
The Artist-Teacher: A Collaboration of Scholar, Researcher, and Teacher Focused on Art

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ABSTRACT

An Artist-Teacher is someone who is identified in a paradoxical way in South Asia due to the academic artists' contradictory practices; that is, the Artist-Teacher operates separately in the creative fields as a misplaced Scholar, Researcher, Artist-Teacher, and Artist. Therefore, a wide range of people is unable to accept visual art as their future profession. As a result, only skills are developed through academic practices, and other concerns of visual arts in the social structure are not explored appropriately. This article emphasizes the multitude of characters in particular segments of an Artist-Teacher and analyzes and proposes the necessary structure of a sequential curriculum in academic culture.

Keywords - Artist-Scholar, Artist-Researcher, Artist-Teacher, Pedagogy, Visual Arts.

1. Introduction

For the purposes of this essay, an Artist-Teacher will be defined as any teacher in an educational setting who maintains an ongoing artistic practice. This article will focus especially on Artist-Teachers at the university level, who are responsible for ushering future artists and art educators through the final stages of their academic training and thus have a crucial impact on the overall landscape of art education. However, it is important to understand the Artist-Teacher as an influential figure who is present from primary school through university education. Rather than drawing distinctions between different kinds of Artist-Teachers, we must emphasize the need for greater connectivity between the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Every stage is important. It is at the primary level that a student's aptitude for visual literacy begins. Generally, Artist-Teachers at the primary level promote children's curiosity about art, expand their foundational knowledge, and teach communication skills to develop cognitive and social capabilities. Secondary art education should include facilities and resources for obtaining indispensable kinds of technical skills in painting, sculpture, digital art, and other media, and should develop a student's understanding of the importance of art in wider social, political, and historical contexts. Ideally, the university program provides a diverse, intellectual, and experimental environment in which undergraduate and graduate students develop their potential as professionals and researchers in their chosen subject area. In this setting, an Artist-Teacher plays a pivotal role not just in regenerating existing cycles of art education but also in incorporating new ideas from the ever-changing fields of contemporary art and scholarship.

In the university context, Artist-Teachers alternately act as facilitators, demonstrators, lecturers, professors, curators of group shows for students, and sometimes even as publicists who promote the department's art activities in the wider community. As facilitators, they help students find the answers to their own work-related questions by discussing the work and suggesting ways of altering their approach to better realize their goals. (McIntosh, 2016) As demonstrators, they often lead workshops on how various pieces of equipment or technology work, or how a skill or craft is performed. As lecturers, they synthesize their own research and knowledge into accessible spoken essays, enriching students' knowledge of art and ability to independently solve their own technical or theoretical problems. And as *de facto* curators, Artist-Teachers are often responsible for putting together student shows or at least guiding students through the best practices of exhibiting their own works either in a solo show or collective project. Considering the above multitude of roles played by Artist-Teachers, art departments are faced with the challenge of seeking out candidates who have cultivated a well-rounded practice that goes beyond the basic technical skills of artistry.

Most academic studio staff members are artists themselves, actively involved in research as well as teaching, and most have a diverse range of research interests and writing proficiency. As noted above, Artist-Teachers need to be able to call upon this wide-ranging historical knowledge, material techniques, and understanding of social engagement through art. This essay argues that an area of necessary growth in Fine Arts departments should be the prioritization of the research element, which is the foundation for all the roles an Artist-Teacher fills. Having experienced the study and practice of Fine Arts within an experimental, discursive, and analytical framework, Artist-Teachers require more opportunities to continue developing their own practices, ideas, and research interests within their professional contexts. MFA (Master of Fine Arts) programs must create the space for this growth through regular seminars, an individually supervised written research project, and assessed written work requirements. All students should follow the same practice-based course.

A standard Fine Art department that includes BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts) and MFA programs should be intended to progress students' individual prospects within the cultural context of a country or particular area. It also needs to develop an excellent foundation for further doctoral research. Hence, graduates could be able to establish international careers as professional artists through participation in various exhibitions, and research actions, managing the largest commissions around the world, winning competitions, and residential offers, as well as emerging artist-led ideas.

