

## Places to Go: Challenges to Multicultural Art Education in a Global Economy

Dipti Desai

*New York University*

This article examines the relationship between globalization and postmodern multicultural art education. The questions that drive my investigation are: What is the role of postmodern multiculturalism in this current phase of globalization and what challenges does globalization pose for multiculturalism? I explore the shifts in the field of art that have occurred due to globalization and then discuss their implications for postmodern art education.

*When is multiculturalism the blind mirror of globalism?*

—Paulo Herkenhoff, (2003)

I begin by juxtaposing two distinct cultural phenomena: one, a typical multicultural art class in grade schools, and two, an exhibit of a contemporary artist's project in order to chart the terrain of a postmodern multicultural art education in which questions of "art," "culture," "local," and "global" mark the complex relationality of our contemporary social, economic, political, and cultural lives in the United States. These two cultural phenomena raise questions that are of central concern to this article: When does multiculturalism become the blind mirror of globalism that can be viewed as a new form of neo-colonialism? What is the role of postmodern multiculturalism in this current phase of globalization? What challenges does contemporary globalization create for a postmodern approach to multicultural art education, especially one that promotes a managed celebration of difference?

Many of the art classes I visit in New York City continue their commitment to multiculturalism largely unchanged by the turbulent forces of globalization.<sup>1</sup> Routinely, these art teachers invoke the trope of global travel in their art classrooms. Similar to armchair travelers, they transport their students to geographically distant cultures and situate their students' encounters through art by locating the cultures' history, society, and political processes in relation to the art object under study. Increasingly, I have observed that some art teachers invite a local person who emigrated from the country that produced the art object into their classrooms to talk about their culture. The studio art project that follows this contextual discussion of the art form tends to redirect the lesson from understanding the experiences of people in another culture to translating this understanding into the student's own personal experience, however, rendered in the aesthetic style of that culture's art form. The assumptions that mark such ubiquitous multicultural art lessons are that art forms are located in one culture—the

Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to the author at New York University, Department of Art & Art Professions, 34 Stuyvesant Street, 3rd Floor, New York, New York 10003. E-mail: dd25@nyu.edu

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<sup>1</sup>In recent years the plethora of texts in humanities, social sciences, and art that focus on globalization characterizes an entire genre of study that is clearly worthy of note due to its collective impact, that is extensive. Globalization is not a new phenomenon. Global trade and its effects have existed prior to the era of

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European colonization and certainly were a major part of colonization. Despite a diverse range of views on globalization, theorists do agree that the current form of globalization in scope and form is different from those of the past. Some cultural theorists (Shohat & Sham, 1996) suggest that globalization, although specific to our condition today, is really an extension of colonialism, and they call it "neocolonialism." Others, such as Thomas Friedman (2000), a journalist, argue that globalization is *the* defining international system replacing the cold war that should be embraced.

culture of origin. The fact that the current form of globalization has disrupted this linear assertion and altered the relationship between local and global is not part of the discussion in multicultural art education. Today, for example, particular "traditional" Mexican art forms are not just made in Mexico, but are also produced in Indonesia in the exact aesthetic style and sold in stores in many parts of the world. Thus, the object is dislocated from any genuine cultural context. Translating the culture under study, art teachers produce either explicit or implicit forms of cultural knowledge not only about the global, but its relation to the local.

The artist Matthieu Laurette re-imagined the local and global relationship when he launched the first part of his ongoing "Citizen Project," titled *Help me to become a U.S. citizen*, as part of the exhibition at Artist Space, New York in 2001. Working together with his lawyers, Laurette began the process of obtaining as many legal nationalities as he possibly could. In this current phase of globalization Laurette is attempting to make the artist the first global citizen. He has set up a website for others interested in obtaining multiple citizenships ([www.culture.gouv.fr/entreelibre/Laurette/laurette.htm](http://www.culture.gouv.fr/entreelibre/Laurette/laurette.htm)). The irony of attaining global citizenship for "the artist" in a time when transnationalization of art is commonplace is not lost in Laurette's art project. He invokes the recent surge of nomadic artists who are increasingly flown to different global destinations to produce site-specific art. Furthermore, his project rubs against the policing of national borders in the United States and Western Europe against the influx of illegal migrants from Mexico, Central America, Asia, and countries in Africa fleeing poverty, war, economic hardships, and political retribution that makes citizenship to certain Western countries a valued commodity. As a form of cultural production, his project charts the complex and contradictory lines of confluence between immigration, nationalism, citizenship, and globalization that raise several crucial issues regarding the tensions between locality and globalism.

