined and self-sufficient they are seamlessly integrated into the space surrounding them.

Alexander and biophilic design theorists share the view that these fifteen principles are rooted to natural systems inherent to the way nature operates. These properties are perhaps fundamental to all organic structures and would therefore appear in nature at many scales as well as in successful objects produced by artists. For example, the property levels of scale are present in countless natural systems. In a cell, tree, mountain, or river there are recognizable hierarchies of scale in the organization of these functional systems. "The presence of a continuous range of structures at different scales, with one level never too far from the next level above or below, is common both in organic or inorganic nature."²¹ The roots, trunk, branches, limbs, and leaves of a tree form a coherent hierarchy of scale necessary to successfully sustain the weight and nutrients vital to its existence. The pervasiveness of levels of scale in natural systems may demonstrate that natural forms and human made objects can share much in common. Alexander suggests that the formation of centers in human artifacts

is analogous to the organic processes inherent to the generation of centers in natural systems. Putting together objects according to these principles in a mechanical, cookbook like fashion, however, will not necessarily result in art works possessing strong centers.

In developing a sustainable design aesthetic for visual art pedagogy, biophilic design and Alexander's pattern language theories can help identify, critically evaluate and establish core standards for determining the ecological dimensions of art. From evaluating a simple drawing to creating a complex installation, Alexander's notion of centers and the fifteen properties generated from them could be used in designing the initial stages of the project as well as critiquing the finished product. Some educators devote time to demonstrating the relationship between the formal elements and the processes of nature, but the textbooks usually do not. If biophilic design and pattern language ideas help foster a healthy contact with nature by creating places and objects worthy of veneration, then articulating principles of design consonant with the ways nature operates will help ensure that sustainable art and design becomes a habit of mind and an intuitive part of the creative process. We will not have a meaningful greening of art pedagogy until the way we think about the formal elements is informed with an understanding of the processes of nature from which they originate.

In her article, "The Ecological Imperative," Suzi Gablik argues that, "restoring an awareness of our symbiotic relationship with nature becomes the most pressing spiritual and political need of our time." She concludes by saying, "As we move towards an environment of limits... the self that sees beyond merely personal existence to inter-subjective coexistence and community is the ecological self."²² This is precisely what biophilic design seeks to do. The designer from this perspective has a responsibility to create forms that enrich the community by creating places worth preserving while establishing a healthy, sustainable relationship to nature. The artist's freedom therefore is bound up with working within the limits of nature's laws. To transgress these limits means to violate the natural systems of nature, thus resulting in human made forms degrading the environment and violating our relationship to it. Foundations courses in studio art are among the places to begin the process of teaching an awareness of and appreciation for sustainable design.

ENDNOTES

¹ In an email to the campus community on May 13, 2013, Appalachian State University Provost Lori Gonzalez said, "The new strategic plan will be based on the concept of sustainability. This is a true value at Appalachian and the University Planning and Priorities Council believes it should be elevated through the strategic plan."

² Greg Thomas, *Art and Ecology in 19th Century France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 5.

³ See Oliver I.A. Botar and Isabel Wunsche, "Introduction: Biocentrism as a Constituent Element of Modernism" in *Biocentrism and Modernism* (Surry, England: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011), 1-15.

⁴ William McDonough, "Hanover Principles: Design for Sustainability." (1992) www.mcdonough.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Hannover-Principles-1992.pdf [accessed May 30, 2013.]

⁵ Suzi Gablik, "Connective Aesthetics," *American Art* 6 (1992); 4.

⁶ Stephen Kellert, "Dimensions, Elements, and Attributes of Biophilic Design," in *Biophilic Design*, eds. Stephen Kellert, Judith Heerwagen and Martin Mador (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2008), 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Stephen Kellert, *Building for Life: Designing and Understanding the Human-Nature Connection*, (Washington: Island Press, 2005), 163.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Christopher Alexander, *The Nature of Order*, Vol. I (Berkeley, California: The Center for Environmental Structure, 2002), 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁵ Mary Stewart, *Launching the Imagination*, 4th edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012), xviii.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, xix.

¹⁷ Otto Ocvirk, *Art Fundamentals: Theory and Practice*, 7th edition (Madison, Wisconsin, 1994), 18-20.

¹⁸ Stewart, *Launching the Imagination*, 68.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Kellert, *Biophilic Design*, 3.

²¹ Alexander, *The Nature of Order*, 246.

²² Suzi Gablik, "The Ecological Imperative," *Art Journal*, no. 3, (1992): 51.

If Collaboration is the Answer: What are the Questions?¹

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"WHAT THE CHILD IS ABLE TO DO IN COLLABORATION TODAY HE WILL BE ABLE TO DO INDEPENDENTLY TOMORROW."²

The interconnectedness of educational and social systems is being driven by the rapid pace of technological change and increased complexity. This paper focuses on art and art education regarding contemporary collaborative and collective practices. These insights begin a dialogue to re-imagine collaborative learning in art education for the 21st century. I provide practical tips for implementing, monitoring, and evaluating collaborative projects that promote collective agency and responsibility in the learning process.

Ubiquitous computing has changed the paradigm of learning: It is not what you know but what you can know. Digital devices, such as cell phones and drawing tablets, have become extensions of our thinking. These devices enhance our social networks and augment the way we research and learn by connecting students in a variety of meaningful ways. Collaboration is therefore highly valued in the 21st century workplace, and learning through a variety of collaborative and collective strategies is crucial. Due to this paradigm shift in learning, educational goals for collaboration need to expand to show how collaborators negotiate systems of knowing—whether actual or mediated. For art education, these strategies should include the following processes: 1) social reflecting and sharing, 2) peer-to-peer knowledge, 3) the capacity of collective intelligence, 4) ways of seeing, and 5) building on the learner's differences, knowledge, and experiences. These practices represent a new era in which students can create, curate, store, deliver, and access knowing and meaning-making very differently.

Every classroom should be a community of learners whereby students gain competence, autonomy, and connections to others in support of their learning. While working in groups can inspire learning, the benefits often fall short when too much time is spent in groups.³ Used properly, collaboration and collective learning can build communities of learners in which students 1) can confront the application of new knowledge through interdisciplinary learning, 2) can advance the relationship they have among themselves and others, and 3) can connect learning to their personal, social, and work lives. Lev Vygotsky acknowledged that conversations become internalized as thought and extend individualized learning.⁴ These conversations reinforce the notion that social construction of knowledge through collaboration is essential for learning. Philosopher Jacques Rancière stated that the "main enemy of artistic creativity as well as of

political creativity is consensus—that is, inscription within given roles, possibilities, and competences."⁵ He challenged us to engage in emancipatory, transformational, and subjective practices. In art, different and often opposing elements converge and shape something new from their interaction. Art education therefore provides a robust space to explore collaborative and collective learning without succumbing to consensus.

WHAT ARE CONTEMPORARY COLLABORATIVE AND COLLECTIVE ART PRACTICES?

Artists collaborate in many diverse ways to harness the rewards of collaborative and collective activities. Collaborative and collective artists are embedded in Dadaism, Surrealism, and Constructivism, as well as Conceptual Art, Fluxus, Feminist Art, and Community-based art movements. Charles Green regarded collaboration as a crucial element in the transition from modernist to postmodernist art, and he stated that collaborators develop a "third authorial identity," blurring the identity of the individual artists.⁶ Today, many contemporary artists collaborate through collectives, community-based projects, and Internet art.⁷ Internet art extends the physical environment and uses the digital interface as an interplay of visual and conceptual exchanges of collaborative practices. Artists today explore artistic expression, skills, and production for today's globally connected digital and actual environments. For example, Collaborative Arts: Conversations on Collaborative Art Practices is an online project established in 2005 and managed and curated by Mark Dunhill and Tamiko O'Brien as a resource and platform about collaborative art practices.⁸

A variety of contemporary theories connect collaboration and collective art practices with places of autonomy, everyday life, contemporary culture, and social practices. Nancy Roth argued that collaboration provides artists with the opportunity for autonomy to connect to everyday life, and collaboration dislodges relations with traditional institutions such as museums and galleries.⁹ Similarly, Brian Holmes contended that collectivism offers a context for a deeper and broader process of resymbolization and political recomposition, which links disparate actors to construct situations of social change.¹⁰ Additionally, Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette viewed artistic collaboration as a way to extend traditional art practices to engage social relations as a medium of artistic expression.¹¹ For theorists Stimson and Sholette, collaboration is "neither picturing social form nor doing battle in the realm of representations, but instead engaging with social life as production, engaging in social life as a medium of expression."¹² A full range of collaborative practices exists, which can be problematic

for traditional art institutions, as they often involve parallel structures of knowledge and challenge artist and audience relationships.

COLLABORATIVE AND COLLECTIVE LEARNING IN ART EDUCATION PRACTICE

Collaborative learning offers an opportunity to recognize and promote personal and collective educational processes. Specifically, it is important for students to develop processes by which they come to know critically informed ways of making. Criticality encourages the capacity for agency. Deanna Kuhn argued that the values and dispositions required to acquire new knowledge are often developed in social settings and not in isolation.¹³ Although learning often takes place within individually constructed systems, learning can also be deeply rooted in a social context of communication, guided practice, collective engagement, cooperative negotiations, and collaborative actions. In this section, I explore research in art concerning educational practices, marginalized communities, disciplinary experts, the digital interface, and the co-production relationships that emerge from collaboration.