An art critic and art historian G. James Daichendt (B 1975) who serves as the Dean of the Colleges and Professor of Art History at Point Loma Nazarene University in Southern California and also a professor at Boston University, published particular books with the title of *Artist Teacher: A Philosophy for Creating and Teaching* (2011) and *Artist Scholar: Reflections on Writing and Research* (2010). Through these books, Daichendt reintroduced two significant terms: "Artist-Teacher" and "Artist-Scholar." Significantly, he included 'Researcher' as an attributional part with the 'Artist Scholar', Artist-Researcher is also a

precise and comprehensive relevance for an Artist-Teacher. In this case, it is a consequential study of deep knowledge to explore the ‘scholar’ and ‘researcher, closely and details through the lens. According to *Cambridge Advanced Dictionary*, “scholar: a person who studies in great detail, especially at a university (McIntosh, 2016), and researcher: to study a subject in detail, especially in order to discover new information or reach a new understanding” (McIntosh, 2016) Without certain qualities to discover new information as a researcher, it is completely meaningless to be a teacher. A comprehensive attachment to a subject, particularly for discovering new information or reaching an original understanding of a relevant ground is highly important for mentorship. A site-specific performance artist, social choreographer, and educator with an interdisciplinary practice, Ernesto Pujol, wrote, “A professionally active faculty committed to both teaching and pursuing its own extracurricular projects. We also need to stop hiring faculty artists who have no field experience—artists who have jumped from their B.F.A. to their M.F.A. without blinking and have very little to offer students other than textbook ideas and textbook art. This sort of oxygen-lacking wheel is killing contemporary ... art in and out of academia. I believe that teaching should come after the fire of extensive field experience. Therefore, this means a curriculum that goes beyond exhibiting in faculty shows within college and university galleries, being awarded more than just faculty development grants and university-sponsored residencies abroad. This in-house system unfortunately serves to enshrine and promote mediocrity.” (Pujol, 2009).

Pujol also shares “Students should have to develop fully thought-out written proposals before, during, and after painting and sculpture ... to learn how to justify that creation intellectually, beyond the subjective, in our visually dense and materially cluttered world” (Pujol, 2009). Nowadays, art has become more than entertainment or simple self-expression. There are unbound forms and media that artists are applying concepts. Moreover, connecting the social context and reality literature of an art project with meaningful thought is essential. So, at the very beginning of academic practice at the tertiary-level students must focus on writing proposals.

2. The Contradictions of Teaching Art

Around different stages and circumstances, art is recognized as a matter of its characterization by many artists, philosophers, historians, critics, and connoisseurs. Art as meaning, art as utility, art as purpose, art as criticism, art as experience, art as a process, and many more. The simple word ‘art’ is most usually associated with those arts which we distinguished as ‘plastic’ or ‘visual’, but properly speaking it should include the arts of literature and music. There are certain similar appearances in every category of arts, and though in these notes we are concerned only with the plastic arts, a definition of what is common to all the arts is the best starting point for our inquiry (Read, 2017). Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) formed her real-life experiences into art saying, “I never paint dreams or nightmares. I paint my own reality” (Margaret & Lazzari, 2012). The idea of art as sense, world-renowned Painter Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) stated, “We all know that art is not truth.

Art is a lie that makes us realize the truth” (Margaret & Lazzari, 2012). American painter Edward Hopper (1882-1967), thought, “If you could say it in words, there would be no reason to paint” (Margaret & Lazzari, 2012). Seeing art as utility, American artist Andy Warhol (1928-1987), stated, “An artist is somebody who produces things that people don’t need to have” (Margaret & Lazzari, 2012). Thinking of art as a purpose Chinese artist Ai Weiwei (B 1957) thought, “Art needs to stand for something” (Margaret & Lazzari, 2012). Art as experience American philosopher Alva Noë (B 1964) experienced art as, “Art, really, is an engagement with the ways our practices, techniques, and technologies, organize us, and it is, finally a way to understand that organization and, inevitably, to recognize ourselves” (Margaret & Lazzari, 2012). For art as a process, English philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) believed, “Art is an endeavor after perfection in execution” (Margaret & Lazzari, 2012). Dhaka-based Bangladeshi artist Aminul Islam (1931-2011) said, “... objective writing on art is nearly impossible. Non-verbal art forms like painting or music are not fully expressible in words” (Jaman, 2002).

