

# An Artistic Approach to Fine Arts Interpretation in Higher Education

Jurij Selan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Correspondence: Jurij Selan, Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Kardeljeva pl. 16, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, EU. Tel: 386-31-415-218. E-mail: jbselan@yahoo.com

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## Abstract

Art criticism was introduced into art education to help students understand works of art. However, art interpretation methods differ according to the educational goals specified for various types of art students. The fine arts interpretation procedures established in education are usually purely theoretical and exclusively verbal, and are thus appropriate mostly for art theory students, whose educational goal is art theory competence. On the other hand, these methods are inadequate for fine arts students, whose educational goal is artistic competence. Namely, artistic competence cannot be achieved solely by means of theory and discussion, but must include practical, “hands-on” artistic experience. Proceeding from this recognition, this paper proposes a fine arts interpretation method that integrates an art theory approach with an artistic one and can thus help fine arts students attain their educational goal (i.e., artistic competence).

**Keywords:** fine arts interpretation, motivation, experiential learning, critical inquiry, critical procedure, artistic competence

## 1. Motivation and Critical Inquiry

As an educator working with fine arts students, I encountered an issue that can be summarized by this question: What are the differences between a method of critical inquiry in the fine arts (a fine arts interpretation) that can motivate fine arts students and one that can motivate art theory students?

In order to explore this issue I first offer some reflections on the nature of motivation and the problem of art interpretation or critical inquiry.

### 1.1 Motivation

Motivation is the drive that moves individuals to choose an activity and compels them to become actively involved with it. Its value can be assessed by three parameters: (1) choice: why a person decides to do something; (2) intensity and quality: how intensely, qualitatively, and profoundly the person will participate in the activity; and (3) persistence: how long the person will be willing to perform the activity (Dörnyei, 2001: 8). The “moving causes” (Lat. *motivus* ‘moving cause’) of motivation are called *motives* or *motivators* (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2009) and causes that divert one from it are *demotivators*. The main motivators for an educational activity are the goals that an individual wants to achieve, and demotivators are all the obstacles in the course of educational activities that prevent one from achieving these goals. Goals may vary. On the one hand, there are “educational objectives” or internal motivators (Lin, McKeachie, & Kim, 2003). These objectives are the ones that compel students into an activity for the purpose of achieving the *competences* that the activity will help them to develop. However, in addition to such internal motivators, in real life there are also many external motivators that are not rooted in competences, but are located somewhere outside oneself (e.g., power, money, etc.).

The motivational value (i.e., positive, negative, or neutral) of an educational activity thus depends upon the relationship between various motivators and demotivators, which can be demonstrated in a “motivational equation” (Figure 1) similar to that by Kurt Lewin (McClelland, 1987: 8).

$$\text{MOTIVATION} = \frac{\text{MOTIVATORS}}{\text{DEMOTIVATORS}}$$

Figure 1. The “motivational equation”

Description: If motivators are stronger than demotivators, motivation is positive (positive motivation); if demotivators prevail over motivators, motivation is negative (demotivation); if motivators and demotivators cancel one another out, there is no motivation (amotivation; Guay, Vallerand, & Blanchard, 2000: 177). (Note 1)

My research only dealt with students of fine arts that (1) have goals, and are thus not amotivated for education, and (2) are primarily internally motivated by the desire to acquire certain educational competences. As an educator of fine arts students designing an educational activity, I thus faced the following problem. If these students are demotivated, the reason for this is not their lack of goals (amotivation) because these students have already indicated high motivation to learn in a self-selected field of study. Their demotivation thus stems from the lack of appropriate educational activities that would help them achieve their goals. When introducing the educational activity of fine arts interpretation to such students, I had to solve the motivational equation properly in order to establish a state of positive motivation. This means that I had to (1) adjust the educational activity of fine arts interpretation to fit the educational competences that serve to motivate fine arts students (the upper part of the equation) and (2) structure the methodological procedure of this art interpretation in accordance with those goals (the lower part of the equation).

Before continuing with this discussion, I would like to comment briefly on the nature of interpretation or critical inquiry.

