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Aim and Scope

The International Journal of Creative Multimedia (IJCM) is a peer-reviewed open-access journal devoted to publish research papers in all fields of creative multimedia, including Digital Learning, Film & Animation, Media, Arts & Technology and Visual Design & Communication. It aims to provide an international forum for the exchange of ideas and findings from researchers across different cultures, and encourages research on the impact of social, cultural and technological factors on creative multimedia theory and practice. It also seeks to promote the transfer of knowledge between professionals in academia and industry by emphasising research where results are of interest or applicable to creative multimedia practices. We welcome all kinds of papers that connect academic researches with practical and industrial context in the field of creative multimedia. The scope of the IJCM is in the broad areas of Creative Multimedia following the five major thematic streams, includes but not limited to:

- Digital Learning
- Media, Arts & Technology
- Games and Virtual Reality
- Cinema and Film Studies
- Animation and Visual Effects
- Visual Design and Communication

Foreword from Digital Learning Editorial Team

Greetings from the Editors and welcome to the Special Issue on Digital Learning in the 21st century. In this Issue, we present papers from international and local researchers focusing on research papers in areas of education technology, learning analytics, e-learning, engineering, IT, business and management, creative multimedia and many other domains that seek to improve the learning process of the learner with technologies. These papers were presented in the ELITE 2019 International Conference held in Multimedia University, Cyberjaya, Malaysia on October 2, 2019, in conjunction with the 2019 IDE4TE International Exhibition on Oct 1, 2019. Themed, “Empowering Learning, Innovating Teaching Environments”, this event showcased best practices of Malaysian Universities, particularly from the network of Industry Driven Education Alliance (GLU iDE4) comprising of Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP), Universiti Multimedia (MMU), Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) and Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL), as well as from international presenters from China, India, Bangladesh and Maldives.

The papers presented in this Special Issue centred around 5 sub-themes; 1) Innovative Pedagogies & Instructional Design, 2) New Roles of Teachers, 3) Redesigning Curriculum for Education 4.0, 4) Emerging Technologies In The Classroom, and 5) Designing Learning Spaces for 21st Century Education, and are very timely articles for readers interested in adapting technology in today’s classrooms. We hope that these papers will provide further insight and contributions to the knowledge base in these fields and we hope you enjoy reading them.

Prof. Ts. Dr. Neo Mai, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Professor Dr. Neo Mai is the Director for Academic Development for Excellence in Programmes and Teaching (ADEPT) for Multimedia University, and Professor in the Faculty of Creative Multimedia, and the Institute for Digital Education and Learning (IDEAL). Prof. Mai is the Director of the award-winning MILE Research lab and founding Chairperson form the CAMELOT (Centre for Adaptive Multimedia, Education and Learning cOntent Technologies) Research Centre. Prof. Mai's research interests are in the design of constructivist learning environments, micro-learning, team-based learning and web-based education. She was the recipient of the 2014 Excellent Researcher Award, an AKEPT Certified Trainer for Interactive Lectures (Level 1, 2, 3), an HRDF certified trainer and is certified in Team-Based Learning from the Team-Based Learning Collaborative, USA.

Dr. Gan Chin Lay, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Dr. Gan Chin Lay is a Senior Lecturer affiliated with the Faculty of Business, Multimedia University. Her main research interest is in learning analytics, particularly related to technology-enhanced student-centered learning environments. Her research domains include teaching and learning issues such as student engagement, and educational technology integration frameworks.

Dr. Liew Tze Wei, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Dr. Liew Tze Wei is a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Business, Multimedia University, Malaysia. He is leading the Human-Centric Technology Interaction Special Interest Group, in addition to serving as the collaboration & innovation coordinator and research & innovation committee member in the faculty. His research interests and contributions fall within learning sciences, human-computer interaction, and media psychology; with a strong focus on experimental research approach.

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International Journal of Creative Multimedia

Material Thinking: How to Develop a Student's Artistic Voice

Megan Wonowidjono
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Abstract

The approach to education so far has placed the focus primarily on theory; practice becomes a secondary function which serves to drill in the theory. Theory-based approach may be suitable for subjects like Math and Science, which are fact-based, where knowledge is exact and explicit. However, Art is highly subjective, thus what would be the best approach to teach subjective knowledge? The traditional art class places high value on technical perfection where the goal is for the student to regurgitate exactly what they see, which is to copy reality. But with the invention of Photography, is this the goal of Art - to replicate exactly what one sees? Thus, what is the goal of Art Education now and what is the best way to teach Art to students?

Keywords Material thinking; Immersive Environment; Practical Knowledge; Heuristic Learning

Introduction

Art, unlike Science or Math subjects, has a strong subjective element. Math and Science subjects are based on cold hard facts and produces black and white results based on unbending principles, which are objective. The memorization and regurgitation method for teaching Math and Science subjects are thus suitable to drill the theories through repeated similar practice, to yield a black and white result. Much of the requirement in creating an artwork is based on non-objective qualities like emotion, personal experience and other subjective concerns. Because of the vast difference in the nature of these subjects, one must assume that the method of teaching cannot also be the same.