Regarding Jack Richardson's ideas of community, public collaboration and social exchange are forms of "social research and an alternative artistic practice that might provide an alternative conceptual and practical foundation for contemporary art educational practices."¹⁴ Pangyiotis Angelides and Antonia Michaelidou used the process of collaborative art practice to increase the participation of marginalized children in the curricula, the cultures, and the societies of schools.¹⁵ Kristin Congdon, Laura Hicks, Paul Bolin, and Doug Blandy suggested that facilitation and collaboration might change the role of the disciplinary experts, and they questioned how social media tools, such as Edmodo, Wikipedia, WordPress, and Tumblr, might affect teaching and learning.¹⁶ Similar observations resurface in Robert Quinn's research, which engaged early childhood education undergraduates in collaborating in online art production, providing students an opportunity to engage in new ways of knowing and meaning-making.¹⁷ Through collaborating with children in art making, Tim Rollins and K.O.S.¹⁸ and Wendy Ewald¹⁹ each produced collaborative art projects which act as catalysts to bring insight into various kinds of power-sharing relationships, equitability, cooperation, conflict, division of labor, and other co-production relationships that emerge in exploring art, visual cultural production, and understanding.

David Johnson, Roger Johnson, and Edythe Holubac discussed circles of learning. For a lesson to be cooperative, they contended that five elements must be included: individual accountability, social skills,

positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, and group processing.²⁰ Similarly, Michelle Collay, Diane Dunlap, Walter Enloe, and George Gagnin saw six key conditions of learning circles: building community, constructing knowledge, supporting learners, documenting reflection, assessing expectations, and changing cultures.²¹ Throughout these elements and conditions, we must understand intersubjectivity at both the interpersonal and community level. Sharing, as well as individual experiences, emphasizes our inherently social being by bringing together cognitive processes and social interactions, which further challenges how learning is distributed across particular dynamics and artifacts.

Collaborative, collective, and cooperative learning practices are places where relationships are the locus of constructed knowledge. An individual can harness differing strengths and comprehensions from multiple knowledge bases, that is, a collective understanding, but not necessarily a consensus. Shared meanings constructed by people interacting can actually be a move away from the problem-solving paradigm to seeing the world beyond the problems, in other words, toward designing and imagining of the world in different ways. For art education, this practice means facilitating the learning processes to embrace both inquiry and change as conjoined entities of agency and collaborative knowledge construction.



Figure 1. Local community residents and law enforcement created original tile mosaics for stepping stones used in a student-designed garden. Image courtesy of Shalini Agrawal.

At the FATE 2013 postHaus conference in Savannah, Georgia, I was impressed by the many strong presentations that involved collaboration, collective learning, and community partnerships. Several themes surfaced as approaches to move student learning and pedagogical practices forward: interdisciplinary collaboration, the co-teaching process, student-centered collaborative practices, collaborative peer reviewing, and the critique as a public collaborative forum. Of the many valuable panel presentations, I highlighted some for their use of collaboration for educational and research purposes. Shalini Agrawal, co-founder of the nonprofit organization *archi-treasures*²² and member of MAC Studio, Inc.,²³ which specializes in landscape architecture and community participation, presented several of their community projects, which use a participatory design model to collaboratively strengthen urban communities by transforming public space and increase collaborative civic engagement (see Figure 1). Agrawal is a catalyst who brings together creative professionals and community members as partners to improve neighborhoods throughout Chicago. She uses her art, design, and architectural knowledge to fuel the catalytic process along with the critical moments reflection process developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for Reflective Community Practice.²⁴ This process shares community knowledge in order to facilitate an awareness of the learning that emerges from community-building practices. Erin Wiersma's presentation, "Collaboration: Why, When, and How," focused on her institution initiative which identified interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaboration as a way to promote research efforts among students and faculty (see Figure 2). Specifically, she drew from her recent experiences working with the Horticulture Forestry and Recreation Resources faculty at Kansas State University to provide examples and tips on how to blend collaborative teaching into the studio curriculum.

COLLABORATION AS A CULTURAL INTERFACE

My collaboration with artist Joo Yeon Woo, an artist who teaches at the University of Colorado in Boulder, began in 2005 with Friday afternoon coffee breaks where we shared our artwork and cultural backgrounds. We decided to pursue collaborative artwork in conjunction with an invitation for an exhibition called *Cultural Interface*. To our surprise, the casual art conversations about contemporary digital media facilitated several ideas for projects, and, despite logistics of time and remote distances, we created an interactive installation, "Untitled" (2005). Because each of us has skills in similar and different areas, we were able to share and extend our abilities throughout the collaborative process.



Figure 2. Blending collaborative teaching between KSU Department of Horticulture, Forestry, and Recreation Resources and the Department of Art through a demonstration of making gouache paint by Associate Professor Rhonda Janke at Kansas State University Student Farm, Manhattan, KS. Image courtesy of Kacie Davis.

In addition, we feel that we have created a third authorial identity that provides a place for critical and creative serendipity.

As Yeon Woo and I began to collaborate, conversations about the process of co-creation emerged. We discussed and considered different expectations about roles as collaborators, that is, as learners with different cultural learning styles to help facilitate our work together. We began to appreciate the mentoring role we played for each other and how that role fluctuated between conversational and collegial to authoritative, depending on our strengths and weaknesses. We spoke about our different strong points and knowledge from multiple information bases. We sometimes needed a collective understanding, but not necessarily an agreement to use our shared understanding toward a coordinate innovative action. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, we talked about different communication patterns (visual and verbal) across different cultures (Asian and Western). We discussed how we see and image differently and how our cultural patterns influence collaborating.

Collaborating allowed us to engage in elaborate methods of working together, especially with more complex contemporary art processes involving technology. In addition, our cross-cultural negotiations of ideas and dialogues in collaborating generated many interesting insights, for example, our individual meaning-making perspectives. We have continued to collaborate and have done several iterations of the original installation, and we expanded the work for *BIT, BYTE, DOT, SPOT: Post Digital Art* sponsored by the Tampa Museum of Art (see Figure 3). In addition, we have written grants and have been invited to several residencies. In 2011, we spent three weeks at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA) and worked through new concepts and prototypes.



Figure 3. Iteration of the author's collaborative work with Joo Yeon Woo, *Iterative Convergence*, 2009. Image Courtesy of the artists.

Yeon Woo and I discussed the performance of communication, which E. T. Hall called “low and high context communication,” as a function of individualism and collectivism. This “low-context communication” is associated with Western culture and emphasizes how intention or meaning is best expressed through the explicit verbal message. Whereas “high-context communication” is more prevalent in Asian cultures and emphasizes how intention or meaning can be best conveyed through the context (e.g., social roles, positions, etc.) and nonverbal channels (e.g., pauses, silence, tone of voice, etc.) of the verbal message.²⁵ To assist in developing approaches for engaging shared strategies for our art, we continually use collaborative research and our collective practices to understand how our learning is distributed across personal dynamics and artifacts. The next section offers some of the initiatives and strategies that I have found to be thought provoking.

CONTEMPORARY INITIATIVES OF COLLABORATIVE, COOPERATIVE, AND COLLECTIVE PARTICIPATION

Although many contemporary initiatives engage collaborative, cooperative, and collective approaches through networking technologies, this section offers examples of specific approaches: systems-based, design-based, professional community, and a user-driven DIY community. While these approaches are situated in the digital interface, they offer strategies that can be co-opted or modified in a variety of practical settings with or without technology.

The MIT Collaborative Initiatives’ mission is a systems-based approach to solving deep-rooted societal issues by engaging experts from a broad range of disciplines both within and outside the scope of a problem. Participants in the initiative

engage a systems approach that uses four phases: exploration of areas of widespread concerns, designing a project, engaging external evaluators, and building project objectives with the goal of narrowing the gap between the way we think and what the world actually needs.²⁶ The mission promotes a system-based approach, brings diverse people together, prompts discussions, and encourages discovery.

The World Café uses seven design principles as a design-based method to engage people in conversations that matter. This method offers an effective antidote to the fast-paced fragmentation and lack of connection in today’s world. The following seven design principles are summarized from The World Café website.²⁷

- Set the context: Clarify the purpose and parameters of the conversation and its place in the larger environment in which it will happen.
- Create hospitable space: Provide a welcoming, safe, life-serving environment.
- Explore questions that matter: Invite collective attention to what is important to the participants.
- Encourage everyone’s contribution: Respectively engage meaningful participation by each person.
- Cross-pollinate and connect diverse perspectives: Facilitate juicy diversity and equally juicy interconnectedness.
- Listen together for patterns, insights, and deeper questions: Help coherent group insight emerge naturally from the stance of individual perspectives and passions.
- Harvest and share collective discoveries: Make the group’s collective intelligence visible to itself.

The World Café’s principles use a design-based approach, which allows issues to emerge naturally through collective voices.

Art Education 2.0 is an online professional learning community of art educators, most notably an online environment that has initiated many hybrid forms of collaborative, cooperative, and collective approaches to learning. While Art Education 2.0 does not have an overarching framework for engaging participation as The World Café, it does offer a space where like-minded individuals (e.g., art educators), who share a common discipline, can collaborate, cooperate, and assemble fluidly and dynamically. With currently 13,381 total members, that is, 159 groups that range from 3 to 471 (Elementary Art Educators) members, the community

can discuss ideas and strategies, create art together, develop and share information and experiences, and guide and seek advice on all matters related to art education.²⁸

Ravelry is a dynamic and community-oriented, user-driven, do-it-yourself environment with a suggestion list that uses the digital network interface to draw from members' expertise.²⁹ Ravelry started in 2005, and currently has 3 million fiber-loving users registered, 20,000 groups, and about 4,000-plus individuals online at any given time (see Figure 4). The founders Jessica and Casey Forbes recently reflected on the collaborative process in a post celebrating the three million-member milestone: "From the very first beta testers, Ravelers have made this site so much more than the sum of its parts."³⁰ In this instance, learning is a cooperative group action, one that does not rely solely on unidirectional transfer of information to individuals. As a result, Ravelers' learning is not only accomplished through the interactions of participants, but resides in the interactions through the mediated interface and often actual world retreats, such as Squam Art Workshops in New Hampshire.