### 1.2 Critical Inquiry and Critical Procedure

Art criticism was introduced into art education to help students understand works of art. A clear distinction must be made, however, between a *critical inquiry* and a *critical procedure* (Geahigan 1998). George Geahigan stated that a procedure represents a sort of opposition to an inquiry because it is usually employed in routine situations that we already know, whereas inquiry is employed when one wishes to learn about and understand something new. Geahigan was thus very skeptical about using critical procedures and art interpretation methods in art education and calls for a transition from procedures to *parameters of critical inquiry*. If procedures are processes fixed in advance that determine how students understand something, parameters are simply the general conditions that allow critical reflection to occur and can thus activate the students' own critical understanding. Therefore, parameters can be combined in countless potential critical inquiry lessons or procedures.

However, although the difference between a critical inquiry and critical procedure that Geahigan emphasizes is very important, I do not perceive them as being in conflict, like he does. On the contrary, my own educational experience has demonstrated that, from a motivational point of view, procedures are an important part of the education process. Of course, procedures distort and increase the rigidity of critical inquiry in some way, and are thus unnatural; but procedural deficiencies will interfere with and obstruct learning only if the teacher demands that students learn the procedure for its own sake, without taking into account the flexibility and suppleness of the critical inquiry that the procedure should lead to. On the other hand, if a teacher is aware of this, procedures can offer some significant educational benefits. Namely, by setting appropriate *transitional goals* (Locke & Latham, 1994: 24), which serve as rungs on a ladder, procedures are able to present students with an orientation to the educational problem that at first sight might seem too difficult to handle. Procedures are thus of considerable motivational importance because they enable students to overcome what at first seems insurmountable. In other words, although professional critics do not need procedures because they are already fully versed in the parameters of critical inquiry, students need some procedures to help them master the process of critical inquiry that they will later be able to perform freely. Thus, from an educational and motivational point of view, it is crucial for the educator to know how to translate the desired type of critical inquiry into a method that will enable students to find, activate, and develop their own personal critical abilities.

### 1.3 Linking Critical Inquiry and Motivation

Linking the comprehension of the interaction between critical inquiry and critical procedures given here with the motivational equation presented above yields the basic framework for investigating the differences between educational activities of fine arts interpretation that can motivate fine arts students and ones that can motivate art theory students (Figure 2).

$$\text{MOTIVATION} = \frac{\text{PARAMETERS OF CRITICAL INQUIRY}}{\text{CRITICAL PROCEDURE}}$$

Figure 2. The motivational equation linked to the issue of fine arts interpretation

My first task was to solve the upper part of this “educational equation.” In order to do so, I had to identify the parameters of the types of critical inquiry that align with the appropriate educational goals or competences of fine arts students and art theory students. This, however, required reflection on the range of competences that both categories of students are motivated to acquire as part of a critical inquiry. The second task was to solve the lower part of the equation: using the parameters of critical inquiry identified, I had to consider (and consequently construct) a sustainable methodological interpretation procedure that would facilitate students’ mastery of the targeted critical inquiry.

Solving the upper part of the motivational equation thus required an exploration of how the educational competences of fine arts students and art theory students differ. Because I teach fine arts students, my prime concern and objective was their educational goal, and the creation of an educational activity that would help them achieve that goal. Fine arts students must above all develop their own artistic creativity, and so an educational activity should primarily help them to do so. On the other hand, art theory students’ prime educational goal is not to develop artistic creativity, but rather to develop the ability to theoretically evaluate works of art. Thus, their educational activity should be properly oriented toward achieving this goal. The difference between these educational goals can be defined in simple terms as the difference between “making art” and “knowing art/learning about art,” or as the difference between artistic competence and art theory competence.

In order to avoid misunderstanding, it has to be clarified that these two competences of course are not mutually exclusive, are not in opposition, and cannot be strictly separated but must be understood as overlapping. On the one hand, artistic competence requires “knowing art” because “making art” is not just a technical routine, but a cognitively complex process; on the other hand, art theory competence also cannot be obtained without some practical ability to feel and understand art as an artist. Therefore, one’s theoretical knowledge always influences one’s production of art, and knowledge of technical and practical questions also enriches historians’, critics’, and aestheticians’ understanding of works of art.

However, distinguishing “making art” from “knowing art” is nevertheless relevant from the educational point of view. Namely, art theory and art history students do not need to learn and experience how to “make art” in practice, even though they might learn about “making art” in theory. Their primary concern is the theoretical understanding of works of art, not the practical experience of actually making them with their own hands. Thus art theory students, even though they may learn about technical and artistic issues, do not really develop artistic competences but only art theory ones.