Learning Gap

The traditional method of teaching Art since the old Academies is to copy and recreate what the eye sees according to the exact visual similitude, because that has been the role of art since ancient times- to faithfully record and document things, events and persons according to what the eye sees.. However, with the invention of Photography, (Benjamin, 1935) it has replaced that role of Fine Arts as a more truthful and faster way of documenting reality and the role of Art has since been questioned and changed. For teaching Math and Science, the knowledge is explicit and exact, thus it can be told and taught through writing or verbally spoken to transfer the knowledge from teacher to student, not unlike how one memorizes a name or phone number. However, there is no exact or explicit knowledge in art, just as there is no one perfect art, or one perfect way to make art. The knowledge in art is tacit, which means it cannot be transferred from teacher to student by verbally telling or writing. Thus, a new approach to teaching Art needs to be applied that is appropriate to stimulate an emotional, personal and subjective response, not based on how a teacher teaches exact and explicit knowledge but on developing tacit knowledge.

Literature Review

Beyond faithful copying, there are many aspects of art that are far more important and useful in life that is not taught with the traditional academic training. With the traditional academic training of copying, does it mean a student understands the meaning of composition, or design? Can a student learn the principles of art and design that is applicable beyond the field of Fine Art, to other areas of life? As an artist, the most important lesson would be to discover and develop your personal style and vision. How can a teacher bring out that personal unique vision within each student?

Material Thinking

Traditional teaching of Fine Arts follows the rigorous method of a detailed and faithful replica of what one sees. In the example of a Still Life drawing, a student typically follows the steps of looking at the still life display, copying as faithfully as possible the visual likeness to draw out and create the tones and volumes of the objects in display in perfectionistic academic rigor. That has always been the goal of Art since Renaissance period in formal Academic Training, to create a truthful replica of what the eye sees. However, being able to replicate only means a student can copy and regurgitate well. If the goal of Art is to copy or replicate, then repetition through regurgitation is a suitable teaching method for imparting exact and explicit knowledge. However, the goal of Art is not to impart exact objective knowledge but a personal, subjective tacit knowledge, and this knowledge of Art will in turn develop each student's subjective personal

voice. The question of how to develop this tacit knowledge in Art has thus been the exploration of my teaching.

As opposed to the objective one size fits all approach in teaching Math and Science subjects, a subjective approach is thus appropriate due to its innovativeness to draw from a student's life experience, as it will result in a richer artwork with multiple possibilities that may not even have been expounded in theory. In Paul Carter's *Material Thinking* (2004), he expounds on how to develop the artistic process, which is not through a universal or decontextualized framework, but rather the opposite which is to reach in to the personal aspects of the creator to draw out the subjective and relational aspect in Art creation. Just as one cannot learn swimming by reading about it, a student can only learn Art by making art physically. It is through this ongoing process that *Material Thinking* happens, which is a record of the thought process where knowledge builds after a constant production and engagement with the material through art-making (Bolt, 2004). Bolt continues with Martin Heidegger's theory (1966), who believed that new knowledge can only come about through the creator's engagement with the materials in the world.

Heidegger argues that we do not come to "know" the world theoretically through contemplative knowledge in the first instance. Rather, we come to know the world theoretically only after we have come to understand it through handling. Thus the new can be seen to emerge in the involvement with materials, methods, tools and ideas of practice.

Heuristic Learning Approach

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger (1966) argues that the new cannot come from merely a representation of an old idea nor can one achieve it through trying to be original, but it can only emerge from a process of constantly doing or working with the material, method and tools; and only through this material thinking can "new" knowledge emerge from the artistic process. One cannot put the cart before the horse and say we will arrive at this "new" knowledge because firstly, this "new" knowledge cannot be known in advance and secondly, this knowledge is not merely a head factual knowledge (Ihde, 1979) but a hands-on experience knowledge known through material handling or Material Thinking.

In Math and Science subjects, theory is primary and practice is secondary to serve the primary focus in teaching. However, Ihde (1979) argues that "new" knowledge in Creative Arts through praxical engagement is primary, while the theoretical-cognitive engagement becomes secondary (Ihde, 1979). Thus,

knowledge in Creative Arts education should focus on praxical engagement as that knowledge is not merely head logic and rational ideas but rather its own personal tacit knowledge developed through material handling.

Methodology

I am teaching The Static Image Class, which is basically a painting and drawing class at Foundation Level in Faculty of Cinematic Arts. The course objectives are: to give the students basic competency in drawing and painting, so that they can express an idea; to understand the importance of design principles, to apply design thinking to create a powerful image, and to enjoy, have fun and appreciate the power of Fine Art as an expression. The Static Image course is part of the three major studios, and this Foundation course prepares the students for their degree programme in Cinematic Arts. So my objective in this class is not to demand technical perfection from the students but it is more important to teach them the basic principles of Art. Do they know to apply composition? Do they know how to use colour? Do they know how to use light? Do they know how to design a space? The design principles that they learn, will be applicable to them not just as filmmakers, but to any field of art.

Immersive Environment

As Art is subjective and the knowledge is tacit instead of exact and explicit, within Art there is also a huge aspect of innovation that is dependent on the relationship between the student's experience and the subject matter given. Thus I propose a solution that is subjective. My approach is to create student-centred learning spaces using creative presentation of subject matter in art, as a means to encourage interaction and inspiration. Using three genres of art, the class is structured from Still Life, Portraiture, Landscape and Experimental, each is designed to be increasingly immersive and engaging.

