
Globalization and Artist's Practices

“Globalization, Art and Education” has been a journey to a variety of topics. I learned about hybrid identity; contemporary art and artist practices; global and ‘*digital savvy*’ children; as well as views from art educators and community organization. In addition, I learned about myself, about my likes and my dislikes and also made me pause and think about my art, my identity, my history, my awareness in ‘*glocal*’ issues, and my path as an art educator. How can I teach kids to discover themselves if I don’t know myself? How can I inspire my students if I’m not aware and conscious of what happens around me? Do I really acknowledge the power of art?

Art is a medium of expression that uses visual language. Art is a vehicle promoting creativity. Art might be a medium for social action. Alice Kindler (2009) in her chapter “Art and Art Education in an Age of Globalization” gave us a very good approach about art as a medium of expression. She suggested alternative ways of building a relationship between art and “art education” to enable our field to be more responsive to realities of the global society. I, as a graphic designer, acknowledge this and embrace the understanding of the benefits of merging art with markets, politics, technologies or multicultural issues. I understand as well how powerful art can be and how much I can spread my voice through it. Art is indeed a global medium that is easy to understand, but sometimes is hard to express for the novice artist.

Furthermore, knowing yourself is not easy when you intend to really master who you are, it can take years to gain that insight. As an artist, your artwork is a storyteller; it does not say what you like, it says, who you are and what you have lived. This story is what makes you an individual. Alice Arnold (2009), exemplified this through the story of the contemporary artist Jan-Ru Wan. A fiber artist currently living in North Carolina who

tells her life and passion for art from an immigrant view and her necessity to feel connected to her roots. Arnold wrote:

“ We see a young girl searching for a sense of place in the world among a large and loving family, stepped in a culture struggling with its own identity as an autonomous nation wanting at the same time to foster its century-old traditions.” (p. 107)

Her statement makes me reflect about my own background and the importance to get to know myself. In a way, I feel identified with Wan’s story and now, through this new perspective, contemporary art make more sense to me. I want to know more, I want to understand more and I want to express myself through it. My piece of art, “Merging Paths” illustrate my past and my present by mixing a traditional Costa Rican design with the sparkle and the dynamic of New York City.

We are not hermits in this world. Globalization actually makes us move place to place and makes us more connected than ever. We get to know the positive and negative stories that surround us, what we want to know and what we do not want to know e.g. news, events, needs and even our neighbor comments in social networks. As a result of our knowledge being fed, we need to give back to our communities and work for them. As an educator, I need to practice and teach this responsibility to my students who might understand art aesthetically but not necessary meaningfully. Several contemporary artists understand these concepts and use their art for social action. Julia Marshall (2009) wrote in her chapter, “ Globalization and Contemporary Art” about fusion, layering, meaning of material, global images or cultural icons, and meaningful creations by reframing or reinterpreting existing images. Marshall concludes, “... Contemporary art that addresses global realities provides fresh insights into the world and how others perceive and live in it”. (p. 96)

Here I am, now as an art educator, understanding and knowing these concepts, the power of art as a medium of expression, the self-discovery as a base to have your own voice in art; and the awareness of our multicultural world, and our artistic responsibility within it. Now, how do I create a curriculum that covers all those needs? Is my example

enough to inspire my students as the new generation of artists? Is contemporary art my mean to this end? Well, those are the questions I want to address to educate responsible future artist into global citizens.

References

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