Given art’s apparent resistance to verbal explanation, is it futile to attempt to teach it? Not at all. We should understand the above statements as ways of deepening our philosophical engagement with art. With the capacity for both visual pleasure and philosophical enlightenment, art calls for an unusual balance of technical knowledge and philosophical understanding. It is only by pursuing a deeper theoretical and historical understanding of art that artists can fully appreciate the peculiar nature of art and its enduring capacity to reveal otherwise inexpressible truths.

3. The Relation between Theory and Practice

Generally, ‘theory’ means resources of basic ideas that need to be elaborated through experiments. The Oxford Dictionary *elaborates on the meaning of theory* as “A formal set of ideas that is intended to explain why something happens or exists” (Hornby, 2000). Likewise, the Cambridge Dictionary stated, “A formal statement of the rules on which a subject of study is based or of ideas that are suggested to explain a fact or event or, more generally, an opinion or explanation” (McIntosh, 2016). However, there are scientific art theories that might be a great part of the theoretical subjects with a set of art historical studies and art appreciation. The Worldwide curriculum of Fine Arts is obligatory to reconsider and develop the rationality that focuses on a higher standard of preparation for an artist. It needs to be divided into two specific *parts*: *universal* academic character and thematic artistic appeal of education. Creative subjects such as Drawing and Painting persist in a diverse way of exercise in academics. An applied-based subject is mandatory to have logical real-life experience. In this instance, to engage in such a creative process one must get real-world historical knowledge within textual accordance. In this type of event, academies must have certain sequential objectives, visions, and missions to execute the appropriate nature of creative studies.

4. Thought Process

Physicist and Nobel Laureate Albert Einstein (1879 - 1955) stated, “When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than my talent for absorbing positive knowledge” (Linderman, 1997). The thought process is directly associated with the basic component of philosophy. In fact, the thought process is considered the foundation of creativity. This is how the thought process is highly connected to establishing an idea into a factual matter. Curiosity has been the driving force behind philosophy since its earliest beginnings in ancient civilizations. Rather than simply accept the way things are, we humans have a natural tendency to question the world around us, and our place in it, and attempt to satisfy our curiosity with rational explanations — to philosophize (Weeks, 2019). Likewise, as an Artist-Scholar it is very important to learn how to think – not what to think.

5. Material-Technique

Generally, art institutes facilitate and demonstrate the traditional approaches to art materials in BFA. According to the experience from the demonstration, pupils could prepare themselves and be able to apply their skills through materials-techniques. Is there anything creative that a particular fellow showed as a personal talent? Especially, at the higher stage, this process is completely incorrect. Fellows should get the opportunity to explore and expose their own techniques with regular materials, whether oil color or acrylic color as common media. Sometimes a scholar goes beyond the norms and creates a new medium with an innovative technique.

6. Why Do We Teach Art

The specific objective of why we teach art must be clear. Is there any significant modification in the method and practice between an art teacher at school and a professor of the Fine Arts at the college or university level? Generally, a teacher in the school is confident to test according to the curriculum. In contrast, the professor of the fine arts hypothetically examines, directs, motivates, and encourages the students on the ways of being professional. It is truly irrational that only one motivation is to be an artist after completion of higher study. There is no structured art market or sufficient art dealers. Earning money by selling art pieces is challenging and uncertain, as it depends on the collector’s desire. Unpleasantly, the number of collectors compared to artists is insufficient. Yet, the scenario is difficult in Bangladesh for surviving as a freelance artist. Indeed, most art graduates want to be a teacher for survival and are also recognized as an artist. Precisely, these phases are totally opposite for both students and teachers. This position is ever present in this introduction as we reveal various approaches to teaching art. An awareness of the past brings to mind traditions, vocabulary, and forgotten aspects of our chosen profession as artists and teachers (Daichendt, 2010). A significant contributor toward tendencies in art education is the research or education of imminent teachers. Even though there are frequent chances, the role of art-making can be nearly absent

including the entire program in professional structure. In fact, scholars with an MFA degree distinguish this strong concept among artists and teachers.