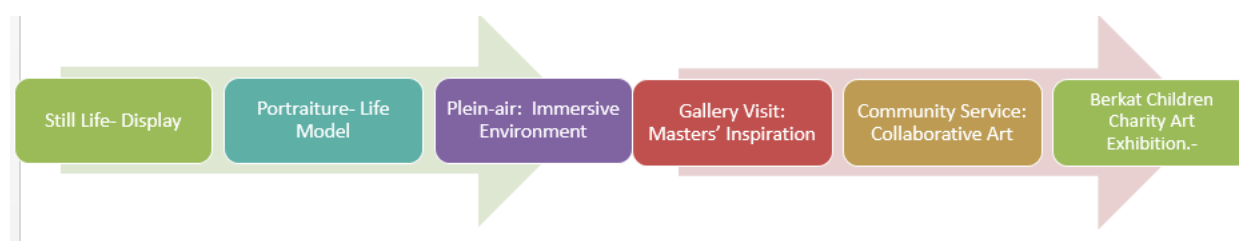


Figure 1 Increasingly Immersive Environment

My approach is to use problem-based learning in the genres of Fine Art, which are Still Life, Portraiture and Landscape, and to use situated enquiry with increasingly immersive environments to inspire the students to make great art.

The first half of the classes are indoor, the second half are all outdoor classes. The traditional classes are entirely indoors, but my plan is to create a learner-centred environment, where the classroom is constantly evolving and constantly engaging the students to make learning challenging, exciting, interactive and experimental. By changing the learning space, I facilitate to students' different learning styles.



Figure 2 Indoor Still Life

For indoor learning, there's a variety of spaces: the class arrangement is changed to facilitate the type of discussion or learning that we are having. I also engage student in cyber-space learning through engaging them in social media and having the students create learning vlogs.

The class first begins with the Still Life genre using Charcoal medium. This is the easiest level in Drawing in terms of difficulty, as each student only need to learn to compose a picture using tones and values, without the element of colour. I have created a huge variety of objects for display as interesting subject matter where the students can draw inspiration from.

The next section of the class is the portraiture genre. With the presence of a life model who is chosen by the students based on his popularity, the students' interest and engagement with their art subject increased. The difficulty level of this section is harder as drawing human anatomy and facial likeness requires a higher level of technical skill and the addition of the element of colour and introduction to acrylic painting as a new medium is introduced at this point. Students have to move on from just the challenge of composition and values to learn how to use colour. However, the immersive level of the subject matter is

greatly increased in section two due to the human aspect of the subject matter, which results in greater passion and interest from the students.



Figure 3 Indoor Portraiture

The third section of the class is landscape and from here on I bring the students out of the classroom to do plein-air outdoor sketching. The benefits of outdoor learning are immense. I bring the students outside campus to all the various locations in the city. We have plein-air class, which is outdoor drawing, outdoor sketching. With outdoor classes, the students' learning is enriched through a variety of environment with different historical background with different contexts that stimulates different engagement levels and many interaction possibilities.



Figure 4 Outdoor Plein-Air Sketching at Heritage Street



Figure 5 Outdoor Plein-Air Sketching at Landscape Park

I also bring the students to National Gallery of Singapore, where they see art of the masters and they feel inspired, “Wow, this is what people can do? This is what art looks like? These are the techniques I have explored!” Standing before real art, they feel art is relevant to society. Art can be fun. These plein-air art classes, not only make problem-solving real but also exciting and interactive. It enhances students’ understanding of the community, as they are immersed in the environment. And it forces them to interact, to touch, see, feel and communicate and to reflect, in order to think about what is the art that they want to make.



Figure 6 Overseas Excursion to National Gallery of Singapore

Contemporary Art is very important, using experimental techniques, forces the students to push the medium, in terms of what it can produce. What are the creative limits? What are the potentials of the medium in terms of expression? I believe in creating a student-centred environment, and I believe in the possibilities of bringing the students outdoors to make learning engaging and fun. I bring the students to

various locations outdoors and they really get very excited. I bring the students to collaborate with the Berkat Children's Home and they love it. The students enjoy going to Berkat Children's Home where they make collaborative drawing with the children. Their conversations with the children, inform their drawing and result in a more meaningful and creative artwork. All the different stages of art learning is designed based on Paul Carter's (2004) process of Material Thinking by combining hand, eye and mind to produce tacit knowledge.



Figure 7 Collaborative Art with Berkat Children's Home

Heuristic Learning Approach

The traditional art class typically requires the student to regurgitate exactly what they see, to copy. But my approach, is not to dictate to the students exactly what art is, but through personal guidance, to develop each student's unique vision, aesthetic and sensibilities in art.