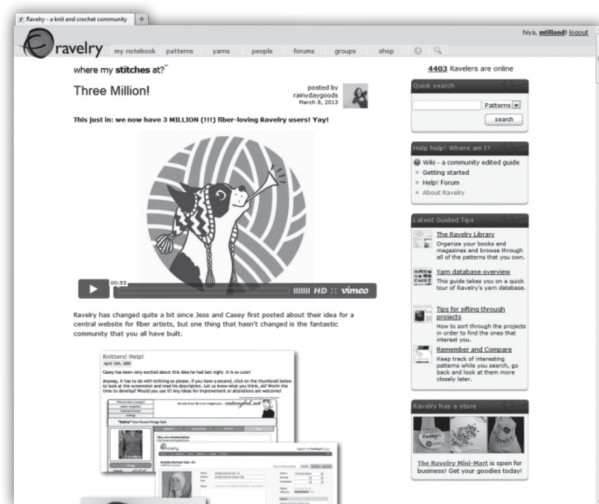


Figure 4. Screen shot image of Ravelry celebrating 3 million members. www.ravelry.com

PRACTICAL EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

Each of the initiatives above offer many unique possibilities such as bringing people together to inspire discovery through a system based approach, using design principles for harnessing collective voices, seeing the role of spaces as key for like-minded individuals, and harnessing the power of members' expertise. Along with these possibilities, I also consider learning. I promote the implementing, monitoring, and evaluating of collaborative, cooperative, and collective activities and projects with

my students that enhance responsibility, accountability, and agency in the learning process. Technology has many connecting tools, which can be used to facilitate the practical strategies of collaboration into students' experiences (e.g., blogs, wikis, discussion boards, dropboxes). In addition, these tools provide an integrated approach between the class and students' "lifeworld." Lifeworld knowledge is the taken-for-granted reality that we pose prior to and outside of school, that is, the commonsense, symbolic backdrop of our worldly experiences.³¹ With preparatory time and effort in developing collaborative processes in learning (i.e., implementing what individuals develop and refine, and the tools they will use), the total time and effort is usually shorter, resulting in more effective learning experiences. I engage what Barabara Rogoff calls planes of "apprenticeship," "guided apprenticeship" and "participation appropriation."³² In the collaborative process, these interrelated planes each engage participation as transformational, that is, through stretching common lifeworld understanding to accommodate shared understanding in a socio-culturally organized activity. The activity involves creative processes and also variations of shared thinking as part of the modeling process. The creative process is a socio-cultural activity. Through collaboration within my classes students can figure out new situations with personal and shared accounts to accomplish their goals and the mutual goals of the group. Transparent learning processes are continually encouraged. My processes involve group selection, modeling process and outcomes, updates for group facilitation and formative assessment, sharing assessment across the group and individuals, and faculty and peer evaluating. The next section provides details of several of my strategies.

GROUP SELECTION

Group dynamics in education are more successful if students are offered opportunities to choose their groups. Specifically, we see less resistance to groups assigned if students are provided a reason for the selections. In my class Teaching Art in Higher Education, I have several methods for assigning Master of Fine Arts students to groups. I share the rationale for my group selection with the students so they can see the pros and cons for each approach. One important class goal is to get first-year graduate students networking across various studio disciplines. Therefore, my strategy throughout the semester includes intervals of either allowing graduate students the option of self-selecting groups or being assigned to groups for diverse structures (e.g., discipline, temperament, cultural background, or gender). In either case, I ask for process and progress reports. If technology, such as a blogs, wikis, and discussion

boards, is used, both the process and progress are explicitly connected and highlighted, thereby making assessment transparent for everyone. In addition, the proper use of technology provides a space for content, resources, and personal voice.

MODELING PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

Successful collaborative engagement must have clear expectations. Mark Cooper and Lisa Sjostrom's research involved children who make art together. Their research considered both the physical framework and attitudinal framework as a strategy to develop skills in conversation, negotiation, problem-solving, and listening.³³ The focus moves beyond discipline content and knowledge to one of collaboration, sharing, elaborating knowledge, active involvement with thinking critically, and reflecting on an individual's performance in the actual collaborative space and mindset. Individual and collaborative performances redirect the art educators' actions to facilitating, modeling, organizing, guiding, and formatively assessing. Once small groups of three to four individuals have been decided (assigned or self-selected), I provide a handout on collaboration (see Figure 5) and initiate several short activities which describe collaborative dispositions. This process offers an opportunity to engage students and model a physical and attitudinal framework. By observing the processes and analyzing outcomes, students examine the processes involved and acquire control over their own performance. Methods include small group conversations about meeting and communicating, as well as strengths and weaknesses of individual members. While technology has facilitated mediated communicating, we must also have a clear understanding

of the unmediated interfaces that influence each group and group member.

UPDATES FOR GROUP FACILITATION AND FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

It is critical to require group updates and provide group guidance. I set time aside in class for required updates and at the end of class for optional updates. I find updates to be most effective about a third of the way into the assignment. The updates help me and the students realign both the physical and attitudinal frameworks needed for a successful collaboration. Another opportunity to model ground rules is to frequently ask students to make a list of key words symbolizing their concerns and distresses, or to gather ideas and perspectives from all students on note cards to promote complete attention, accountability, and interdependence. It is important to provide the support necessary to initiate and sustain change and honor everyone's efforts and move those efforts forward.

I oscillate between making updates mandatory, informal, or optional. All approaches are useful for different reasons. I like to informally assess student's ongoing progress through observations, discussions, and quick questioning to determine if the group is able to clearly explain or seems to be struggling with the assignment. Judging progress can be tricky early in one's career, so it is better to be cautious and make updates mandatory until you know students' progress patterns and potential road blocks for a given assignment. Clear expectations are important because the updates can be very effective forms of assessment. Therefore, it is important to balance the "I" and the "we" to

Collaboration: What is collaboration?	
<i>Technological change and the increased technological complexity is spawning the rise of interconnectedness of economic, environmental and social systems.</i>	
Collaboration Learning	<i>"... a coordinated, synchronous activity that is the result of a continued attempt to construct and maintain a shared conception of a problem." (Roschelle & Teasley, 1995, p. 70) People more or less at the same level, can perform the same actions, have a common goal and work together interact, synchronize, and negotiate a place for divergent views, misunderstanding and meaning making.</i>
Networking	<i>to sharing information and experiences across a variety of nodes does not necessarily involving collaboration. Learning together, advocacy, management, communication structure, diagnosis, exchange, comparison, and synthesis.</i>
Cooperation	<i>is sharing of information, activities, and dividing resources and responsibilities for mutual benefit to achieve a common goal (Huxham, 1996).</i>
Collective Learning	<i>is essentially a "social process that produces intellectual synergy of many minds coming together to bear on a problem, and the social stimulation of mutual engagement in a common endeavor. This mutual exploration, meaning-making, and feedback often leads to better understanding." (Bennis, 1997)</i>
<i>Team work, group dynamics, and learning</i>	
• <i>Work together to identify resources.</i> • <i>Set goals and development a clear vision, mission and evaluate them.</i>	

Figure 5. Handout on collaborative strategies. Image courtesy if the author.

raise everyone's awareness and skill by supporting critical and creative higher order thinking. In addition, we must consider self-assessment, peer-assessment, or goal setting from the group to further learning by collectively reflecting on tracking, and sharing group progress.

SHARING ASSESSMENT ACROSS THE GROUP AND INDIVIDUALS

As previously noted, updates offer a variety of opportunities for formative assessments. One of the requirements for my Group Seminar Collaborative Assignment is that the final presentation must feel like a whole, not separate parts. To promote unity, collaboration is used to produce a cohesive presentation and artifact, as well as within a component of the assessment rubric. A collaborative artifact and presentation pushes the process of negotiating beyond the comfort level of many art students. Personal, interpersonal, and community processes are all given value along with the final project. The value is clearly articulated at the introduction of the activity and as part of the final assessment. Students understand upfront that the evaluation is for the group effort and will include points from me, from themselves through self-reflection, and from peer group members (see Figure 6). In this instance, closure is important, so a quick summary in one or two words or an image is requested from the group, as well as briefly supporting their responses through discussion. The limited number of words or visuals compels students to synthesize and cross-analyze multiple sources of feedback to guide both the process and outcome. During this activity, collaborators begin strategizing their role individually and collectively for the final presentations and infographic resources.

FACULTY AND PEER EVALUATION

The decision to grade group work depends on the desired outcomes of the assignment. I consider the contribution to the group goals as well as the outcome. A student who was too busy to assist with the work is evaluated accordingly. Additionally, students participate as part of the group grading, that is, students are responsible for providing 10% of the evaluation and grade for their colleagues. After the group presentation and activity, each group is also given feedback by their peers in the audience. I do not collect these inputs; instead, they go directly to the group and are not part of my grading.

SUMMARY

Collaborative projects can be a powerful strategy in education. Thought must be given in implementing, monitoring, and evaluating collaborative projects that promote responsibility in the learning and research process. Collective learning offers an opportunity to provoke and facilitate learning tasks, while engaging critical and creative thinking within ourselves and others to build social competence. Collaboration emphasizes dialogue, and it places a social emphasis on role sharing and responsibility sharing within multiple communities. If planned well, collaboration with a social emphasis provides opportunities for flexible leadership and design thinking by embracing inquiry and change as conjoined entities of agency.