In what follows, I take up this issue of the local/global nexus that frames the central questions cited above by examining postmodern multicultural art education. It can be argued that postmodern consciousness is the only space in art education that is fundamentally concerned with the politics of difference—specifically the relationships between local and global. Efland, Freedman and Stuhr (1996) comment on the relationship of multicultural art education to modernism and postmodernism by saying "postmodernism is often considered to be synonymous with multicultural education" (p. 75). This statement is a response to the unprecedented circulation of goods, commodities, technology, media, and other cultural forms, due to recent forms of global capitalism, which has blurred the boundaries that separate cultures, and therefore, how we address the notion of culture in schools. Efland, Freedman and Stuhr clearly indicate not all approaches to multicultural art education can be

considered postmodern, and in fact, suggest that only two approaches, “social democracy” and “social reconstructivist,” share the main characteristics of postmodernism. Because multicultural art education draws from the field of art for its subject of study, I next turn to the recent shifts in the field of art that have been propelled by globalism.

### Transnationalization and Art

Since the late 1970s, the aesthetic field has witnessed the relationship between local and global which is being fueled by multiculturalism, tourism, and globalism. We now see an increase in appropriation and brokering of artworks from specific non-Western cultures by art institutions in the United States in concert with transnational corporations. The simultaneous growth and demand for “authentic” hand-made art objects from so-called “Third World” countries has also spawned transnational production and distribution networks for these “indigenous” art objects. The flexibility of global capitalism has eroded the Fordist means of industrial production demonstrating that capital is no longer firmly yoked to nations and their national agendas. This has generated rapid movement of goods, services, and people incubating the formation of global subjects.

In the field of art, this shift marks the emergence of particular forms of large-scale art exhibitions that represent difference. The development of large-scale exhibitions is not novel; the late 19th century and early 20th century World’s Fairs were spectacular events, unprecedented in scale and extravagance, that at times required entire cities to be built to house them. Rooted in the earlier history of trade fairs and industrial exhibitions, the World’s Fairs in Europe and America emerged during a time of rapid industrialization, increased economic power of nation-states, and mass migration of populations. Intended to create a “utopian future built on the machine, international trade, and world peace” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 79), these fairs constituted particular subject positions through their display of culture. Similar to today’s large-scale art exhibitions, these displays of culture offer us a space for analysis of the subject positions and the shifts that occur in different periods.

In the following, I focus specifically on three forms of art exhibitions chronologically: a) art exhibition extravaganzas of the cultural Other designed to be blockbusters, b) the national cultural festivals created to promote “cultural diplomacy” (Tanen quoted in Wallis, 1994, p. 268), and c) the recent phenomena of global contemporary art exhibitions. In a later part of this section, I highlight the transnationalization of hand-made “ethnic” art objects—many of which were displayed and marketed through national cultural festivals.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, echoing the early phase of global capitalism that to a large degree was still regulated by nation-states, the individual blockbuster art exhibitions in the U.S., such as *The Treasures of King Tutankhamen* (1976-79), *Five Thousand Years of Korean Art* (1979),

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*Treasures of Ancient Nigeria* (1980), to name a few, focused on displaying artworks as national heritage. Heritage, as Duncum (2000) indicates “enlists the past for purposes of the present” and, in doing so molds a common, fixed, and authentic national identity based on ancestral legacy that collapses social, economic, and cultural difference (p. 173). By deliberately focusing on the countries’ ancestral artistic heritage, these exhibitions chiseled a harmonious and stable nation-state for audiences in the United States, while simultaneously promoting cultural pluralism as a staged show that could be consumed (Hall, 1997). The new development of promotional shopping bags for national stores at this time based on these blockbuster art exhibitions (the Holmes store shopping bag advertised the *King Tutankhamen* exhibition), demonstrated the allure of the local/global nexus as a public relations endeavor. Sponsored by transnational corporations, these art exhibitions intended to serve a diplomatic function of promoting good public relations for those countries represented in the United States with the hope of opening trade relations, while also appealing to tourists who increasingly sought to visit heritage sites.