In line with Ihde's (1979) argument of Praxical engagement above Theoretical-cognitive engagement in Creative Arts, my primary focus is to give the students complete freedom within the framework of the Fine Arts genres and to make sure they get as much material handling and experience the artistic process intensively (Heidegger, 1966). The traditional class ends, after a student finishes making an art, and regurgitates exactly what they see. I focus on action and reflection learning; where after they make the art, we discuss what they have done, why do they make it that way, and how can they make it better. Through this way I hone their design thinking skills. I teach art through Praxical knowledge (Bolt, 2007) that is a knowledge-giving process that comes through doing and not by following instructions or regurgitating. I give personal coaching to each student, to develop their own skills as unique designers and unique artists. The key to the success of the class is Student-centred learning (Crumly, 2014) through the

personal coaching and guidance I give after each of their artwork, by tracking their progress, comparing their previous and current work, troubleshooting on the problem areas. I arrive at a learning catered personally to each student's level, temperament, interest and strengths in order to hone their artistic voice that is uniquely their own.



Figure 8 Heuristic Learning through Praxical Knowledge

Results

Still Life Reflection

The Still life section is the beginning and introductory section in this class, thus the framework is kept simple, which is through the medium of pencil and charcoal. This limits the scope of challenge to only line, values and composition.

In each Still life class, the students were given a huge variety of objects, with different sizes and textures to stimulate their interest. The students were not told what to draw but they were told to discard the tradition of academia, where the Still life art must be in wide-shot to include all the elements in view and at a full frontal angle. They were encouraged to focus on composition that fulfils the aesthetic principles of line, space, rhythm and balance in an artwork. They were also encouraged to play with their materials to create as many different possibilities on line and mark making as they wish.

Still Life 1

Teacher's Comments on Figure 9:

The student used a Mid-shot, top-down, high angle view for this artwork. He also depicted the objects at an angle, so that the objects are aligned along an imaginary diagonal axis. Using perspective technique, he

places the hat in the foreground and making it bigger in scale in comparison to objects in the background like the jacket and bags. This layering of objects creates a sense of space and the further variation of textures and dark and light tone make this final work a dynamic art piece. Though not technically perfect, the student understands how to apply principles of art in this work.

Still Life 2

Teacher's Comments on Figure 10:

The student used a wide-shot, high-angle view for this artwork. Although only simple few main objects are used and the composition is symmetrical, the student's placement of objects along the diagonal axis and varying the sizes on each side adds visual interest and variety to what otherwise would be a boring piece. The contrast of the soft smudge textures created by his charcoal shading is contrasted by the use of strong hard lines that blends perfectly to create a successful art piece.

Still Life 3

Teacher's Comments on Figure 11:

In this Still life, all the objects are partially cropped. The student's focus was on creating a strong composition and the simple use of geometric lines lean the art towards abstraction. The repetition of the square shape through the depiction of files, box, frames and table creates an interesting play of space. The smooth rendering of shading also adds an ambiguity between the solid form and the transparent form, overall resulting in a dynamic and intriguing piece.



Figure 9 Still Life 1 – Hats and Bags by John Yee (Charcoal on paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

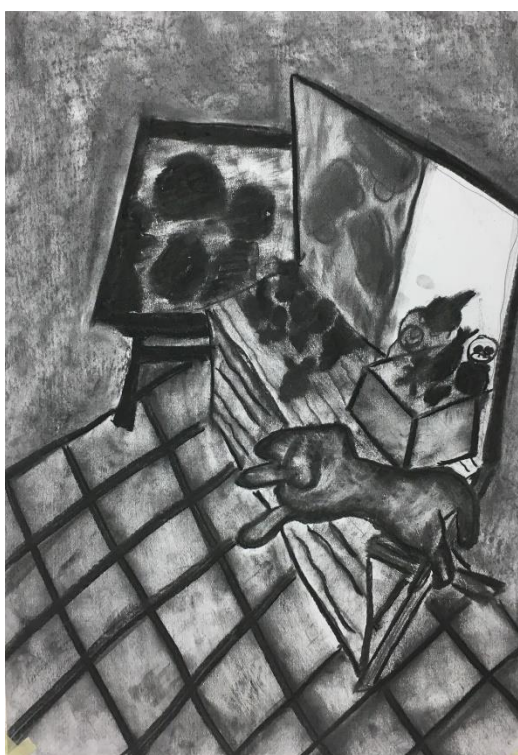


Figure 10 Still Life 2 – Dressing Table by Hazirah Shahrin (Charcoal on paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)



Figure 11 Still Life 3 – Frames by Afif Irfan Rashid (Charcoal on paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

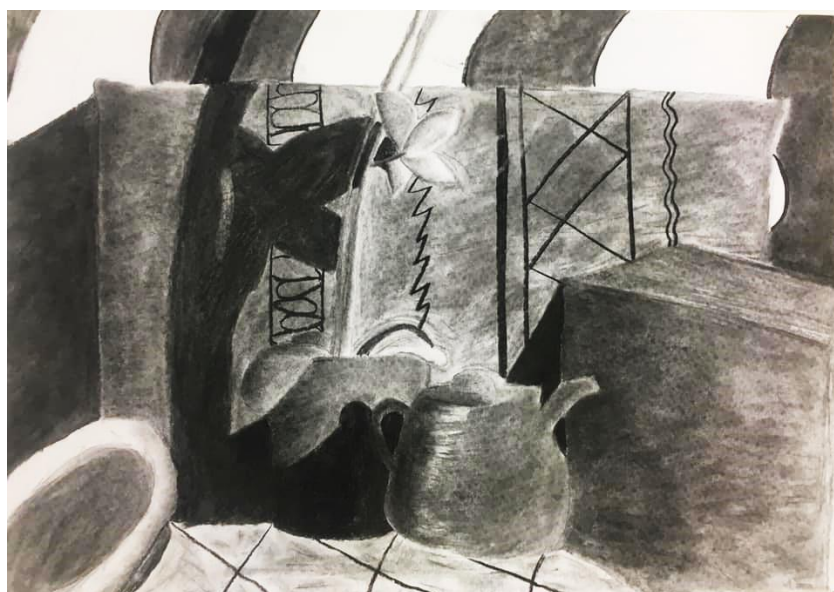


Figure 12 Still Life 4 – The Orchid by Intan Sakinah (Charcoal on paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

