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Buzz Words to Remember: Time, Culture, and Change

Time changes cultures. Sources reviewed highlight the desire and need to analyze and reevaluate goals for art education within changing cultures. Important ideas were (1) reflection on past theorems in order to update today's curriculum as noted by Robinson (2010); (2) evaluation of today's issues and incorporation of what is significant and meaningful to living life, as discussed by Stuhr (2003); (3) collaboration in formulating sustainable plans for our present and future world, as referenced by Blandy (2011), Gude (2009), and Robinson (2010).

In 2010, Robinson's video clip engaged the audience by drawing cartoons with simultaneous text in writing and audible speech. He illustrated that the problem in trying to revamp public education lies in people "trying to meet the future by doing what we did in the past" (p.2). He pointed out flaws in this paradigm and the need to "go in the exact opposite direction" (p.3) as the basis for change. He suggested divergent thinking as the "essential capacity for creativity" (p.3) noting that the age-old quest for one right answer should be replaced by the thirst for finding multiple answers.

A present-day evaluation of issues in art education was stressed by Stuhr (2003) when she questioned the figurative loudness of her voice, but clearly expressed her desires:

> I want an art education that helps students actively participate in a world that has reverence for life and values social justice….an important component of it would have to deal with the investigation of social and cultural issues from multiple personal, local, national, and global perspectives. (p. 303)

She ended her tale by pondering other possible areas to explore, such as increasing outreach, and connecting with people of all ages and from multiple destinations. "After all…isn't this what we are also asking of our future and present art teachers and their students?" (p.313).

With Stuhr's reminder to look towards the future, collaboration may be the key for affective change. Visions for the future often include sustainability and participatory culture as noted by Blandy (2011), democracy as noted by Blandy (2011) and Gude (2009), and the push for collaboration made by Blandy (2011), Gude (2009), and Robinson (2010). At the root of collaboration is the power of group dynamics in recognizing obstacles, tolerating differences, formulating plans, and reconstructing new ideas. Blandy noted that collaborations may be found in networks to consist of various community and civic centers. Gude wrote that collaborations form when many voices are considered in a democratic life that embracing different views. Robinson stressed that collaboration is essential when considered "the stuff of growth" (p. 4).

Buzz Words that Unify: Culture, Sustainability, Democracy, and Self

Culture was one buzz word that unified these authors' works. As defined by Stuhr (2003) it "provides beliefs, values, and the patterns that give meaning and structure to life. It enables individuals within the multiple social groups of which they are a part to function effectively in their social and cultural experience" (p.303). Culture would therefore allow for multiple aims of contemporary art education to develop over time.

Sustainability refers to the "ability of a place or a community to meet the needs of its current citizens without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their full range of human needs" (Committee on Identifying Data Needs for Place-Based Decision Making, 2002, p.3) as referenced by Blandy (2011, p.2). Hence, sustainability requires that citizens be considerate, thoughtful, evaluative, and innovative in looking to the future.

Democracy is "performed by working with others, building consensus, designing inclusive discussions, resolving conflict, acting on common concerns, and planning for the future" (Blandy, 2011, p.252). "As democratic citizens, we must believe that what we do affects the world around us, that what we do makes a difference" (Gude, 2009, p.1). Gude continued to note that democracy "requires that difference be perceived not as an assault on selfhood, but as an invitation to be a fuller, more open self who incorporates the sensations and experiences of others into one's own perceptions of the world and into one's contributions to collective decision making" (p. 4).

Self, as defined by Gude (2009), is someone who is able to stand alone and

> is itself a society, a drawing together of many ways of feeling, being, perceiving, receiving, thinking, making and expressing. The self is not coherent, unified, singular. A thoughtful person in the 21st century's 'self-identification,' identifying internal multiplicity, contradictions, and incompleteness-accepts the complex and always shifting nature of the self. The artistically aware person recognizes deeply felt aspects of experience that are irreducibly ambiguous, beyond words and beyond representation. (p.3)

Individual citizens and societies with a solid sense of self should and must look to others for collaboration in making positive future strides.

Buzz Words put to Work: Our Journey through Time

Using the elements of time, culture, and change in my classroom, I will focus on making it real for today's learners. In a non-school classroom of six students, meeting weekly for two hours, I could teach "Our Journey through Time" and put the buzz of theory to work. Students would be asked to explore the idea of time, with connections to science and technology, history and geography, cultures and society, and how time has played a role in art. Art exploration would be guided by student suggestions on how to illustrate, literally and figuratively, their thoughts and ideas. References could be made

to connect past art, such as Salvador Dali's 1931 oil painting *The Persistence of Memory* (in collections of Museum of Modern Art) with "0 to 60: An NCMA Exhibition" currently on view at the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) in Raleigh http://0to60ncma.tumblr.com/. NCMA is a valuable community-based resource for art education, especially when citizens live nearby to take advantage of workshops, camps, and programs. Although Clinton is located approximately seventy miles south of Raleigh, in rural Sampson County my students and I have benefited from prearranged docent-led student tours at NCMA.

Part 1 would focus on natural time and man's time. What is time? How did time measurement evolve? How did different cultures measure and value time? Part 2 would focus on events that led to universal units of time and contemporary models of time pieces: clocks, watches, calendars, etc. In Part 3 students would illustrate and discuss their individual predictions for a 2020 time piece. These ideas would be secured in a class time capsule to be revealed later. Collaborative efforts during Part 4 would result in a group project to present the "Watch of 2020": a must-have time piece of the future. Finally, students would decide on when to reveal the contents of their class time capsule. Time will tell what they would predict for their future world.

References

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