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The Hidden Curriculum

Abstract

A work of art is as useless as a tool is useful.

The term interdisciplinary and how institutions establish this as a core function of undergraduate education is a conundrum.

It could be argued that art is an expanded field that does not need to recognize interdisciplinarity - we acknowledge that art practice is post media and antithetical to categorization. Yet the pedagogy in UK art schools predicated a get-on-with-it studio culture with making as the, often unquestioned, cynosure of activity foregrounding the conventions of material and technical methods and processes. A mono-technical approach to learning that relies on doing, often separating theory from practice, advocating studio time over learning through the study of other subjects.

In this paper I will question how can we potentially enable a true analysis of a practice that relies on a broader context not just in its inception and development but also in its reception and reflection. Developing ideas discussed in the paper I delivered at the PARADOX conference I will interrogate what is instrumental in our teaching and how we engage our students to grasp that art is as useless as a tool is useful. How do we maximise the future potential for art education in the broad context of universities and what form and function should our *trivium* and *quadrivium* take?

Art is as unique and irreplaceable as tools are common and expendable – but what aspects of our teaching and, by extension, students' learning is unique and irreplaceable and what is common and expendable?

References

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