Still Life 4

Teacher's Comments on Figure 12:

In this Still life, though it is a simple symmetrical layout, the student successfully added a sense of space through addition of objects in the foreground and successful treatment of the background. Through the

use of tones, she has clearly brought the emphasis to the orchid plant through a contrast of darkest to the lightest parts of the drawing. The addition of patterning through the play of shadows, table cloth design and pillow patterns, has added an interesting contrast between the 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional form. The integration of the forms, tones and ambiguity of space is successfully achieved in this artwork.

Portraiture Reflection

In the second section of the class, which is Portraiture, a model is invited into the studio where the students can be inspired to create an artwork. With a human model as subject, the interaction is stronger and thus more immersive in order to achieve a stronger response from each student.



Figure 13 Portraiture Class

Portrait 1

Teacher's Comments on Figure 14:

Inspired by the life model, Student Hazy chooses a mid-shot of model focusing on her face and the expression of her gaze. She chooses pastel colours to portray the feminine gentleness of the model. She uses the clothes patterns and textures of the wall and trees to create interesting textures and gives the whole painting depth through layers of space. The composition is ideal as the main subject is at the one third space following the one-third rule in composition. The Wayang Kulit is partially obscured to give the viewer visual interest as we follow her gaze to look to the Wayang Kulit and beyond, which adds tension to the piece.

*Portrait 2***Teacher's Comments on Figure 15:**

Student John chooses a wide-shot to depict the model. In his portrait, the viewer can look upon the main subject, which is the girl in the painting and also the spaces around her, which is the Wayang Kulit, Kuda Kepang, and soft cushion, chairs and view behind the windows. Keeping to the theme of Malay Culture, John chooses a style similar to folk art painting, where simple geometric shapes and repeat patterning is used to enhance the Malay Culture aesthetic. Along with the use of primary colour, the strong square, triangles and line patterning is enhanced for folk art effect. The posture of the model portrays a gentle charm.



Figure 14 Portrait 1 – The Gaze by Hazirah Shahrin (Acrylic on watercolour paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)



Figure 15 Portrait 2 – The Puppeteer by John Yee (Acrylic on watercolour paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

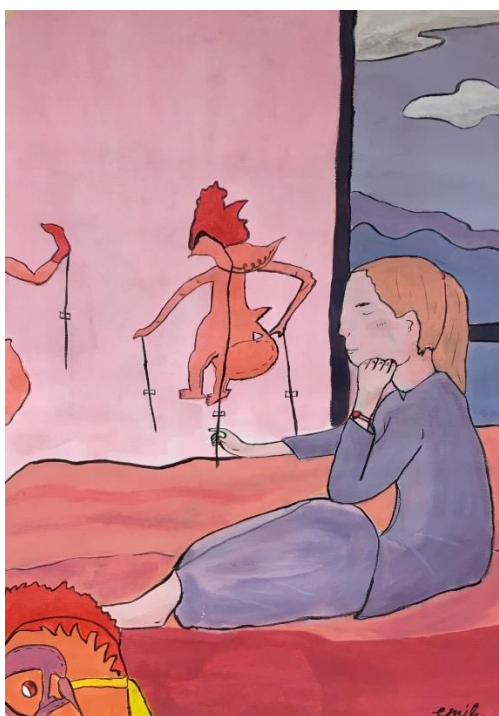


Figure 16 Portrait 3 – Purple Skies by Emily (Acrylic on Watercolour paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

Portrait 3

Teacher's Comments on Figure 16:

Student Emily chooses a medium wide shot of the model. She depicts the model with eyes closed and set the art in portrait. The Kuda Kepang and Wayang Kulit are cropped partially to suggest an extension of space but a lot of negative space is portrayed in this art to suggest its importance to the intention of the artist. Emily keeps the colour palette restricted to pinks and purples to evoke a sense of peace, happiness and imagination. The model's clothes are purple, just like the purple sky outside, which implies though the model is in the interior space, she is closing her eyes, day-dreaming about a bigger and freer space, beyond the interior walls, outside to the mountain and sky. With its simple, intuitive lines, and the use of colour purple to express her desires and dreams, the art is successful compositionally and in its choice of colours to bring out a sense of poetry.

Through accessing the three different results from students' artwork, we can see that although the Students were given the same subject matter, same poses by the model but each gave a different interpretation and mood in their final artwork. They each developed their own uniquely different style according to their personal vision.

Landscape Reflection

The following paintings 1.1, and 1.2 were inspired by the class's plein-air outdoor painting at the heritage street of Tan Hiok Nee district. Inspired by the streetscape of Johor Bahru old Town, the students created this landscape of the JB City.