Judith Balfe (1987) examined the ways art and culture are negotiated through such exhibitions in relation to national expression in an international arena. She argues that in this global era,

Artworks are ‘symbolic carriers’ mediating politics wherein the orchestration has become more complicated and more necessary in recent years as the world’s great artworks have been increasingly used in the competition between various ‘imperialistic’ powers and assigned various roles of propaganda. (p. 195)

Although these exhibitions served a diplomatic function, they tended to benefit the transnational corporations who sponsored them. The increased interest of transnational corporations in supporting multicultural art exhibitions demonstrates their awareness that a controlled marketing of cultural difference is a necessary component of globalization. As Banerjee and Linstead (2001) argue, ‘in a global economy, diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, and nationalities has to be “managed” for the market economy to function smoothly’ (p. 702). This celebration of diverse cultures in our world, although endorsed by nationalist agendas of the represented non-western countries, and the desire by museums to extend their role to a larger audience, ultimately maintained western hegemonic power relations within a global context.

The emergence of finely orchestrated large-scale spectacles called cultural festivals in the 1980s and early 1990s, shifted the focus from solely heritage to national culture as a living entity. The syncretistic approach of the festivals that represented the fine arts as heritage, living arts traditions, performances, food, films, lectures, and cultural events of the country on display had an educational appeal while being entertaining.

These festivals, such as *Festival of India* (1985-86), *Festival of Indonesia* (1990-91) and *Mexico: A Work of Art* (1990) were multi-million dollar productions and required many sponsors as the events were composed of multiple art exhibitions, performances, and cultural events through out the United States. For example, *Mexico: A Work of Art* showcased 150 exhibitions, performances and cultural events in various cities in the United States for an entire year, while *Festival of India* included over a hundred exhibitions and performances across ninety cities (Wallis, 1994).

One of the distinguishing aspects of *Festival of India* was that dignitaries from the nation represented made public appearances; business and marketing seminars were organized; and department stores such as Bloomingdales participated to sell the image of the nation and its "ethnic" products made by indigenous craftspeople and indigenous designers. The purpose of the festival was unabashedly to improve public relations for the country on display. Ted M. G. Tanen, one of the principal organizers of *Festival of India*, provided reasons for why a country would be interested in initiating a festival: "A country may wish to have a more positive image in the United States, or wish to encourage tourism and to build up new markets for its products" (Wallis quoting Tanen, 1994, p. 268).

These festivals were designed to generate a long-term impact economically, politically, and culturally by generating an opportunity for dialogue between two nations. By staging ethnicity—articulated as ethnic art, ethnic performances, ethnic food, ethnic clothing and products—these festivals participated "in the discourse of pluralism, of unity in diversity" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 77). Ethnicity was the "symbolic carrier" that was marketed through the festivals (Balfe, 1987).

Produced by the discourse of multiculturalism, the construction of the category "ethnic" is problematic for several reasons. It re-frames the artwork of colonized people that was suppressed, considered inferior, and often destroyed because it was "different" in aesthetic form and style from the dominant culture, thereby maintaining the "binary oppositions of the dominant culture" (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001, p. 705). The fact that the dominant culture is also composed of several ethnicities remains hidden. Edward Said (1979) reminds us that the construction of orientalism as a fixed difference allowed the West to maintain its domination over the Orient. Similarly, "ethnic art like ethnic food or ethnic clothing is an invention of the dominant hegemonic cultures" (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001, p. 706). An example of the power of this invention is demonstrated by the rise in lower-class and middle-class Indians' desire to buy Indian "ethnic" arts redesigned for today's lifestyle that were previously unfashionable, as Western goods held higher cashé. The opening of India's markets in the 1980s propelled *Festival of India*, Western interest in the "ethnic," and the increased numbers of nonresident Indians affected the transnational imaginary (Appadurai, 1997). I believe that these factors

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influenced Indians' "going ethnic." Several theorists argue that this attention to the ethnic and exotic in art exhibitions, corporate advertisements, and government policies constitutes a "postmodern racism" (Araeen, 1987; Banerjee & Linstead, 2001; Jordan & Weedon, 1995) in this global era.