On the other hand, even though fine arts students must “know art,” this knowledge cannot be transmitted to them in isolation, but must be integrated into the practical experience of how to “make art” in practice. Thus, fine arts students must primarily be able to use their art theory knowledge to reflect their own artistic experiences and abilities.

Therefore, from the educational point of view I must make a distinction between “making art” and “knowing art,” but on the other hand I must also be aware of the fact that these two approaches need to embrace each other. Subsequently, even though the interpretation method proposed later in this article is primarily intended to develop artistic competence, it does not exclude the development of art theory competence, but simply subordinates it to the goal of “making art.”

The next issue was identified upon reconsideration of the type of critical inquiry and methodological procedures that have been established in university-level fine arts education (at least in Slovenia) in relation to these differences in educational goals. The purpose of the critical inquiry generally used is only to master the acquisition of art theory competence and is thus purely theoretical and exclusively verbal. Therefore, methods based on this type of critical inquiry are suitable only for art theory students who primarily need to master the theoretical understanding of art, but are unsatisfactory for fine arts students, who also need to experience and

master art on a practical and artistic level. For this reason, in my experience, many fine arts students see such purely theoretical and verbal methods of interpretation mainly as an institutional coercion imposed on them by “theorists.”

Therefore, the fact that this critical inquiry and its institutionalized methods of art interpretation have not been built to help students achieve the objective of developing artistic competence means that the educator has two tasks related to the motivational equation: first, to promote a form of critical inquiry (i.e., an *art-critical inquiry*) that will—in addition to theoretical skills—help students of fine arts to develop artistic competences in particular; and, second, to construct a type of critical procedure (i.e., an *art-critical procedure*) that will effectively teach them to do so.

## 2. An Artistic Approach to Critical Inquiry and the Method for It

### 2.1 Experiential Learning and Artistic Learning

The general educational framework that best fits the critical inquiry I had in mind is holistic *experiential learning*, which posits that students can best develop their competences if they simultaneously “have an experience” (i.e., primary experience) and “know an experience” (i.e., secondary experience); or, in other words, when they both act and reflect their activity at the same time (Figure 3). This enhanced learning is based on the recognition that, in the interaction between primary and secondary experience, other types of intelligence and psychosomatic dimensions of perception are activated in addition to rational thought. All of this together eventually leads students to arrive at an “Aha!” moment or insight that makes their experiences special and personal: they become part of their bodies and not just their minds (Beard & Wilson, 2006: 172, 217). Or, as the following Chinese proverb succinctly puts it: “I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand” (Weigand, 1995: 4).

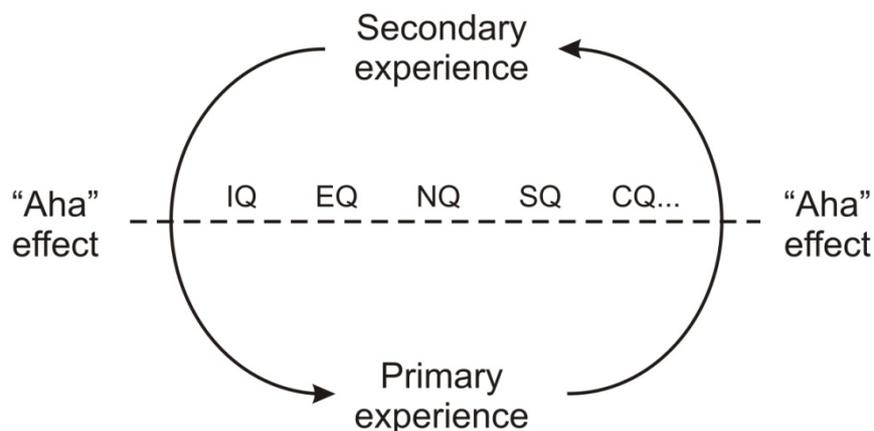


Figure 3. Model of holistic experiential learning

In brief, holistic experiential learning is based on the simple but important recognition that people develop competences in the most effective, creative, and motivational way when they activate not only their abilities of recollection and rationalization, but also personal experience, physical activity, and all the various forms of intelligence.

This, however, is particularly true of learning that aims to develop artistic competence. Namely, the knowledge of “making art” cannot be developed any other way than through practical artistic activity (i.e., primary experience) or as picturesquely illustrated by Slovenian art theorist Milan Butina: “The painter thinks painterly only while painting” (1997: 8). Artistic learning thus requires a holistic learning experience, which is shown in Figure 4 by aligning it with the abilities in David Kolb’s model of experiential learning (1984).