Heritage Street 1

Through the student's plein-air class, he walked through the busy streets of Tan Hiok Nee district. Afif's concept was to express the busy streets through travelling. Every day, people commute in and out of town spending much time travelling. Quote:

“But travelling isn't just about visiting new places or trying something new or different. It's also about enjoying beautiful views or scenery that we have never seen in our place.”

Through the use of the top part of a building at the background and a cafe at the centre, Afif creates the perspective of a tourist walking around the streets looking for a beverage shop. He includes many elements of the tower, cars, restaurant, street food shop etc. to show how busy and crowded the place was.

Teacher's Comments:

Afif is one of the weaker students in terms of drawing skills, and yet in this artwork he has demonstrated that he understands the principles of design to successfully express a concept. Through the simple overlapping of elements, he managed to create the impression of crowded complex space through another technique other than the conventional perspective which is rather difficult to achieve without good technical drawing skills. The composition in this artwork is also strong through the successful use of the overhead bridge as framing device and the combination of diagonal lines creates an exciting dynamism of a busy fast moving street. The use of negative space by leaving the paper blank also creates an emphasis to important elements while leaving new possibilities in the unsaid in “Looking Through Something”.



Figure 17 Looking Through Something by Afif Irfan Rashid (Acrylic on Watercolour Paper, 21cm x 29.7cm)

Heritage Street 2

Inspired by the streetscape of Johor Bahru old Town, the student created this Landscape of the JB City. The student also interviews a teenager to get his reflection of what the town means to him. John quotes:

“He has a good and bad view about JB town area, he says he can buy what he wants here but at the same time, his friend was robbed here, so he wishes that the JB town area can be more safe and clean and beautiful.”



Figure 18 John's Photo of River along Jalan Wong Ah Fook

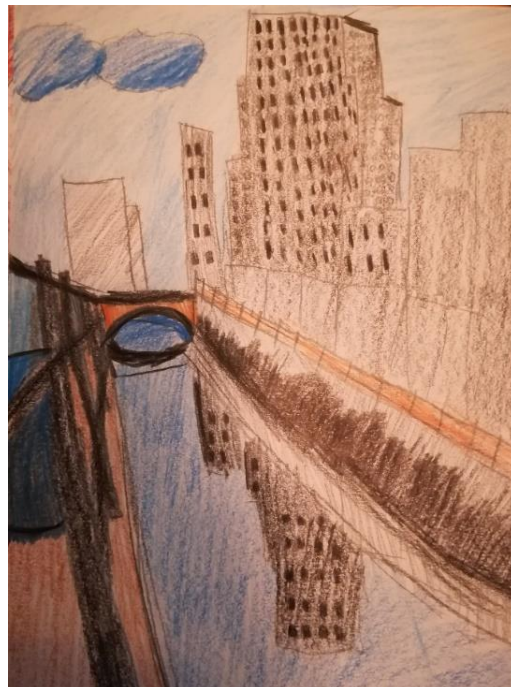


Figure 19 John's Study Sketch 1 of the Site



Figure 20 John's Study Sketch 2 of the Site

John's concept was to create a "Dream Town" by contrasting the reality and the dream. In the painting, the warm colours used reflect harmony and peace. The red and dark blue in the sky creates the magic hour during sunset and shows the beautiful combination of the city and nature. The huge tree on the left-hand side follows the idea of the "Garden City" Concept in Singapore, where the purpose was to balance the man-made in the city with nature and fresh air. From the reflections on the river, the student shows how clean the river is, but in reality, the river is sadly far from beautiful. Through the use of vibrant colours, the student aims to create light everywhere in the painting to express his wish that one day in the future, Johor Bahru will become one of the brightest city in the world.

Teacher's Comments:

The students walk all over the Heritage Street area, through a series of drawing studies and photos, he takes a photo of the river beside Jalan Wong Ah Fook. He was saddened by the dirtiness of the river and hopes for a better future for the city. He successfully depicted that by showing not the exact replica of the reality of cityscape, but through irony, he depicts a "dream" city that is opposite of reality and expresses his own vision of the beautiful city through bright colours to depict hope and rich textured brush strokes to depict his love for the city. Through the experience of walking and walking the city, John did 2 study sketches; one was more realistic- Sketch 1, and in the other- Sketch 2, he made the sky and the river red to depict his

feelings towards the place. From there, he has selected the second strategy and enhanced it with even brighter colours at the end product to achieve clarity of his emotion.

The students were able to look and observe the city's actual circumstances and clarifying through drawings and photos his own feelings towards his city and then proceed to create an inspired art where the context of the city integrates completely with his personal feelings and vision through the use of the principles of art and design.