George Yudice (1996) confirms Balfe's insight of the symbolic power of art in our global economy that is represented by cultural festivals, such as *Mexico: A Work of Art*, which at the level of culture ushered in NAFTA. Televisa, Mexico's largest television network, was the main sponsor of this festival and had much at stake in NAFTA. It is apparent that these festivals are a complex negotiation between transnational corporations, governments, and major cultural institutions and foundations designed with an eye towards gaining the trust of American people in order to increase tourism and business partnerships between the United States and the country represented. As Wallis (1994) argues "festivals mark a specific moment in the realignment of international political and economic power relations" (p. 277). This realignment has, as Shifra Goldman (1991) described, created "a global alignment of power elites from nations of the First and Third World whose objective is the control of resources and cultural configurations across national boundaries" (p. 16). The new economic form of control exerted by transnational corporations has created multiple links between foreign capital and the elite of the so-called Third World countries creating "new spaces of centrality" (Sassen, 1998) and the formation of global subjects. These new centers shifted the locus of art from global cities such as New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris, and Milan to include Shanghai, Beijing, Mumbai, and Johannesburg, to name a few. The relationship between art and globalization, then, is one that challenges the centrality of the Western art canon, yet both the blockbuster art exhibitions and the festivals re-affirm national culture by simultaneously celebrating and commodifying difference.

The watershed events of 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, reflected the next phase of unbridled global capitalism and, not altogether unrelated, affirmed the United States as the hegemonic super power (Delanty, 2000). In this current era, the cultural, ideological, political, economic, and social effects of global capitalism have sparked polemic debates among scholars and activists about its constructive and destructive effects. Despite differing opinions, theorists of globalization agree that this major historical conjuncture is marked by specific characteristics that have, in turn, influenced the field of art. Globalization through rapid technological advances has:

- 1) decentered the nation-states as the primary center of economic activity as transnational corporations form networks that yield more economic power;
- 2) facilitated transnationalization of production or subcontracting of goods and services, including artistic production, around the world;

- 3) spawned an increasingly nomadic community of artists, curators, and collectors who travel the world creating site-specific artworks, global exhibitions, and producing various economies of art;
- 4) simultaneously homogenized the world socially, culturally, and economically while creating unprecedented fragmentation, and;
- 5) complicated the ways in which people experience cultural and national identities, making difference a normative aspect of our lives. (Appadurai, 1997; Dirlik, 1996; Hall, 1997; Hannerz, 1996; Jameson & Miyoshi 1998; Tomlinson, 1999)

Today, the multi-centered field of artistic production, or what Okwui Enwezor (2003) calls “parallel economies of artistic production,” requires art institutions to reconsider the complex relations between artworks and sociopolitical and economic situations that are inextricably linked to specific histories—connecting local and global in multiple, contingent, and often contradictory ways (Nederveen Pieterse, 1997). These shifts force us to ask: What is the role of art in this global economy? What responsibility do cultural and educational institutions have to educate children, youth, and adults to become critically engaged global citizens?

The recent move towards an interdisciplinary approach to global contemporary art exhibitions in the West indicates a promising change because the multifarious issues of globalism in relation to art are addressed from different geographical perspectives. The intellectual commitment to multiple viewpoints on globalization in these exhibitions, such as *When Latitudes Become Forms* (2002), *Venice Biennial* (2003), *Documenta 10* (1997) and *Documenta 11* (2002) provides a context where the internal contradictions of globalization are discussed, such as a critique of the reliance on transnational corporations for sponsorship of these exhibitions.<sup>2</sup> These exhibitions have become “home to nomadic artists” (Hearntney, 2003) who travel from one Biennial to another to create artworks and in the process, as Geraldo Mosquera indicates, unwittingly engage in the “process of self-eroticization” (quoted in Walsh, 2001, p. 52). Notable differences exist between the Biennials in the non-western world, such as *Johannesburg Biennial* (1997), *Istanbul Biennial* (2003), *Gwangju Biennial* (2004) that explore the global/local relationship from their specific geographical lens (Africa or Asia) and the large scale exhibitions such as *Venice Biennial* and *Documenta 11* in the West that have been criticized for their “closet colonialism” because they “reduced the expression of artists from around the world to a common aesthetic of ‘cold intellectualism’” (Kendell quoted in Hearntney, 2003, p. 75).