7. Artist-Scholar-Teacher-Researcher

Artist-teacher is a conceptually rich term in the field of art and design education used to describe the professionally distinct roles of artist and teacher. The Association of Teaching Artists, the Teaching Artists' Journal, and the Artist/Teacher Institute are just a few professional organizations that employ the term. The formation of the concept of 'artist-teacher' by George Wallis in 1845 (Daichendt, 2011) is a creative act and utilizes research and theory from the field of creativity to emphasize the many aspects that led to this accomplishment. George Wallis (1811–1891) was an artist, museum curator, and art educator. He was the first Keeper of the Fine Art Collection at South Kensington Museum (later the Victoria & Albert Museum) in London. From 1843, he served as Headmaster at Spitalfields School of Design, then after the Manchester School of Design and some more design schools organized by the Government. However, the development of this new identity did not happen instantly in most of the countries in South Asia. On the other hand, Western countries have started to reveal the hidden essence or attribute of an artist-teacher. An American New Thought writer Wallace Delois Wattles (1860–1911) remains personally somewhat obscure, but his writing has been widely quoted and remains in print in the New Thought and self-help movements. In the evolving systems approach to the case study method, there are three guiding ideas: "The creative person is unique, developmental change is multidirectional, and the creative person is an evolving system. The necessary uniqueness of the creative person argues against efforts to reduce psychological description to a fixed set of dimensions. The creative person is not conveniently "far out" along some well-charted path: She or he is unique in unexpected ways. Indeed, it may never be possible to make more than a few obvious generalizations about ways in which all creative people are alike." (Wallace, 1999).

However, the idea or concepts are badly needed to be explained. Like- what is a creative case? What do we mean by creative work? Like most definitions of creativity, ours includes originality and value: The creative product must be original and must be given value according to some outer criteria. Nevertheless, there is the third criterion, purpose—creative products are the result of purposeful behavior—and a fourth, duration—creative people take on hard projects lasting a long time (Wallace, 1999). Now it is clear that only external beauty is not considered an art piece. The art piece should have revealed four qualities.

An artist and professor Deborah Rockman in the BFA and MFA drawing programs at Kendall College of Art and Design. In 1992, she was the first woman and the youngest person ever to be awarded the rank of full professor in the history of Kendall College. She remarks on dynamic parts of her teaching experience, "In a field of study where there are few absolutes and where self-expression and personal experience are vital elements, recognizing and nurturing the individual temperaments and natural abilities of the students in my charge is

perhaps the most important and difficult challenge facing me as an instructor of art.” (Acockman, 2000).

When an art instructor heartily gets the assigned responsibility it is connected to something personal more than academic attitude. In this case, self-motivation and involvement are the essentials that support identifying the pupils’ quality. Furthermore, the proper development of art students’ strategies and appropriate techniques is highly appreciable. This is a strong backup for artist-teachers to reform their own strategy with appropriate structure. The following idea from Deborah Rockman would be a considerable basis for art instruction: “Lectures, handouts, class discussions, gallery visits, demonstrations, and slide presentations are important aspects of my instructional approach, with the work of both historical and contemporary masters as well as student work serving as examples and inspiration. Individual and group critiques are held in all courses and consider technical, formal, and conceptual issues in both a contemporary and historical context.” (Acockman, 2000).

The link between contemporary and historical topics could be a suitable way to understand and take responsibility to create something new. Sometimes, art classes become difficult, boring, and meaningless to students without proper explanation by the teacher. Deborah Rockman Students often go through the motions of sighting without really understanding what they are doing and why it works. A little understanding of the principles of sighting goes a long way toward encouraging students to use the process to their advantage (Acockman, 2000). So, this is very much essential to understanding and being an artist-teacher.