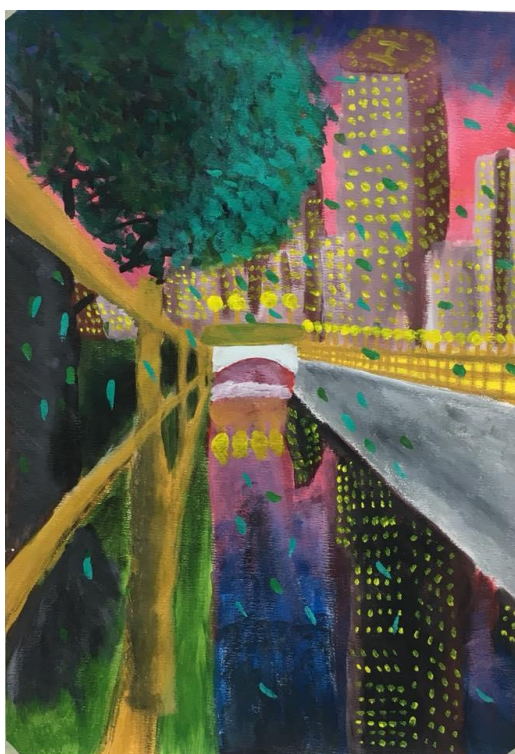


Figure 21 Dream City by John Yee (Acrylic on Watercolour Paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

Scenic Park 3

The following painting was inspired by the class's plein-air outdoor painting at Taman Merdeka Park. Inspired by the nature of the scenic park, the student created this landscape painting. Student Aiman walks through the different areas in the park which was built to commemorate the war by our independent fighters. He came across a series of arches and through his walk, he was inspired to create this painting.

Teacher's Comments:

Aiman was successful in the creation of this artwork to express a strong emotion of desolation and loneliness through this work. Compared to the rest of the class that depicted the park as a happy, peaceful, and joyful

place of retreat into nature, Aiman's depiction was the only one that showed a sadness in its tone and mood. He is successful in depicting through a repetition of the park's existing skeletal arches a mood of sadness. The series of arches in the park was open and airy, but in Aiman's depiction of space he has narrowed them together to force a trapped and enclosed claustrophobic feeling which not only mirrors his own personal emotions but also his understanding of Taman Merdeka or Independence Park. Through the use of colour purple, Aiman further pushes the sense of loneliness and isolation by depicting a dark and near lightless sky, with a sole silhouette in the middle, as if trapped in an endless tunnel, unable to reach the sky. Aiman was able to express his powerful emotions through the painting "Desolate", despite his weakness in drawing.



Figure 22 Taman Merdeka Photo

Student Aiman was one of the weakest students at the beginning of the semester. He comes to me often at the end of the class and apologises for being the weakest in his batch. Below is a sample of his work in week 1.

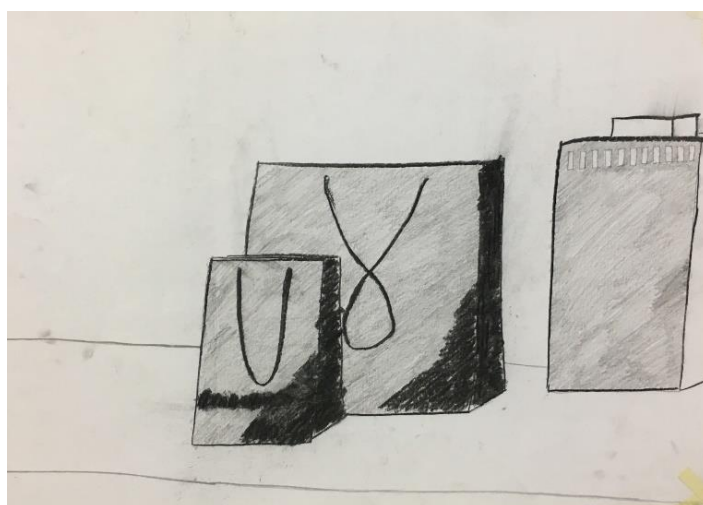


Figure 23 Aiman's Week 1 Drawing

However, through weekly guidance and encouragement, Aiman has developed self-confidence and was able to successfully create this work “Desolate” by the end of the semester. This shows the importance of Practical Knowledge and Heuristic Learning application, where it can help in a student’s development of character and confidence by bringing out his own individual voice instead of forcing down a mindless, non-individualistic approach in academic training to regurgitate and copy. Through this work, Aiman clearly demonstrated his understanding on how to use design principles of composition, colour and emotive space to evoke a strong emotion.



Figure 24 Desolate by Aiman Nur Asraf (Acrylic on Watercolour Paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

Harbour 4

The following painting was inspired by the class’s plain-air outdoor painting at Puteri Harbour. Student Hazirah takes multiple photos and sketches as she absorbs her environment and eventually decides to paint this painting as a summary of what she feels.

Teacher’s comments:

Many students return from this outing with depictions of boats from the harbour, but this student created a simple painting and titles it “Jalan Kaki” referring not only to her walk at Puteri Harbour that day but also her own personal “walk” or journey in life. Looking at the warm use of colours, we see her sensitive and positive view of her future. She chooses to depict her walk in bare feet against the cold hard bricks,

expressing not only her desire to experience life to the full but also her vulnerability to the joy and pains in life. Instead of looking at the far journey ahead, her view is at her feet, where we observe the fallen leaves. This creates a poetic symbolism of not just the abundance of life through the surrounding trees but also the temporality of nature through the fallen dead leaves.

Hazirah is one the strongest painters technically in class but I am happy to see her develop in terms of engagement in content to clarify her emotion to depict her personal vision through composition, line, rhythm, colour and subject matter, a sensitive yet powerful artwork in this piece “Jalan Kaki”.