Expansive global exhibitions, such as *Documenta 11* and *Venice Biennial*, nevertheless attempted to challenge the West/non-West binary by designing multiple forums or platforms that served primarily a pedagogical function. These platforms not only extended the exhibition venues across many geographic locations around the globe, including the

<sup>2</sup>The internationalization of the *Venice Biennale* in 1895 for the first time included invited foreign artists suggests the emergence of a particular kind of traveling artists. However, one can argue that burgeoning growth of biennales all over the world in recent times reflects globalization.

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“Third World” but more importantly, they organized panel discussions and lectures with academics and non-academics from various fields in the humanities and art, generated publications and performances, and initiated public projects that encouraged multiple audiences across the world to discuss and debate the nexus of relationship between local and global in our times. These exhibitions, although similar in their large-scale to the 1980s festivals are, in fact, radical departures, as they do not focus narrowly on art objects, artistic heritage, living art traditions, performances or contemporary artists. Rather, they present a “plurality of visions” (Bonami, 2003, p. 155) about a topic of current interest. As Catherine David (2003), the curator of *Documenta 10*, says:

The question for me is not about who is leading or even less about who is the artist but about how to produce, discuss, debate, and circulate to various audiences a certain number of ideas and formal articulations produced by author(s). At this level, I think that many people.... with whom I am working no longer correspond to the economic, social, and cultural figure of the “artist” as it has been constituted in the modern age. (p. 158)

By mobilizing ideas or issues that become the focal point for dialogue, these large-scale exhibitions challenge the normative idea of art as disinterested objects. Rather they require active engagement with the complex social, economic, political and ideological positions, including a critique of corporate structures that support the field of art. For the artist Yinka Shonibare (2003) this means resisting the “temptation of defining artists by the narrow confines of nationality” (p.154). He continues “[t]he question of globalization and its political significance of course remains relevant in an economically divided world. But we must return now to the work of the imagination and prioritize the aesthetic and political concerns of artists rather than their origins” (p. 154).

The naming of identity based on the culture where one was born that has marked the politics of multiculturalism in the eighties and nineties in art education can no longer be the primary way of describing artistic practices. The de-territorialization of contemporary art is related to the development of what Appadurai (1997) calls the “global cultural economy.” Today, artists born in one culture may grow up in another culture and then, as adults, might move yet again to another culture or cultures. Each location may or may not influence their work. No longer is their artwork an expression of a national or ethnic culture marked by birth. Therefore, defining an artist solely by nationality is problematic. Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2001), in their recent discussions on multicultural art education, distinguish between personal, national, and global culture. They state that “the personal, national, and global aspects of culture make up a fluid, dynamic mesh of an individual’s cultural identity” that is necessary to acknowledge in multicultural art education (p. 8).

By troubling notions of identity, ethnicity, and nationality as the primary defining characteristic of dominant culture, contemporary artists are forcing us to rethink how we contextualize their artwork. I am not saying that we totally abandon stating the artist's nationality and or ethnicity, but we do need to expand our understanding of dominant culture that moves beyond identity politics in this global era. This shift in nomadic contemporary art practice requires us to explore the multiple economies of art that as Enwezor (2003) suggests "puts art into a relation of values of different sorts—exchange value, use value, exhibition value, commodity value" (p. 13), and I would add cultural value.