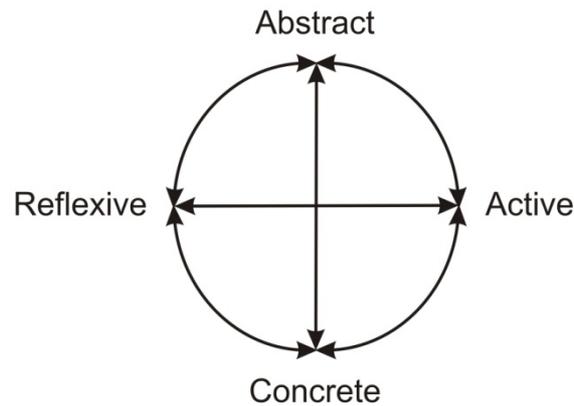


Figure 4. Kolb's learning model

Kolb ascertained that the holistic learning process can be understood as a process of resolving conflicts between four parameters of the holistic experience: active vs. reflective and concrete vs. abstract. In relation to artistic learning, this can be interpreted in the following way: people who want to learn how to paint are like people who would like to learn how to swim. Until they get into the water, they can only have a slight idea of what “making art” consists of. In order to truly understand this, they must make direct contact with artistic materials (the *concrete*); that is, dive into the water and try to swim. Only then can they begin to think artistically and truly reflect (the *reflexive*) on all the issues associated with achieving artistic competence, which poet Paul Valéry long ago beautifully expressed like this: ‘There is an immense difference between seeing a thing without a pencil in hand and seeing it while drawing it’ (1955: 40). Only then, when they are “in the water” together, can the art teacher lead and advise students in their artistic development. Abstract art theory knowledge, which primarily serves as a means of reflecting practical artistic activity with reference to established principles of art theory, art history, and aesthetics (the *abstract*), cannot be sensibly included in student activities any earlier than the point at which students have already dived in. Consequently, the artistic learning process does not make much sense if the students are not in the process of “making art” (the *active*) for the whole time because only when doing so can they fruitfully incorporate their art theory knowledge into the development of their artistic competence and learning “how to swim.”

## 2.2 The Art-Critical Inquiry and Art-Critical Procedure

The recognition that developing artistic competence demands a holistic learning experience implies that the critical inquiry that would aim to develop artistic competence should also be constructed in accordance within holistic artistic learning parameters. How this can be achieved?

My inspiration for this came from Pablo Picasso's statement: ‘Copying others is necessary, but what a pity to copy oneself’ (1972: 53). This statement means that, when artists become overly satisfied with their own style and start to repeat themselves, their artistic competence somehow becomes more rigid. However, because the essence of education is the development of competences in a way that will allow students to continually evolve, artistic competence must also be taught in a manner that enables fine arts students to continually develop as artists. Therefore, students of fine arts must somehow de-egotize themselves when learning. One way to do this is to direct students toward nature motifs, like Henri Matisse usually did when he found himself at a standstill (1978). However, another way to do this is to orient students not toward nature, but to works by other artists. This was the method Picasso preferred to use when stuck at an impasse: he would start to “copy” artworks by other artists. Of course he did not actually copy them, but allowed himself to be inspired by them to burst his own creativity. Re-creation or appropriation of artworks by other artists made him achieve something new on his own.

It is precisely this second, re-creative artistic process that offered me the inspiration to argue for a critical inquiry that would teach students how to keep their artistic competence alive and flexible by learning from works by other artists. The educational basis for doing this can be found in the teaching practice of painter Johannes Itten on Bauhaus, who was one of the first to stress that art interpretation can also be approached artistically and experientially, and not only verbally and rationally (Wick, 1988: 10–12). Itten thus argued two points: first, that verbal interpretation is not the only possible medium of interpretation, but it may also “speak” artistically; and, second, that rational analysis is not the only modality of interpretation, but may also include wider aspects of the

artwork experience. As a result, Itten acknowledged two axes of art interpretation: the verbal-artistic axis and the rational-experiential axis, subsequently formulating two interrelated methodologies that vary according to their objectives. The aim of the first method, called *structural analysis*, is to reveal the general and objective organizational principles of a work of art: those that one can “know” and thus verbally describe and visually explain. The basis of this methodology is the rational knowledge of compositional principles, proportions, distribution of light and dark, color contrasts, and so on. On the other hand, the second method, called *experiential analysis* (Germ. *Empfindungsanalyse*), does not aim at verbal or visual rationalization, but at a kind of re-experiencing of the artwork’s creative and artistic momentum, something that a student cannot describe rationally, but only express in a new artistic articulation or, as Itten himself put it, in a “mystical demonstration by artistic means.”