	Resource Handout INFOGRAPHIC (20 pts.)	Group Presentation	Total Score + Peer Assessment
Clarity	4.5	16	
Completeness	5	14 (parts)	
Presentation	3	13(as a whole)	(76.5) + (10/10 peer)
Audience Engagement	5	16	76.5 + 10= 86.5
	15.5/20	59/70	Final 86.5

Figure 6. Handout for evaluating by peers, the group, and myself.
Image courtesy if the author.

ENDNOTES

¹ Support for my collaborative research/projects was provided by the Virginia Center for Creative Arts (VCCA), Amherst, Virginia, and the Jentel Foundation, Banner, Wyoming.

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Integrative Teaching International: Rethinking Approaches to Foundation Teaching

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INTRODUCTION

Integrative Teaching International (ITI) identifies innovative approaches to higher education in the arts and creative practices by linking educational theory to practice. ITI advocates for progressive educational models and policies that support an environment of integrative teaching experiences across disciplines. ITI works with professionals in the field to define cross-disciplinary partnerships required in the new millennium between knowledge, creativity, and learning which are integral to student and teacher success in the 21st century. We encourage the implementation of a comprehensive foundations curriculum with supportive administrative structures that is carried forth into the other years of arts training. Such a program engages the student on intellectual and cultural levels through an awareness of the physical and psychological spaces inherent to the studio environment.

Founded in 2005 by Mary Stewart and Jim Elinski, ITI hosted the first ThinkTank in June 2006 at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago.¹ From the beginning, the primary objective has been to provide emerging educators with skills, knowledge, and a sense of community essential for effective teaching and to provide experienced educators with a fresh perspective on foundations curricula, pedagogy, and administrative strategies. Beyond ThinkTank, ITI also creates connections among other professional organizations with ThinkCatalyst, a one day program offered at the beginning of conferences like: the Southeastern College Art Association, Mid-American College Art Association, National Art Education Association, and of course FATE.

ThinkTank is a three-four day intensive, discussion based workshop where each group is tasked with one issue or idea to parse out for the rest of the attendees. Innovative concepts, teaching strategies, and exemplar activities—revolving around re-theorizing pedagogy, cross-disciplinary engagement, and critical thinking in the classroom, the value of ‘best practices’ in the studio, lecture hall, faculty meeting etc. take center stage. An organic momentum develops, peaking in the morning of the last day, as participants and facilitators work to articulate the conclusions that their group has reached after many hours of discussion. As the cohort and its facilitator establish mutual trust and confidence, the ideas and opinions of each member flourish, sometimes emerging with great urgency, as Eugene Rodriguez, a ThinkTank 5 participant stated, “I must cut to the chase because my students can no longer afford to wait....”²

ThinkTank 8, Big Sky Vision—Grounded Strategy will be held at Montana State University in

June 2014. More information, including the ThinkWire newsletter, FutureForward journal, and an Educators Showcase, may all be found at integrativeteaching.org.

INNOVATIONS IN FOUNDATION TEACHING³

If we consider foundations as a spine that holds together, and brings to life an entire degree program and as a bridge between high school and upper-level college art and design curricula, then we must understand foundations as a pivotal point of empowerment for a creative learner. The first-year studio is not simply a place where students jump through a series of hoops after which they move on to ‘real’ art/design-making, rather foundations is a place where students actively cultivate and hone the professional and creative mindsets required for success in the field. Foundations can inspire and engage students by fostering an environment where they think and act not only as individuals, but also as a community, and in so doing empowers them to recognize how the creative process functions in their own work and in the work of others. Foundations can be an environment that activates a student’s sense of self within the practice of art and design.

Through the formation of learning communities, the implementation of an inquiry-based curriculum and a host of other innovative practices, ITI encourages instructors to consider the foundations classroom as a place that “functions like an artist’s studio or progressive collaborative laboratory.”⁴ It is a rigorous and dynamic environment that invites learning through active questioning, playfulness, and failure. Such an environment shifts the focus of teaching from the art itself to the artist, who is human, fallible, and an ever-changing entity. This article brings to light pedagogical, curricular, and administrative practices and approaches to implement this kind of experience in the first-year studio.

INTEGRATIVE INNOVATION IN FOUNDATIONAL PROGRAMS

Integrative teaching refers to a responsive pedagogical approach that embraces and utilizes a wide range of teaching methods to facilitate student achievement.⁵ In this responsive form, an instructor is actively aware of the psychological and physical environment of the classroom and therein outfits his or her way of teaching so that the methods used are the most effective within an evolving context. These approaches encourage a fresh perspective on teaching and learning, from curriculum design to pedagogy and assessment.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The word curriculum implies action; it stems from the Latin word *currere* meaning 'to run'. Many foundations programs still impart a curriculum that is a belabored rite of passage in the form of repetitive exercises, but this does not have to be the reality.⁶ In order to develop greater student engagement and success ITI believes we must move beyond the past 100 years of content and methods and towards programmatic change that engages students with contemporary approaches to art. We must ask ourselves, "What are the most critical aspects in the practice of art that our students need to learn in relation to the culture in which they live and practice?"⁷ Moving beyond training students to use materials in relation to the elements and principles of art/design, foundation courses can focus on introducing students to structures of thought and perception. This approach, based on conceptual and contextual inquiry, allows formal and material skill sets to be developed in relation to the engaged student's interests.⁸

When seeking overall change, administrators and faculty often begin by reconsidering the structure of their foundations curriculum.⁹ In order to enact change on a programmatic level, the writing or re-writing of a mission statement and student learning outcomes by a group of stakeholders is a productive place to begin. For many years, Mary Stewart led a workshop at ThinkTank entitled "Mission to Outcome." This session helped emerging educators and administrators understand—when considering program, course, and project development—the importance of a programmatic mission statement and its fundamental connection to student learning outcomes. These descriptors can steer conversations about course curriculum and project development and set a tone for all faculty involved in the program. They can also be used to represent a program externally, when working with assessment, marketing, and similar issues. The writing and promotion of these statements is one way to publicly note that a change is underway or has already occurred.¹⁰

Not all instructors can influence programmatic change. As a result, ITI is determined to support and empower the part-time instructor, non-tenure track professor, and assistant professor, as well as the experienced instructor and administrator, in our discussions, research, and publications. ITI encourages instructors to recognize their influence in the studio classroom, to be responsive to their students, and to create a curriculum and working environment based on respect, trust, empathy and flexibility, where both they and their students thrive.¹¹ The success of this kind of approach may

also affect the outlook of their colleagues and thus cause further change to manifest organically. At the very least, we have found that this kind of localized innovation creates an environment where both faculty and students can thrive.

APPROACHES TO PEDAGOGY

Since we are charged with helping our students learn how to work in and through a creative practice, we must be creative ourselves and allow room for this rigorous process to exist. ITI promotes projects that challenge students to heighten their creative instincts, with the full knowledge that they may fail, partially or wholly, in the generative process. One of the ways that we encourage this type of learning is through the creation of a learning community—that is, a collective learning environment—that empowers and challenges students and instructors alike.

Fostering a rigorous learning process through community is essential in this day and age of collaborative work environments. An instructor, working as a responsive facilitator, fosters community-oriented learning through simple actions, particularly those that distribute leadership like: student contributions to images in a lecture, removing a teaching desk or other areas that imply a hierarchy, daily structured and informal peer reviews, casual critiques, and sincere openness to a variety of responses and challenges. This kind of learning community emphasizes commonality and collaboration because it relies upon input from each member for information and guidance.¹²

A learning community, as such, is one where trust, empowerment, risk, and flexibility or playfulness are valued attributes.¹³ In particular, we believe that play is a critical form in, and aspect of, the practice of contemporary art. Our publications, *State of Play I* and *II*, co-created by Stacy Isenbarger (University of Idaho) and Anthony Fontana (User Experience (UX) and Graphic Designer at GE Capital), explore the nature of play and methods used to meaningfully incorporate it into a curriculum.¹⁴ As a vehicle in a creative process, play is a permissive and yet competitive structure that promotes divergent or relational thinking. By pursuing divergence, students participate in complex thinking strategies and put pressure on both ideation and material manipulation to develop art specific to their interests and lives.

Play employs divergent thinking strategies and compels students to be curious and, importantly, to query their environments and learning processes as a matter of routine. This can be disorienting when first practiced, as many of our educational structures promote convergent or linear thought and a rule-following mentality. Play can be structured and strategic, silly, competitive, fluid, and intense while

encouraging a form of fearlessness. When projects and even project goals are presented in either the form of an actual game, or when presented with flexible responsiveness and openness to a variety of outcomes, students become more engaged in the process and thus take ownership of their own learning.¹⁵ As a result, the studio art classroom becomes a place where the indoctrination of rule following characteristic of K-12 education can be disassembled and students are free to generate their own questions in the same manner of a professional artist.¹⁶ When students play, students fail. This is to say, when at play, students experiment more freely in an iterative process of conceptualization and making towards a final outcome. ITI is interested in how the processes of risk taking and failure can be used in the learning process. Risk and failure ultimately empower the student artist to fully own his or her creative process. Every artist knows that the process of making sometimes, or often, ends with the punctuation mark of a trash can or dumpster. In teaching entry-level artists the full process of making, failure must be integrated into the paradigm as a normative aspect. Not failure through apathy, but failure within an iterative, intensive, engaged process of conception and making. If failure is permissible or accepted as a part of a larger process, greater risks will be taken and students will become more invested in generating non-prescribed final outcomes—that is, in making art.