The impact of globalization and tourism on art has been profound and has influenced the purpose and scope of large-scale art exhibitions. It has also influenced the time-honored art objects produced in villages and towns in many parts of the world. Many of these time-honored art objects not surprisingly have been exhibited and marketed through national cultural festivals. History shows us that outside influences from distant countries due to trade and migration have changed artistic practices all over the world, including "ethnic" art objects or "indigenous" art forms. The introduction of beads in the 19th century by Europeans, for instance, changed both Native American and Ndebele (South African) indigenous works of art. Yet, the "transnationalization" of "indigenous" art, as I will discuss, raises different questions from its historical precedents where art forms changed due to multiple global influences.

Currently, tourism is the world's leading industry and, according to the World Tourism Organization, generated \$476 billion in 2000 with predicted growth rates despite the slump created by 9/11 (Muller, 2003). In many places around the world, not just tourist centers, there has been a burgeoning of production of art objects for the tourist market. For some artists and craftspeople, this market has been beneficial as a means of livelihood, but for many, living conditions have not improved. Tourism has directly affected major changes in art production worldwide and, as rightly advocated by Christine Ballengee-Morris (2002), can no longer be avoided in multicultural art education.

The town of Ubud in Bali, Indonesia is known as an art center where tourists can see artists producing textiles, wood-carving, silver jewelry, ceramics, and bamboo works on a daily basis. Interestingly, the art forms they make are not just Balinese or Indonesian. Ubud is the center of mass production of art objects originally derived from all over the world. Steve Cisler (2001) on a recent trip to Ubud discovered a family carving and painting wooden objects with the motif of skulls, skeletons, skull wall hangings all made in the style of Mexican *dia de los muertos* (Day of the Dead). Other Mexican folk arts such as masks, Moroccan ceramics, Native American jewelry are also produced in Ubud, Bali and shipped back to Mexico, Morocco, United States and other places where the arts

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originated. The obvious but perplexing question is: Why are Mexican arts produced in Indonesia? Both countries have unregulated labor markets, so who benefits?

One can make sense of the business partnership established between Amish stores catering to tourists and Hmong women to produce Amish quilts in the early American style as labor is cheaper in Laos (Cisler, 2001). These Amish quilts are not only sold in Pennsylvania and Ohio but also Thailand. The increase in the global market has undoubtedly created some interesting business partnerships to maintain a steady flow of objects to meet global customers' needs. The more aggressive involvement of non-government organizations (NGO) and fair trade organizations to not only promote equitable means of production and distribution of art objects, but also to educate consumers, is an outgrowth of these various business partnerships (Grimes & Milgram, 2000). The transnationalization of art raises questions for the postmodern approach to art education "that all cultural production has to be understood within the context of its cultures' origin" (Efland et al., 1996, p.13). What is the culture of origin for Mexican art made in Indonesia and sold in Mexico or elsewhere? How are determinations of the culture of origin made in this global economy?

### Framing Postmodern Multicultural Art Education in a Global Era

It is not surprising that the postmodern attitude deliberately emphasized the local in order to challenge modernity's preoccupation with the enlightenment project and its emphasis on the universalizing teleology of grand narratives. The rise of many local social movements in the 1960s drew attention to the local as a site of resistance and empowerment. By asking why multiculturalism is a postmodern issue, Efland et al. (1996) address ways in which local culture is conceptualized from this perspective and its relationship to changing conceptions of art. One aspect that makes social reconstructivist multiculturalism a postmodern issue in contrast to modernism, they argue, is that "postmodern attitudes toward culture are conditioned by the notion of pluralism, by the sense that all cultural production has to be understood within the context of its *culture of origin*" (Efland et al., p. 13, my emphasis). Another aspect that makes this social reconstructivist approach to multiculturalism postmodern, is its focus on structural inequities in our society.

In this approach diverse socio-cultural groups represented within *the nation* are expected to be present in the curriculum. These socio-cultural groups are represented as little narratives with a diversity of power/knowledge relationships and possibilities of negotiation. No single art world is represented by meta-narratives as the only truth. (Efland et al., 1996, p. 89, my emphasis)

Postmodern teachers and students working collaboratively are called upon to develop multicultural curriculum based on their local community that is socially and culturally relevant and allows for critical inquiry.