Itten’s subdivision of art critical inquiry along the two polar axes (verbal-artistic and rational-experiential) contains parameters similar to those of holistic experiential learning, and so I was able to adjust it to the parameters in Kolb’s learning model (Figure 5).

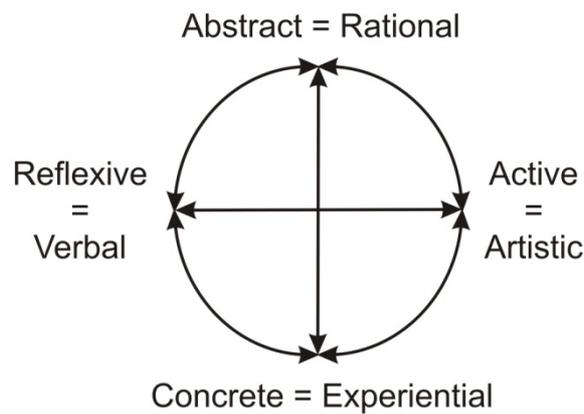


Figure 5. Parameters of art-critical inquiry

This established parameters of critical inquiry that are in accordance with the educational goal of artistic competence and solved the upper part of the motivational equation (Figure 2). As mentioned above, these parameters are not intended to determine the procedure or diachronic stages of the interpretation method, but simply to define the basic conditions that a critical inquiry should meet. For the particular art-critical inquiry required here, these conditions are as follows: students must choose a work of art that attracts them creatively and place them in direct contact (“face to face”) with it (the *experiential*); then they must be encouraged to become involved with the selected work of art in practical artistic performance (the *artistic*), which they should also simultaneously reflect in cooperation with teachers, classmates, and so on (the *verbal*). These reflections should also be set up in relation to various art theory, art history, and aesthetic frameworks (the *rational*) in such a manner that the development of art theory competence is not excluded from art-critical inquiry, but integrated as a means of reflecting artistic practice.

When these *parameters of art-critical inquiry* are converted into an *art-critical procedure* for educational purposes (in order to solve the lower part of the motivational equation; Figure 2), the varying levels of complexity with which a target group of students has already mastered the parameters of holistic art experience must be taken into account.

A standard critical procedure that is well suited to art education at the primary and secondary levels can be obtained when the phases of Kolb’s learning cycle are also taken as transitional goals of the art-critical procedure. Marjo Räsänen (1999) did precisely this in her method of “experiential art education,” in which four phases can be distinguished: experience, reflection, contextualization, and production. In the first phase, students attentively observe a work of art and surrender to it. In the second phase, reflection and discussion take place in the classroom and, in the third, a teacher tells the students about the context of a work of art using various theoretical methods of interpretation. Finally, in the last phase, students create their own artworks inspired by this process.

However, for university-level art education, this kind of procedure seems too simplistic. Therefore, I constructed a more complex art-interpretation procedure, presented in Figure 6.