Yet invoking failure means that faculty must also feel the productive discomfort of risk-taking. In other words, instructors must investigate a divergent process in project development, which means the authority of a truly correct answer is likely unavailable at any stage of a project. This pedagogical approach moves beyond the canon of exercises that typically constitute foundational coursework (color-wheel, value-scale, etc.) and allows for an honest creative practice to develop. Using failure as a marker for success may seem antithetical to our assessment culture, but it simply means requiring students to engage in a risky, intense, play-filled, and iterative process in which they must challenge themselves beyond an expected or obvious solution.

In order for students to fail repeatedly but continue to develop their work in constructive directions, they need to know that their studio community values and supports the entire process. In such a classroom, frequent critiques are the norm and students seek out the advice of their peers as well as the advice of the instructor. Critique is used as a constructive, not punitive, tool and is inserted into the iterative process of making. Advice given by the instructor will include prompting questions instead of one concrete solution, thus engaging the student in the practice of divergent thought. In such an en-

vironment, any rubric or noted objectives will include valued terms such as: process, iteration, inquiry, intermediate deadlines, risk-taking, critique contribution, open-minded approach, innovation based on peer review and the like. By placing these terms at the forefront of the course and/or project and evaluating student performance in relation to both process and outcome, the instructor sets the framework for an environment that values learning through inquiry and iteration, a.k.a. failure and play.

INNOVATIONS IN FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATOR ENVIRONMENTS

A supportive work environment for faculty and administrators—one that mimics the responsiveness described above—also engenders respect, engagement, and dynamism in the area of leadership. Thus, ITI has dedicated part of our programming towards an investigation of innovative leadership in the arts, inclusive of art/design, music, dance, theater, etc. When intentionally cultivated, a supportive work environment can become a learning community where all members are engaged in a rigorous, creative, and respectful process that directs them toward a unified goal. Leadership, then, is not the same as management, which is a form of overhead maintenance that merely allows a complex system to run.¹⁷ Rather, leadership is a method of direction that is genuinely influenced by and through the community that it seeks to empower. As such, the methods for creating a responsive leadership-based learning community in faculty/faculty and faculty/administrator spaces are similar to those employed in a studio classroom.

A “distributive leadership” model rests at the foundation of successful faculty and administration learning communities. Distributive leadership, an idea promoted by Dr. Richard Elmore, professor of Educational Leadership at Harvard University, describes “a broadly disseminated pattern of leadership operating throughout a school and school community, the organization being led collaboratively by many participants rather than by a single authoritative being with the power of delegation.”¹⁸ A top-down, hierarchical approach, with one person determining the direction for a group without consultation does not utilize the full resources available to that group. Moreover, it can engender disenfranchisement, foster non-engagement from faculty, and even breed resentment. Methods that foster distributive or shared leadership, however, largely avoid these issues. They create a more engaged community because this system empowers each member to work with his or her strengths and develop his or her peripheral skill sets. This is true in the studio classroom, the faculty or committee meeting, and in working with TAs and part-time

faculty. Approaches to distributive leadership include: group discussion-based meetings, meetings with committee chairs as facilitators, departments with rotating leadership positions, faculty retreats, and meetings held in neutral spaces and/or without imposing hierarchy. As a whole, these kinds of faculty/faculty and faculty/administrator environments are built on rigorous intellectual pursuits, respect, support, and reciprocity.¹⁹

We have found that this type of leadership, whether put into practice via the leadership of a foundations program or a department, responds well to new or shifting circumstances. Leaders involved must be intentional, aware of both physical and psychological environments, and guided by a clear vision in order to be effective. Their role in this scenario is one of facilitator, keeping the work and conversation of the group aligned with the vision and holding group members accountable for their participation in the group's activities.²⁰ When this vision is determined and fulfilled by all of the stakeholders in the group, everyone is more engaged in the process and usually welcomes change in the curriculum, program, course, department or school.

CONCLUSION

ITI research the format of our programming and our organizational structures. ThinkTank and ThinkCatalyst are based on the theory and practice of creating a responsive environment, concepts of community, fluidity, divergence, and, yes, play and risk-taking. It is our intention that each new program builds upon lessons learned in previous events and organically generates new knowledge about teaching and administration in art. While promoting these values, we equally inspire rigor in the work of all participants, educators and administrators alike. We ask participants to take what they have learned and return to their home institutions prepared to initiate relevant and necessary transformation. We support those who are ready and willing to foster those changes that we believe are required to support teaching and learning in a 21st century art practice.

This endeavor as one that is not only practical with regard to student development, but also makes clear the link between theory and practice—taking the often abstract “codes” or “paradigms” related to pedagogical research and putting them into accessible formats available for classroom use. In foundation courses, this involves considering the introduction of non-traditional learning objectives and projects related to ideas of play, failure, community, location, and identity, with the elements and principles taking an important but supportive role. While perceived as non-traditional, these concepts

or outcomes are contained in many pedagogical approaches, but remain unspoken or implied. Uniting theory and practice, in turn, highlights a second and related concept integral to ITI's mission—integrated education. Our goal of fostering “innovative approaches to higher education in the arts and creative practices” is one founded on inclusivity.²¹ Above all, we understand the foundations classroom as a site for fostering the holistic development of the artist. We ask students to engage in authentic as opposed to inauthentic (i.e. where the answer is already known, a component of traditional pedagogy) forms of problem solving in order to empower them as people and artists.²² As instructors and administrators, we can no longer passively acknowledge how our students learn, rather we must find ways to actively implement necessary changes in the classroom such that our students do indeed learn. Our methods are designed to foster vital connections ‘between knowledge, creativity, and learning’ required in the 21st century.²³

ENDNOTES

¹ ITI was originally called ITT ('Integrative Teaching Thinktank') until a name change, addressing the increased scope of the organization, was agreed upon in 2010. ThinkTank 1 included 25 educators and administrators from institutions from across the United States met for three days in Chicago to discuss and then define the nature of exemplary teaching. Participants, including Mary Stewart, Jim Elniski, Dr. Richard Siegesmund (then at the University of Georgia, now at Northern Illinois University), Cindy Helyer-Heinz (from Northern Illinois University), Dan Collins (from Arizona State University), and Adam Kallish (principal at Trope Collaborative and then an adjunct professor at Northern Illinois University); all have since played a pivotal role in ThinkTank's development.

² Eugene Rodriguez cited in Alison Crocetta et al, "Cultural, Conceptual, and Historical Frameworks," *FutureForward* 1, no. 1 (2010): 15.

³ The authors would like to thank Dr. Richard Siegesmund, Anthony Fontana, Mary Stewart and Jim Elniski for providing valuable feedback during the writing of this article, any errors in this text belong to the authors alone.

⁴ Sean Miller and Bethany Taylor, "Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning," *FutureForward* 1, no. 2 (2011): 50.

⁵ Michael Arrigo and Anthony Fontana, "Integrative Teaching," *FutureForward* 1, no. 2 (2011): 37.

⁶ Richard Siegesmund, "Defining and Refining Curriculum," *FutureForward* 1 no. 2 (2011): 7.

⁷ Siegesmund, "Defining and Refining Curriculum," 7.

⁸ Arrigo and Fontana, "Integrative Teaching," 37.

⁹ While we advocate innovative change, we also promote a considerate approach towards any major programmatic alteration. Thoughtful change offers deserved respect to previously existing curricula and programs, and is more likely to be well-received and understood by other professors and administrators, thus making them stakeholders in the process and the success of any new curriculum. For more information, see Rae Goodwin et al, "Contemporary Learning Communities," *FutureForward* 3, no. 1 (2012): 12-23.

¹⁰ This process can also be used for departments wishing to create and enact a strategic plan or other form of programmatic document.

¹¹ Michael Arrigo et al, "Learning Partnerships," *FutureForward* 2, no. 1 (2012): 11.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ See www.itt.squarespace.com/stateofplay for more information.

¹⁵ John Dewey spoke of the need for "flexible purposing" in education. As we engage in inquiry, we discover that our goals shift and thus new opportunities emerge. Flexible purposing allows the inquirer to wisely pivot and find new direction, therein adequately meeting the needs of a changed situation and, likewise, allowing authentic forms of inquiry to continue. See John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1938).

¹⁶ Anthony Fontana, "Introduction," *State of Play, FutureForward*, divergent methods for creative exchange, no. 2: (2012): iv

¹⁷ Bill Hill et al, "Transformative Leadership," *FutureForward* 2, no. 1, (2012): 35.

¹⁸ M. Keppell et al., "Transforming Distance Education Curricula through Distributive Leadership," *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks* 15, no. 4 (2011): 10.

¹⁹ Goodwin et al, "Contemporary Learning Communities," 13-17.

²⁰ Bill Hill et al, "Transforming Leadership," 37.

²¹ "Mission Statement," Integrative Teaching International, www.integrativeteaching.org/ITI_mission (accessed June, 14 2013).

²² For further discussion of authentic and inauthentic problems (and the cultures of education that they describe or typically characterize), see S.B. Heath, *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

²³ "Mission Statement," Integrative Teaching International.