The contradictory moves of global capitalism are precisely the arena on which the local becomes a "site of both promise and predicament" (Dirlik, 1996, p. 22). The irony of global capitalism is that it uses the local for its own means and justifies its exploitation by speaking the language of particularities and difference. For those of us who find postmodernism's insight into the local to be a useful position in multicultural art education, I argue that how we understand the local and the nation needs to include a consideration of the contradictory terrain on which capital advances (Hall, 1997).

A more complex understanding of locality in relation to globalization in postmodern art education is evident in the current discussions of visual culture that focus largely on mass media as a form of cultural production (Duncum, 2000; Freedman, 2003; Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001; Tavin, 2003). Implicit in our understanding of visual culture is its globalism, including the contradictory terrain on which economic and political processes create global cultures. As Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2001) indicate "global culture functions through mass media ... and computer technology ... to produce hegemonically constructed, shared, virtual, cultural experiences" (p. 8). In their revised positions for multicultural art education, they suggest that our examination of the art and experiences of cultural groups be based on socio-anthropological study, which means "exploring the social, political, and economic complexities, ambiguities, and contradictions of the personal, national, global cultural belief systems" (p. 9). However, there is a tendency to render invisible the transnationalization of indigenous art in a global economy in multicultural art education and thus inadvertently mythologizes the power of the local as independent of international power structures.

It is in the translation of postmodern concepts in the art classroom that the challenge of exploring the nexus of relationship between local and global is most apparent. The kinds of contextual questions we ask in multicultural art lessons that allow a focused investigation of a culture, such as identifying the culture the art form was produced in, describing the geographical features of the culture that affect the art form, and its social structure that influences the form and function of the artwork, are an important springboard for study. These contextual questions, however, assume that art forms are produced in one culture ("the culture") and that the geography of the region, the social structure, the aesthetics, etc. has an impact on the art form. The possibility of artistic production being connected to global capital must be included in the list of questions. We need to move beyond the narrow confines of cultural origin and nationality in this global era. We need to ask: What national

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and international networks facilitate the production and consumption of the artwork? Who benefits from multiple sites of global production of an art object? Why is indigenous art of a culture made in another culture or cultures? Is there a relationship between indigenous art produced in the home culture and its production elsewhere? What is the impact of global production on the indigenous culture?

So, for instance, a lesson on Amish quilts, as Efland et al. (1996) suggest, certainly requires us to pay attention to difference among Amish quilts made in different parts of the United States and situate the quilts historically, socially, politically, and culturally. The lesson also needs to address the economy of Amish quilts, that is the production of these quilts within the context of transnationalism. As I have mentioned earlier, due to the global market for Amish quilts, the production of these quilts is not solely in the hands of the Amish. Some quilts are made by Hmong women in Laos based on patterns that are sent to them. Hmong women living in Lancaster (since 1970s) are also commissioned to make Amish quilts for stores in the area, but the increased demand for Amish quilts was not only a result of the rise of tourism to Lancaster. In 1983, *Bride's* magazine featured a first home for a newly married couple that showcased an Amish quilt that was specifically designed for this particular feature in the magazine by staff of the old Country Store known for its Amish and Mennonite quilts. This quilt appeared in the June/July 1983 issue of *Bride's* magazine and was a major success creating a network of Amish quilt production organized by the Old Country Store. The store eventually contracted the work to Hmong needle-workers to produce the Amish bride quilt design for the growing market.

Tourism and globalization are undoubtedly the connecting force driving business contracts such as the kind made by the Amish and Hmong women remain absent in multicultural curriculums. Many of the ubiquitous artworks from other cultures represented in multicultural art lessons are today connected to the tourist market and some are made specifically for that market in what might be visually read as a traditional style. Therefore, as Ballengee-Morris (2002) suggests, we need to ask "who really made these items; and who made the money and why" for tourist art (p. 244). Moreover, we need to ask these questions for "indigenous" art that we believe is connected to the culture in which it is made and not made for tourists.

The transnationalization of production of some contemporary art is another area we should explore. Consider the artwork of Alighiero Boetti who addresses issues of global culture and non-Western crafts, authorship, and words as image. His 1993 artwork *Alternating from 1 to 100 and Vice-Versa* was composed of 20 to 25 kilim rugs that were designed by Boetti's friends and 30 teams of students at art schools across France as graphic drawings and then organized and packaged in Boetti's studio for

shipping to Peshawar, Pakistan to be woven and then shipped back for the exhibitions in the West. His artwork *Map* (1989-92) was sewn by Afghan women living in exile in Pakistan as refugees from the Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan.