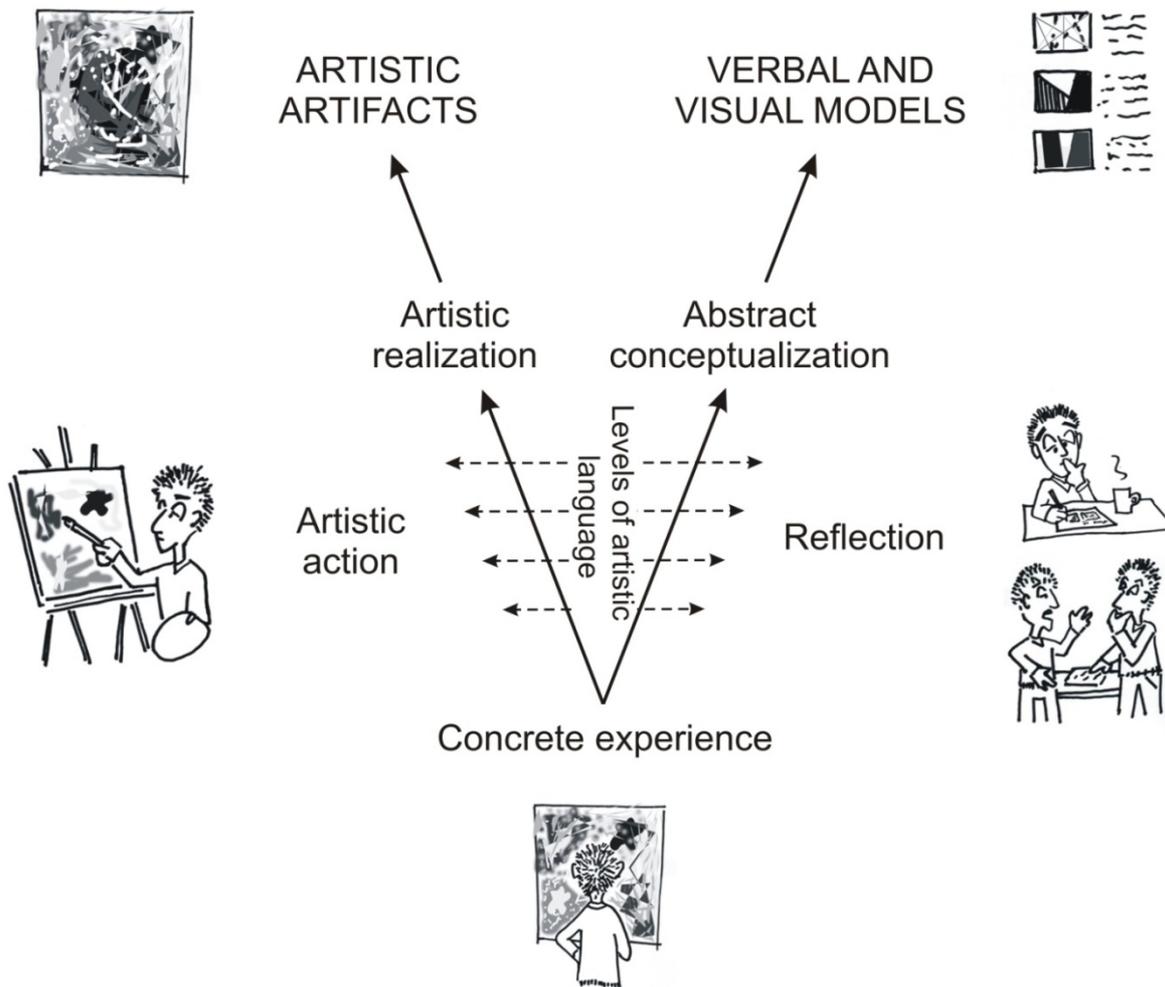


Figure 6. The art-critical inquiry method (Note 2)

The starting point of such a method is concrete (“face to face”) experience with a work of art. Students are then guided through transitional goals—which I have defined on the basis of Milan Butina’s fine arts theory (1995: 203–231) according to the levels of artistic language (which cannot be described with more precision in this article)—in such a way that their artistic experience is gradually built in the simultaneous interaction between artistic activity and theoretical reflection. Because the levels of artistic language constitute the practical transitional goals used to build the artistic experience in practice on the one hand, and also the theoretical transitional goals used to reflect the artistic experience with the assistance of other theoretical methodologies on the other, the path of this kind of interpretation somehow splits—like in Itten’s method—into two interrelated paths: one leading to abstract theorization and the other to artistic realization. Subsequently, two types of product arise in this process of artistic interpretation: one type of product is rational models (visual or verbal), in which the intellectual reflection of the interpreted artwork is clarified; and the other type of product is unique works of art, in which the artistic experience of the interpreted artwork has culminated.