BOOK REVIEWS

Book Review:
After Art
by
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Teaching contemporary art history at an undergraduate level to young art students full of hope, ideas, and a strong desire to engage with what is new, what is hot, what is interesting, and what is contemporary poses many challenges; often the various ways in which we approach teaching the subject range so widely no one path seems more appropriate or efficacious than another. One problem, however, has always struck me as a constant irritant: every semester, it seems, I am bombarded with advertisements for new textbooks (or, even worse, new editions of textbooks) that are cited as being the perfect solution to teaching contemporary art. I dutifully request examination copies and, invariably, I am either disappointed or appalled. The reason for my negative reaction is not that the books are bad but that they fail to address their targeted primary audience—studio art students, since art history students are another matter entirely—in a practical fashion while providing a source of inspiration. Even when the text purports to address studio students there is often a poor balance between developing an engagement with contemporary art and ideas about artistic practice; either the text drivels away at how awe-inspired we should feel at the product of creativity, or it fades away from talking about art in favor of discussions of technique. At first glance, *After Art* by David Joselit, Carnegie Professor of the History of Art at Yale University, doesn't seem to be addressing these issues at all; one could argue that *After Art* is a theoretical treatise stuck within its ideas, having little to do with the concerns of studio students, containing no practical information whatsoever. I contend, however, that Joselit's book deceptively inserts itself into a discourse on studio practice in a manner that is enervating, constructive, elucidating and challenging regardless of its central premise. For aspiring artists *After Art* might be a perfect book to get them inspired and prepared for the changes that are taking place in the contemporary art world right now.

Discomfortingly, Joselit's book discusses architecture and newer art forms and avoids almost entirely the traditional arts because of their outmoded attendant sense of location. The emphasis on buildings, installations, photography, video, and conceptual art marks Joselit as embracing a declining value for the older mediums such as paintings and sculpture which, when they appear, are utilized primarily as indications of past efforts that are slipping away from relevancy. Setting out to describe the current state of contemporary art, Joselit works specific examples into a topographic framework. Articulating a dynamic relationship between object and meaning that is dependent on an avoidance of interpretation and a construction of an unfolding dialectical forces, what emerges are artistic

practices enacting both the inwardly directed desire to understand and interpret experiences of the world while redirecting the resulting object's utility outwards. All of this is based on what appears to be a truism for Joselit: the products that appear in the contemporary art world today exist at an intersection between value and form, functioning as a currency that is easily translatable across boundaries but which is increasingly divorced from traditional methods of production and, therefore, resist simple monetization. This means two things: First, products that have been monetized in the same fashion that capitalism monetizes everything—traditional art having become analogous to monetary devices disassociated from the real world, such as the overly complicated monetary devices that brought about recent economic woes worldwide—are no longer of any real importance and their role merely as an exchange rather than an aesthetic value has far more significance only to the elite members of the art world. Second, almost contradictorily, art is rooted in a sense of specific locatedness, predicated by its origins, while increasing its values through its capacity to be translated beyond its point of origin. The second point is rooted in a rejection of Walter Benjamin's well known thesis of reproduction, which Joselit believes fails not because it was inappropriate for its time but because it is inadequate for the current age of pervasive imagery: "Benjamin's essay can hardly account for the revolutions in image production and circulation initiated by media like television, the Internet, and mobile phones since its publication in the mid-1930s. His brilliant analysis has become a roadblock."¹ Quick to reassure the reader of the value of "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," the loss of aura that Benjamin describes is, nevertheless, no longer relevant because it is dependent on the idea of image fundamentalism that is counter to Joselit's notion of images "experiencing cascading chains of relocation and remediation. Images are no longer and probably can never again be site specific."² While Benjamin's loss of aura is often understood as a near annihilation of the continuing power of images, with other interpretations countering that position by claiming such an outcome as a democratization of images, for Joselit the loss of aura must continue to be considered a loss in all of its negativity that is necessarily tied to the creation of value through literal scarcity. Still, for Joselit, there are attendant gains as well.

What are these gains? Disregarding simple centralized accessibility as the justifying force behind cultural institutions, Joselit claims that "it is saturation through mass circulation—the status of being everywhere at once rather than belonging to a single place—that now produces value for

and through images.”³ Quite simply, the art that is in the world means more, is more valuable, than the art stuck in what the Futurists would label “absurd abattoirs of painters and sculptors ferociously slaughtering each other with color-blows and line-blows, the length of the fought-over walls”⁴ that are our museums. This is codified by Joselit in art consisting of emergent or distributive forms, by which he means imagery that is dynamic across a spectrum defined by the polarities of location and mobility; imagery that is clearly locatable but is also translatable. In this we have the first real moment of inspiration for foundation students. Extending Joselit’s conclusion back to the early days of modernism, whose history so often constructs the mythology of artistic educational practices to this day, we reached an impasse when the encroachment of digital technology has become complete. If students today are going to succeed in the art world, they are not going to do so by negotiating an outdated terrain; given the flexibility inherent in digital artistic production to cross borders while retaining its point of origin, it is increasingly not only a necessity but an opportunity to produce art wherein the goal is a point of saturation through emergent and distributive forms that simultaneously embody their origins, with Joselit noting their emphasis on a shift “from an object-based aesthetics... to a network aesthetics premised on the emergence of form from populations of images.”⁵ For Joselit, identifying this shift is an opportunity for the creation of a new critical methodology; for myself, this is an opportunity for a new criteria of artistic educational practice.

Nowhere is this more true than Joselit’s centripetal topography of art, meaning that the external forces inherent in the creation of art move inwardly towards a substantiation of the art object; one could theorize this as a mantra to return to the object, an attenuation to all of the influences, ideas, facticities, ephemera, and practical consideration being increasingly intertwined and dependent on each other to produce a nexus that explodes out of its place, its point of origin, to have more than just a broader appeal but a universal applicability while retaining its local flavor. Coupled with this notion of centripetality, Joselit offers a further opportunity with his use of the term ‘format’ rather than ‘medium’ to describe contemporary practice; format signifies a greater sense of heterogeneity and provisionality, in part because the emphasis on format can function as an aggregation that configures forces rather than restricts them to a predetermined and limited set of facets. Here Joselit builds on and extends beyond Nicolas Bourriaud’s relational aesthetics in that the notion of format dialectically bridges the gap between audience and

object⁶ that is built on a sense of trust between artist and the art world as an “event within a population of images”⁷ that may depend on transgressive strategies but which elucidates further opportunities for engagement.

Joselit is identifying specific shifts in today’s art world: a move away from traditional mediums in favor of new formats, with an attendant shift in terminology that is less restrictive; a rejection of the object as a vehicle for monetary value in favor of a pervasive effect on the world where value is created through the spread of ideas that naturally are networkable; an emphasis on universality and immediate comprehension rather than on specialized translations and interpretative procedures; a constant flexibility enabled by digital tools; and a shift in the way objects are thought about, as nexuses that retain their distinctiveness but engage the audience in a manner driven by necessity. More than just identifying trends, however, Joselit’s text is an indirect opportunity for studio students to engage with issues in contemporary art; to create art within the context of these issues is an opportunity, regardless of whether they are agreed to or not. Despite its confusing title—‘after’ is not intended in the same way as ‘post’ but rather as a reference, a sign of pursuit, an honorific reproduction—*After Art* could be read simply as another study of contemporary art but it is, I believe, more of a manifesto of what art could be today and one that I highly recommend for faculty and students at the foundation level.

ENDNOTES

¹ Joselit, David, *After Art*, (Princeton & London: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 13.

² Ibid., 14.

³ Ibid., 16.

⁴ Marinetti, F.T., "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism", (Paris) *Le Figaro*, February 20, 1909, (Futurism: Manifestos and Other Resources, www.unknown.nu/futurism/manifesto.html)

⁵ Joselit, 43

⁶ Ibid., 66

⁷ Ibid., 89

Book Review:
Josef Albers: To Open Eyes
by
Frederick Horowitz

REVIEWED BY ELAINE S. WILSON

Professor Emerita

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Frederick Horowitz, artist, art educator, writer, and a passionate champion of the work and teaching philosophy of Josef Albers died on September 12, 2013 in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Professor Elaine Wilson reviewed his book *Josef Albers: To Open Eyes* in *FATE in Review* volume 29,. The following is a brief obituary of Professor Horowitz and a revised copy of her original review. On the heels of the 2013 postHaus conference in Savannah, it seems particularly fitting to remember Professor Horowitz, his dedication to FATE, and to the lessons learned from his professor, Josef Albers.

IN MEMORIAM

Frederick Horowitz was born and raised in New Haven, CT and attended Yale University, earning a BA in English in 1960 and a BFA in Painting in 1962. His life was forever changed when he enrolled in Josef Albers's drawing class. Although he later went on to do an MFA in painting at the University of Michigan (1964), his contact with Albers was defining. In his book, *Josef Albers: To Open Eyes*, co-authored by Brenda Danilowitz and first published in 2006 by Phaidon, Fred recounts the comment Albers made about one of his drawings of the textural quality of a log of wood:

In his crit of one day's results, Albers singled out a drawing in which repeated black strokes of a soft pencil had jabbed a hole in the newsprint. "Yah," he exclaimed with delight, and only half ironically, "this boy is getting into it!"

Horowitz spent thirty-five years teaching Drawing, Design, Color, and Art Appreciation at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor. He mentored countless students who went on to become artists. Many of his students were older individuals whose lives were deeply enriched by his courses.

At WCC Fred taught the Art Appreciation course, and wrote *More Than You See, A Guide To Art*, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in 1985 to be used in his class, and widen it to a broader audience. This text is different from most other textbooks for Art Appreciation and Art History in that it doesn't present artworks in a chronological order, or group them by "ism"; rather, it presents a series of questions about looking at a wide range of paintings and objects. These questions continually challenge the reader to think for her or himself, and the text doesn't necessarily provide answers.