It is not helpful to think of globalizations as a totality that is creating a homogeneous world. Neither is it productive to think of local and global as distinct spaces separated by time and location. Globalization is a highly contested process (Hall, 1997, Duncum 2000). It simultaneously “produces and is founded upon the tension between global and local” (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001, p. 684). Globalization and localization are inextricably linked in this current phase of global capitalism. This particular historical conjuncture structured by global capital requires us in art education to pay attention to the specific ways global capital defines the culture of the local. Henry Giroux (1992) provides a way of connecting local and global in a “non-totalizing politics” that attends to “the partial, specific contexts of differentiated communities and forms of power” that do not “ignore larger theoretical and relational narrative” through what he calls “formative narratives” (p. 79).

### Thoughts on Globalizing Multicultural Art Practice

Globalization is increasingly becoming a crucial aspect of art education (Duncum, 2000; Tavin & Hausman, 2004). As Tavin and Hausman (2004) suggest,

teaching and learning about globalization can be understood as pedagogy toward critical citizenship, where students see themselves as agents of change. Through connecting creative expression, theoretical knowledge, everyday experiences, and social critique, students have a stronger basis for investigating the implications of globalization. (p. 3)

At grade schools and universities, art educators are engaging with issues of globalization in relation to children/youth in their classrooms; such as tourism and identity (Duncum, 2001), the complexities of global visual culture (Tavin & Hausman, 2004), and corporate culture and teenagers bedrooms (Grauer, 2002).

Given the limits of space, I am unable to develop at length how the ideas discussed here can be incorporated into multicultural teaching practices; however, I offer a few general suggestions:

- 1) As multicultural art educators, we need to construct formative narratives (Giroux, 1992) in class by charting the global networks that connect economic, social, political processes to aesthetic production thereby opening spaces for students to examine the relationship between local and global.
- 2) Multicultural curriculum should provide a space for students to explore the ways events in their local community are connected to the

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- global and their role in this local/global relationship that is always contingent, fluid, ambiguous, or contradictory.
- 3) By drawing on contemporary artists who address globalization, we can design lessons that stimulate debate about current global issues, fostering critical dialogue among our students and allowing for critical global citizenship to develop.
  - 4) Perhaps we also need to re-conceptualize the ways we focus multicultural art lessons on one specific culture or nation and instead conceptualize location on the basis of diasporas, such as the Black Atlantic, Trans-Pacific, and U.S.-Mexico transfrontera zone (Sadowski-Smith, 2002).

In closing, I provide two brief ways of thinking about studio-based classroom practices. As a foundation for such explorations, students can begin a multicultural art lesson by going to a store in their local community that sells art from another culture and then researching the networks of production and distribution today and in the past. The students' studio project would be based on the formative narratives constructed in class—that is, the artwork made in any medium would be a response to or in dialogue with what they have learned about this local/global nexus. Alternatively, art teachers can imagine multicultural lessons in a manner similar to the curatorial practices of global contemporary exhibitions that focus on debating a current global issue from multiple perspectives through various forms of aesthetic production that are traditional, popular, and contemporary. Again, the studio project would be a visual examination of globalism produced in an art medium that best suits the ideas a student is exploring.

The normative studio practice in multicultural art education of creating an artwork based on our students' experiences in the United States, but rendered in the style of the culture under study, is a form of colonialism, as it reduces and appropriates another cultures' worldview that is incommensurable. In our rapidly changing world, it is our responsibility to harness the transformative power of art in order to educate the next generation of students to become informed and critical global citizens. Therefore, we no longer can ignore the transnationality of art in our global economy and the ways it forms new consumers and producers in postmodern multicultural art education. Otherwise, our attention to difference paradoxically becomes, "historically continuous with U.S. imperialism, even if this time it comes in the form of proliferation of difference" (Yudice, 1996, p. 198).

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