**3. The Art-Interpretation Method *in flagranti*: Student Interpretations**

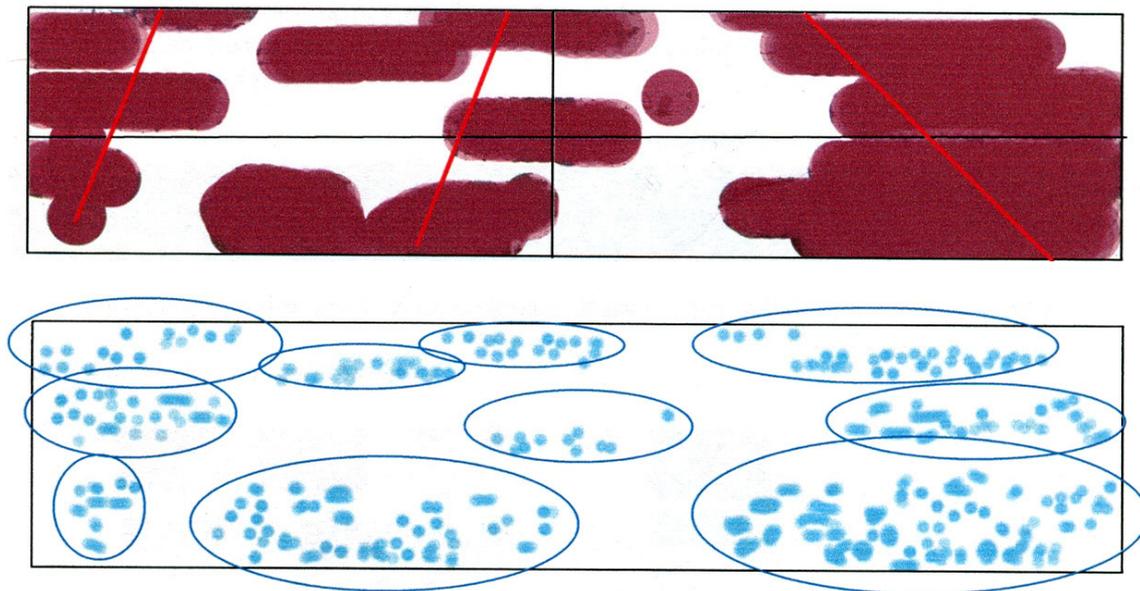
Because the intent of this paper is to theoretically outline the art-interpretation method, I will not describe the suggested procedure in more detail. However, it is useful to give some basic illustrations of its outcomes. Therefore, I am including three examples made by my students (in the Department of Art Pedagogy, Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia). Examples presented are chosen to illustrate the diversity of the method: first is the example of interpreting impressionist art, second of interpreting modernism and third of interpreting modern sculpture. Since the focus of this method is not on verbal interpretations, these are omitted from the examples and only visual models and artistic artifacts are presented. Some basic student commentary on how they felt about the art interpretation process is also given. To conclude, I comment on how these student interpretations verify the proposed artistic approach to interpretation.