In 1992 Fred began thinking about writing a book about Albers's teaching. Brenda Danilowitz, chief curator at the Albers Foundation in Bethany, CT, worked with him and coauthored the book. His

research led him to interview numerous artists who studied with Albers, and to ask them about Albers's presence in the classroom and studio as well as about the impact and import of the particular projects he assigned. Research at the archives of the Bauhaus, Black Mountain College, Yale University as well as the Albers Foundation led to a rich trove of material, which eventually became *Josef Albers: To Open Eyes*. This groundbreaking book has changed the teaching of numerous younger artists.

Fred's mentoring did not stop with students. He routinely worked with the part-time faculty that he recruited to teach many sections of the studio art and art appreciation classes. This included discussing course assignments and curriculum, student behavior, grading policy and the other young artists' own work. He created an atmosphere of cooperation and collegiality within the art area at the community college that made it a unique place for the overworked and underpaid adjunct faculty to work: a laboratory for good teaching. He was honest and generous with everyone, while holding all to his own high standards.

After retiring from WCC in 2003, Fred continued to lecture and give presentations and workshops on Albers and on Color and Design around the country (including FATE conferences in 1997 and 2003, at Black Mountain College Museum, and Art Center in Asheville, NC). Abroad he taught workshops at art schools in Mexico City and Jerusalem.

His recent research at the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation expanded to include close examinations of a number of Josef's Homage to the Square paintings. He developed his thoughts into a manuscript now awaiting publication. This text is unlike any other that I know of about this body of work, as it looks closely at the way in which Albers's color choices interact with each other in specific ways, and describes poetically their effect after long looking. Most people don't spend the amount of time in front of one of these works to have the experience Fred describes. Hopefully more of them will.

BOOK REVIEW

The text, *Josef Albers: To Open Eyes* first published in 2006 by Phaidon and authored by Brenda Danilowitz and Fred Horowitz, examines the teaching of Josef Albers, who may have done more than any other individual in the last century to promote the notion of a Basic Design course as part of a Foundations program. Where most recent Basic Design texts and courses are organized around a set of so called principles of design, Albers probably never used the word principles. Rather he focused the students' attention on exploring the nature of visual perception and on the nature and potentials of a variety of materials. Believing in practice be-

fore theory, he allowed the students to experience drawing, painting, and rearranging and reordering a variety of materials before discussing with them what constituted a real discovery. In fact, in his teaching about the behavior of color, he refuted many of the claims of his teacher Johannes Itten as well as the rules or systems that most teaching about color had tried to establish. Just about the only sure thing that he might have claimed about color was that our perception of it is always relative, always subject to particular relationships and the given set of circumstances.

In *Josef Albers: To Open Eyes*, Danilowitz and Horowitz explain clearly and succinctly how Albers developed his courses in Design, Drawing, Color, and Painting to explore with the students what qualities were essential to exciting visual experience. It is not a textbook, but a book for teachers and advanced students who want to rediscover the excitement and fundamental core of Albers's classes. If one understands the underlying ideas that formed the exercises Albers gave, then introducing these exercises into one's courses yields a deep learning for the student. The projects and ideas are as vital and valid now as they ever were.

The book is divided into two sections. Section I: 'Teaching Design: A short history of Josef Albers,' written by Brenda Danilowitz, curator at the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, traces his educational background and the complex forces within the Bauhaus, Black Mountain College, and Yale that shaped those schools and the ways in which Albers placed his imprint on them. Danilowitz deftly sums up Albers's ideological differences with Gropius, Kandinsky, Itten, and Klee and the tensions around the evolution and final closing of the Bauhaus in 1933. She discusses Albers's emigration to the United States and his sixteen years at the Black Mountain College, his journeys to Mexico and South America to explore Pre-Colombian art, and his reinvigoration of the Yale School of Art, building it into one of the most respected art programs in the United States if not the world. If you want to understand why Albers thought and taught as he did and how he impacted the people and institutions where he taught, this chapter is essential.

Albers was educated in Germany at the Bavarian State School of Art, and studied at the Bauhaus from 1920 to 1923. He developed his teaching at the Bauhaus where he was on the faculty from 1923 to 1933, at Black Mountain College in Asheville, North Carolina, from 1933 to 1947, and at the School of Art at Yale University where he taught until his retirement in 1959. These three schools were crucibles out of which came three generations of influential and exciting artists. The people who studied with Albers, some of whom loved him and some of whom

didn't, speak about their contact with him and with his passion and ideas as transforming.

Many of the artists who studied with Albers went on to teach themselves, and some of his ideas became part of the fabric of Foundations coursework around the country at art schools and colleges. But over the years much of what he believed in became stiffened or distorted, his revolutionary course 'Color' renamed 'Color Theory,' his personal preference for clean line recast as a rigid upholding of geometry over all.

If what you want to know is how Albers did it in the classroom, turn to Section II, the four chapters written by Frederick Horowitz, describing and analyzing the Design, Drawing, Color, and Painting courses. Horowitz says in his introduction,

Albers was a revolutionary whose ideas and practices liberated art training from the academy and shaped it into something fresh and forward looking. Despite (or because of) his impact, his pedagogical ideas are today often distorted and misunderstood, and the classroom practices that brought them to life are a fading memory. Widely perceived as a rigid theoretician who hammered squares into his students' heads, Albers in reality shunned theory and rejected orthodoxy: Bauhaus, modernist, or otherwise.¹

Horowitz's lucid text describes not only the projects that Albers devised, but his particular way of presenting the material to his students. Rather than describe principles and create two or three-dimensional designs that were supposed to utilize or exemplify these principles, Albers program of study used open ended assignments to set in motion a series of discoveries about materials and relationships.

Horowitz's research at the Bauhaus archives, Black Mountain College archives, and the Albers Foundation in Bethany, Connecticut, as well as countless interviews with students and Albers's still surviving colleagues, helped him meticulously select and describe illustrations of student projects from all three schools. These images dovetail with the text to provide clarity to the descriptions of what went on in the classes. Illustrations of design projects and drawing exercises supplement the better-known examples of color projects from *Interaction of Color*.

Albers believed in three things above all: the importance of a single simple visual idea; the importance of the figure-ground relationship; and as a corollary or outcome of those two ideas, an emphasis on economy of means. In fact, if you think about those three ideas they are all ways of describing the same thing. These are not principles; rather, they

are guidelines that govern an approach to experimentation with discipline. Horowitz stresses that for Albers these were not guidelines just for art making, but for living life, a philosophical, moral, and political stance.

In the chapter on Design, Horowitz outlines several projects that were at the core of Albers's teaching. 'Material Studies' were primarily three-dimensional. (Albers did not separate Design into two and three dimensional, preferring to have them mixed together as part of the same course. One can see that this way lessons learned in two dimensions are immediately related to lessons in three dimensions.) Albers chose simple cheap materials such as wire, paper, or wood, encouraging students to be creative with whatever was at hand. These materials are no longer new in our classes, but he would probably now be encouraging students to work with a new variety of available materials.

What did they do with these materials?
Horowitz writes,

Albers's pointedly casual (and casually pointed) directions guided the students without directing them toward any specific result. Distributing drinking straws to one class, Albers said, 'Take what you want or need; make what you think can be made of it. Try to make something that could only be made of drinking straws, not of knitting needles, lengths of wire, or spaghetti. Think about the limits of their strength, their particular structure, texture, rigidity, and color. What you make should amount to more than the sum of your drinking straws. For us, 2+2 must equal 5.'²

Horowitz then carefully describes Albers's evaluation of the results of the projects, where he laid out his concerns for economy of means, the figure ground relationship and the single, simple, visual idea. While Albers found a wide variety of results exciting, he was not afraid to say what was not interesting.

Another project Horowitz describes is the 'Matieres.' Distinct from the Material Studies, these studies were designed to awaken in the student an awareness of and appreciation for all types of tactile and visual textures, and the way that combinations and juxtapositions of a wide variety of materials can reveal similarities and differences as well as point up particularities of the materials. Horowitz suggests that these studies gave students a more acute and fresh way of seeing, and acknowledges the similarity to the Dadaists' approach to materials.

Students were asked to search out textures from every imaginable source—the woods, the dump, the office, the garage, and the kitchen—and

place them together in new and unexpected combinations. The intriguing thing about these studies is how absolutely open they were in form and in expectation. Sometimes a study would be praised for how one material mimicked the other material. (One illustration shows pieces of matzoh side by side with squares of corrugated cardboard.) Sometimes a study would be juxtapositions of opposite textures. What they were not were art objects. These studies typified Albers's belief that students were in school not to make art but to study, and as such he warned the students against cleverness and preciousness.

Other projects were aimed at rearranging or reordering materials. Some of these were three-dimensional, some, two-dimensional. Students rearranged pages of newspapers, photographic images, the weave of burlap, or type developed with manual typewriters. The concern was not to create an art object, but to reveal a new, surprising structure to overlooked, everyday forms.

Horowitz clearly explains these projects, and discusses how Albers developed them and represented them in varying ways at the three schools in succession. He describes how the circumstances and limitations of each school were used creatively by Albers to further his teaching. At Black Mountain College for instance, where the classroom was often the front porch of the dining hall, he would lay projects out on the floor for discussion, use the architecture of the dining hall itself as a lesson in structure, or take students out into the surrounding woods to examine lichen, moss, and other natural materials, discussing the textures of each for its own particular individual qualities.

Many of the approaches to image making that we only associate with our current era—an openness to the entire visual environment, an interest in Pre-Colombian, African, or other indigenous art forms, and an interest in children's unfettered approach to materials and form—were fundamental to Albers's thinking. His trips to Mexico and South America led him to bring back slides of Mayan and Incan art to use as examples in the classroom.

Albers was as interested in the questions as the solutions. But he was interested in understanding the logic of formal relationships and in planning—in thinking ahead. He valued clear, conscious thinking over spontaneity but he himself never gave any lesson the same way twice—instead investing the teaching process with a sense of drama, play, and discovery.