8. Teacher

In the general and regular character of teachers and their actions, it is quite typical to consider the teacher as a well-mannered, thoughtful, and conscientious individual whose practice is consciously planned and initiated. Dennis Atkinson, the assumption here, of course, is that the effective teacher is a rational individual, who is able to bring rational [judgment] and reflection to evaluate the quality of his or her teaching (Atkinson, 2004). To describe essential individuals, it is required to clarify and understand every term and definition deeply. Generally, an artist is a person who paints, draws, or makes sculptures (Atkinson, 2004). ‘Artist’ is an alternative to a great responsibility that contains various artistic approaches. Therefore, an artist should be a person who has an aesthetic attitude that helps to get renowned and significant recognition of a national identity that must contain intelligent and intrinsic instincts to connect a social attachment to the talent of timeless creation. A scholar who studies in great detail with an analytical point of view, especially in college or university (Atkinson, 2004). A keen observation of the term ‘Scholar’ will reveal true and stimulating scope. Like, when a pupil is able to be involved with progressive matters by devoted accountability, then the apprentice is considered a scholar. When scholars’ devotion involves a study and examination to the ultimate finding of the original information the scholar is called a researcher. Basically, the actuality of a ‘Teacher’ is a powerful responsibility that should not be considered a general job or profession. Despite this, we accept this responsibility by way of occupation. A teacher is a

collective character of many responsibilities with evaluating acting as a motivator to develop a profound nation. To be an artist-teacher one should have achieved the required attributes first as an artist-scholar and artist-researcher.

9. A Chronological Structure of A Sequential Curriculum

Every particular academic subject needs a way of expression with appropriate instruction in academic practice. Therefore, it is very important to organize a common method of art education for a better way of academic approach. Individually, art offers ways to visualize our inner minds, both intellectually and spiritually (Linderman, 1997). So, creating a meaningful connection between our intellectuality and spirituality is highly required to follow a certain direction with sequential curricula. From preschool to higher study, art education should offer a rationale course in the syllabus at every stage. The syllabus must have certain credit hours with objectives, missions, visions, and intended learning outcomes. Art can be introduced as such involving kids playing with materials at the preschool stage. They will be encouraged to play with materials like paper, colors, brushes, erasers, and so forth. Gradually, they will learn about the elementary objectives. The introductory part of Elements of Art with the vocabulary of visual arts terms. Academy should be concerned with art for students with special needs education, to identify their learning domains at the school level. For instance, drawing, painting, music, and dancing. etc. could be discovered in the active domain of learning or the type of study capacity of a specific student. At the school level students will learn elements of art with practical skills and the significance of art within the basic history of world art to acquire a basic and general knowledge of world art as a visual language. Thereafter, at the college level, Artist-Students will focus on creation through a blended combination of knowledge with skills. Artist-Students must have the capacity to absorb meaningful creative practice according to the academic structure. Gradually, at the tertiary stage in the BFA level apprentices will start the process to be considered scholars in the creation through the exploration of the innovative approach to creating art. Finally, MFA/Ph.D. Artist-Scholar is completely prepared for advanced research and generating state-of-the-art attribution for society as a professional researcher.

10. Conclusion

The development of art agendas within institutional frameworks is acutely necessary to understanding and resolving the paradoxical nature of teaching art. There has been a wrong concept that artists and teachers are incapable of working in the same space as a resident character; the conditions—including tradition, culture, and context—play the main characters in considering art's values. With attention to Bangladesh, the Fine Arts Academy's theoretical, and practical practices are moving in a perplexing direction. What is more, research is not appropriately encouraged academically or personally. For this reason, Bangladesh's people are unable to enjoy advanced applications of visual art. Most of the drawings and paintings have been displayed only for the purpose of beautification. The academic curricula need to follow a sequential structure of a sequential curriculum in academic culture.

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At heart I'm an artist; my passion is creating engaging and inspiring works of art in various media. But I'm also committed to the development of Visual Arts in Bangladesh; in fact, I believe that Visual Arts, the study and making of visual art, is crucial to the holistic advance of my country. As a faculty member in one of our country's finest institutions, Khulna University, I am privileged to have the opportunity to share my joy for Fine Art every day with my students. I hope that I can be an inspiration to them, an encouragement to my highly-valued colleagues, and a small part of the unstoppable cultural movement in this world, called art. I completed my Masters of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting at Rajshahi University, Bangladesh. Before that, I worked on the faculty of Daffodil International University in the Multimedia and Creative Technology Department and at the Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology in the Graphic Design and Multimedia Department. My research interests are vernacular painting, contemporary painting of Bangladesh, and environmental and ecological painting.