Figure 25 Jalan Kaki (Walking) by Hazirah Shahrin (Acrylic on Watercolour Paper, 21 cm x 29.7 cm)

Berkat Children's Home Reflection

Rabeka, in Figure 26, was inspired by the class's visit to Berkat Children's Home as part of their Collaborative Art Experimental class and also as a contribution back to community to share the joy of drawing with an orphanage. Through an afternoon of interaction and uninhibited collaborative painting, the students interacted with an orphan and through that experience create their final project. In student Yasmine's final project, she was asked to create a portrait of the Berkat child chosen in an A1 scale with acrylic paint as the main medium. Her portrait subject was a child who was forced to shave her head by her poverty-stricken parents in order to save money. Below is an excerpt from Yasmine's research:

“After a few minutes of conversing with the 9-year old muse behind this painting, Rebekah popped a simple, but heartfelt question... “Do you cry? At night, before you sleep?” Rebecca was having trouble fitting in as a new kid on the block. She often talks about escaping the Orphanage.”

Yasmine's Painting "Rabeka" portrays the bald Indian 9-year old girl, sitting with her basket of flowers. This imagery came about after an in depth talk with the child, and how she said she'd rather escape her dreadful situation. Yasmine drew Rebekah in a blue singlet, expressing the sadness that she feels inside. Rebekah misses her mother, although her mother is abusive to her, just like her father. Her parents had sent her there as they cannot afford to raise her, thus the "who wants to be a millionaire" posters and she had innocently let me know that her father used to lock her up, and starved her for long hours. Her pants are green, as they symbolize growth. The background is yellow, taking a dip into a daydream, a happier place I'd rather believe she's in.

Teacher's assessment:

This portrait is highly successful as it achieves my goal as a teacher to teach students that art is not a photographic, mindless copying or outward likeness, but it comes from understanding of the subject. In this artwork, the student did not copy, but through personal and experiential interaction with the subject, the student was able to understand the subject, her problems and situation, which resulted in a strong love and compassionate feeling towards the child, which inspired the final artwork.

To further depict the hopelessness of Rebekah's situation, the student was also able to integrate in the artwork, her personal touches of imagination and poetic irony in the get-rich dream through re-contextualizing the subject in the game of "Who wants to be a Millionaire". The student has also added elements of poetic symbolism through the use of flowers to symbolize hope and bright colours to express the in depth desire for the poor child's desire for Happiness. Through this work, the student execution in terms of subject matter, mix media collage and brush stroke textures all combine successfully to create a unique artistic style that is uniquely the student- Yasmine's own personal vision.



Figure 26 RA BE KA by Yasmine Lazuli (Acrylic on Watercolour Paper, 59.4 cm x 84.1 cm)

Discussion and Conclusion

Art is not a mechanical process of just creating exactly what you see; Art is an internal, individual, creative response and expression of the way that you see the world. The situated enquiry in this class requires each student to actively engage to find their own solutions in art, the student learn through action, and reflection of the action they have done and thereby produce their own personalised tactic knowledge in art (Freitas, 2002). The Static Image class is designed where the students learn heuristically (Kiss, 2006), which is through self-discovery learning.



Figure 27 Action and Reflection through Personalized Coaching

Knowledge comes after practice. After the students make their art, during our reflection time, that is where I connect the art that they make with the theory. Each student's learning is subjective, so I tailor my coaching on a very personal level where I know each student's strengths and weakness at the back of my hand and I cater learning to each student's abilities. Even the weakest student had grown in confidence in his use of art to create a powerful image and the strongest students are pushed beyond their comfort zone to make their best work. Thus the situated enquiry in learning successfully unites problem, context and solution.

There are two main limitations in this process; one is time, as the students are only experiencing the material handling process in a period of either seven weeks, if they enter during the short semester or only fourteen weeks if they enter during the long semester. The other limitation is that the teacher student ratio has to be kept small. The ratio should not be more than 1:15 for this personal mentorship studio to be successful.

So far, from the students' artwork, the process is successful. The purpose of this research was to develop a new approach to teaching art that defers from the traditional approach of just regurgitating what one sees. As the "new" knowledge in Art that needs to be imparted to each student is not exact and explicit, we cannot use a theory based, universal one size fits all approach to like how we teach factual based subjects such as Math and Science. Thus a subjective approach that focuses on creating increasingly immersive subject matter is used to tap into the subjective and personal aspects of the student's life experience to encourage a heuristic self-discovery learning through material thinking.

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Authors' Bio

Megan is the Head of the Foundation Programme in Faculty of Cinematic Arts, Multimedia University. With a background as a Film Editor, she is an Artist and Filmmaker. Her distinctive animation *Study of a Singaporean Face* was commissioned for the opening of the National Gallery of Singapore in 2015. Her debut animation *LIBERTAS* won the Best Screenplay at the 6th Indonesian Film Festival 2011 Short Film competition and was a finalist for Best Short Animation at the prestigious AFI Fest 2011, Los Angeles. Her debut short film *Woman at Home* was in competition at Seoul International Women's Film Festival in 2017. Megan graduated with a Master in Arts (in Drawing) from College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.

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