Horowitz's examination of the Drawing course reveals a great deal of overlap with the Design course, but also reiterates one of Albers's primary concerns: that students are in art school to study and not to make art. Drawing classes were not for self-expression but for the expression of form

and materials. Because of this the basic drawing courses focused on the articulation of form, on understanding through drawing how forms are structured, but also the nature of the two dimensional page as form. He devised many exercises which were designed to lead the student both to a greater control of materials, but also a greater understanding of the conceptual world of the two dimensional page. He taught students to visualize.

Each exercise assigned would yield multiple results, and often be beautiful in their own right. One, in orthography, taught not only visualization skills but also an understanding of good design. He used traditional letter and number forms—such as the Bodoni ‘S’ as tools to teach an understanding of proportion and skill at forming precise curves free-hand. Built into this exercise was an explication of how the parts relate to the whole—not just of the letterform, but of the entire page in the students’ drawing pad on which multiple studies were drawn.

Horowitz examines with care many of the exercises but also explains Albers’s balancing of the careful exercises with freer studies that were designed to release the students’ motor sense and spontaneous line making. He describes how Albers would bring in simple everyday objects for students to draw from observation, and the pains he would take in analyzing the structure of these forms, exhorting students to go beyond lazy looking and draw what was actually there in front of them.

Constantly emphasizing the importance of an intellectual understanding of what they were drawing, he talked to his students about structure, how things fit together, how they worked. With an engineer’s insistence on clarity, he urged that the thickness of the object, however narrow or fine, be depicted. Places where planes began or ended, overlapped or hinged or disappeared from view—where as he put it, the ‘action’ occurred—were to be drawn with special care, and accented by darkening the lines so as to draw the viewer’s attention to them. If part of an object was too small to draw clearly, an enlarged detail could be made off to the side.³

This chapter presented many exercises that seemed like old friends to me from my drawing classes as a student (one of my teachers was a student of Albers), but it also presented many more that I did not know. What it does for all these exercises is explain specifically why Albers thought they were important and the way in which he alternated and interrelated them. Horowitz makes them more than just a group of clever things to do with students. He describes how they built both manual and conceptual thinking.

The chapter on the Color course goes beyond Interaction of Color to discuss why Albers dispensed with the word ‘theory’ and focused instead on the behavior of color. He describes how Albers developed the course over time beginning at the Bauhaus. The focus of many artists at the Bauhaus had been a search for universal laws and principles. Itten, Klee, and Kandinsky all were interested in examining theories and systems. Albers used some of their experiments and exercises, but saw their benefit as one of sensitizing the students’ eyes rather than proving a theory. He continued developing the course at Black Mountain College where he initiated the leaf studies as a way to supplement the found papers he preferred as a tool. A student remembers that he brought a large trove of papers to class in a suitcase to be used by everyone. The class was by nature collaborative as well as competitive; each student shared materials and discoveries, each one egged on by the others’ work to something new of their own.

Horowitz is particularly delighted by Albers’s use of language in the classroom. He offers several of Albers’s quotes in critique describing the way colors interact in very associative terms, likening their combinations to flavors, smells, family connections, political interactions, and polite conversation. These poetic flights bring Albers alive and show us that he was not always the buttoned up tyrant of legend, but could be playful and lighthearted.

One of the qualities of Horowitz’s text that I think Albers would have appreciated is the modesty of his writing. Horowitz aims for simplicity and clarity. He does not draw attention to his own writing style; rather, he uses simple, descriptive prose to explain as clearly as possible what Albers was aiming for. It is as though he took to heart Albers’s notion that the good designer is someone who sets something in motion and then steps aside to let the material and the design itself take over and dictate how it should be completed. Nothing in the way he writes gets in the way of us understanding what he has to say.

I have some issues with the design of the text that makes it difficult to actually read: size and color of font, decisions about margins and lack of indentations or spacing to indicate paragraph change, all impinge on readability. But don’t let my criticisms of the layout stop you from getting a good reading light, making sure your eyeglass prescription is up to date, and sitting down to read this book. I believe it is exactly what is needed at this time, when art educators are reassessing the fundamentals. I don’t think the advent of digital or ephemeral or performance media have changed the guidelines that Albers stressed. His emphasis on the nature

of perception is still of vital importance, and the beauty of the single, simple, visual idea has not disappeared with a change of tools.

I have every intention of using the projects described in the design chapter in my fall class, as I have been using the color projects for the last ten years. I have renewed energy for the task, after discovering the enthusiasm, energy, and moral commitment Albers brought to his teaching.

ENDNOTES

¹ Brenda Danilowitz and Frederick Horowitz, *Josef Albers: To Open Eyes*, (New York and London: Phaidon Press Inc., 2006), 6.

² *Ibid.*, 103.

³ *Ibid.*, 177.

THE STATE OF FATE

THE STATE OF FATE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR FATE IN REVIEW

STACY ISENBARGER

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COMMUNITY GROWTH

Over the past year, the FATE board has continued to work in the service of a wider reaching, connective community. In appreciation of FATE's mission and our own enriching firsthand experiences through various FATE outreach outlets, we volunteer to keep networks of foundational pedagogical exchange in the visual arts thriving. Supported by the efforts of our board, FATE's voice was shared through various regional events, CAA and SECAC conference sessions, project shares, Facebook discussions and now, volume 35 of *FATE in Review*.

At the time of this writing, with 479 individual members, our network of emerging and experienced educators continues to seek innovation, enriching dialog, and the kind of positive momentum we know has the power to shift young artists and designers forward professionally. In addition to this individual membership, we also note that FATE cannot do what we do without the consistent contributions from our 67 supporting institutions.

I often note that energy I have to offer in my classrooms has become exponentially greater through the shared experience and perspectives offered by others in the FATE membership. Thank you.

FINANCIAL STRENGTH AND CONNECTIVITY

In 2012 FATE modernized our business structure. In addition to our conference vendors, corporate sponsorship has grown further through the savvy of Raymond Gaddy, FATE Vice President of Development. We currently have seven corporate sponsors contributing \$23,000. With the eight additional vendors at the Savannah College of Art and Design's postHaus conference, corporate support totals \$28,550. Furthermore, our transition to Memberclicks software for our website and online credit card payment system, and the excellent attendance at the postHaus conference, FATE is financially solid.

Building off of FATE's past Vice President of Communications Jerry Johnson's assistance to move to electronic communication, Membership Coordinator Colleen Merrill and Vice President of Communications Greg Skaggs have been instrumental in making these new structures more useful and operative. Through their efforts and others on the board, we are continuing to address best practices for membership communication and connectivity through FATE web outreach.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE: TECTONIC SHIFTS

The 2015 biennial conference is taking shape. Hosted by the Herron School of Art and Design at Indianapolis University (IUPUI), Tectonic Shifts:

Breaking New Ground, will offer a variety of sessions examining how the forces of change are shifting foundations curricula. Thanks to the efforts of our Vice President for the Biennial Conference William Potter, with Sherry Stone and the rest of their team at Herron, this event will connect innovative arts educators from around the nation and internationally. American artist, art director, illustrator, and puppeteer Wayne White will be the Tectonic Shifts keynote speaker. Known for his highly acclaimed documentary *Beauty is Embarrassing* and his role as designer for the hit television show *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, White's reflections on his varied career will be a noteworthy addition to the four day event. Please plan to join us and share your own creative and pedagogical research March 25-28, 2015.

RESEARCH AND PEDAGOGICAL EXCHANGE

FATE regional gatherings have brought together communities of artists, designers, historians, and educators who wish to share their goal of making the foundational experience more immersive in their area. Consider organizing or attending a FATE event in your region. Many have run successful events in a variety of formats from brownbag lunch sessions to longer events focused on various approaches to strengthening foundations pedagogy and building a strong network of academic support in a wider community. If you would like further information, please contact Valerie Powell, Vice President for Regional Coordinators. She is ready to share her enthusiasm and offer you the support necessary to run a creative and productive event.

Also, look out for future 2014-15 FATE sponsored sessions at CAA, SECAC, and MACAA. FATE Affiliate Representatives, Chris Kienke, Brent Dedas, and Chris Olszewski will each host sessions that bring our conversations to a wider audience.

Thanks to efforts of our new editor Mary Preis and her team, this volume of *FATE in Review* showcases the increasingly critical dialog among us. The articles support our mission to explore the breadth and depth of our disciplines and contribute to the theory of foundation pedagogy while offering practical tools. As contemporary artistic practices become more complex, foundations curricula must to the same. From drawing ("the probity of art") to 2D, 3D, and 4D design; critical thinking, reading, and writing; techniques for working independently as well as collaboratively and as socially engaged citizens, there is a nearly endless array of topics to be explored. We hope to continue to address topics old and new from a contemporary point of view. Submissions for next year are already being accepted!

AND AGAIN, THANK YOU

Taking a cue from FATE's 2015 conference Tectonic Shifts, the predominately re-designed FATE board is carrying our predecessors' collective force forward. Looking back at my first year as President, I cannot help but recognize past leadership for their support as I have transitioned into FATE's trajectory. I would like to extend extra thanks to all who serve with me on the FATE board. As a team of valued colleagues whose collective, creative drive and generosity continuously pushes our mission forward, I am sincerely thankful to the layers of support that keep FATE both the "friendly conference" and force of academic rigor and innovation.

And thanks to you for your investment in FATE. Your genuine spirit and dedication to foundational teaching is greatly appreciated.

ABOUT FATE

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FATE logo

Philip B. Meggs
(1942-2002)

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