3.1 Example 1



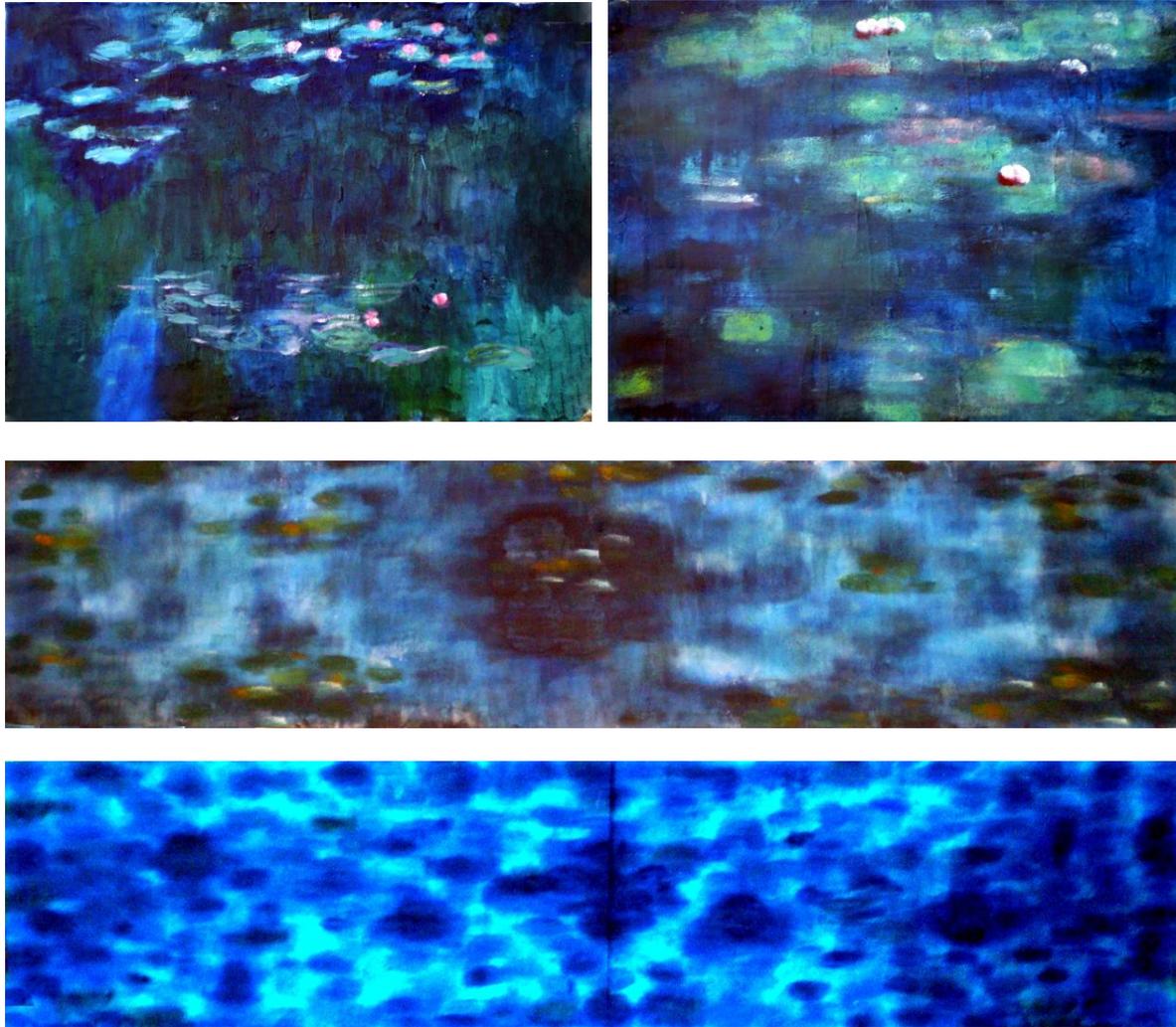
Claude Monet, *The Water Lilies/Green Reflections*, 1920–26, oil on canvas, 200 × 850 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Models



Artifacts





Student A, *Interpretations of Green Reflections*, 2009

This student described her interpretative experience as follows:

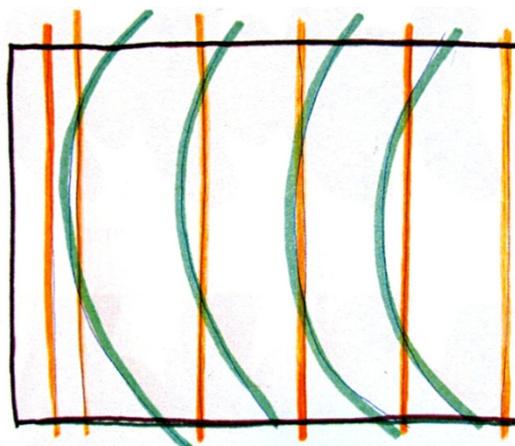
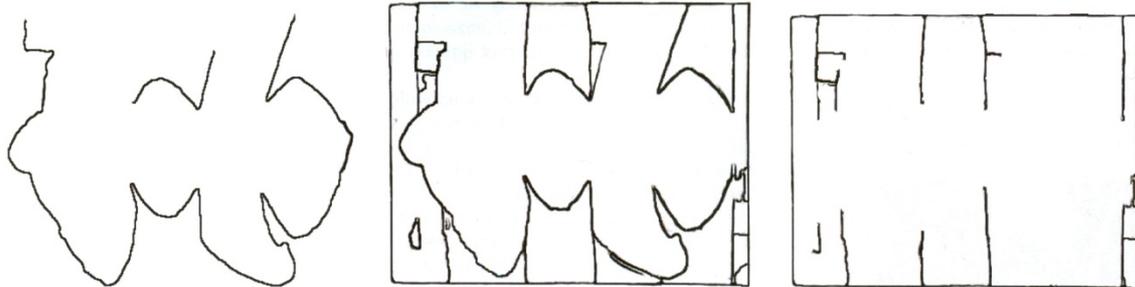
When I started to paint I didn't know how to approach it. Then I focused on the strokes, on the contrast between transparency and plasticity. I wanted to create the effect of water, its surface and depth. I found the result satisfactory. The stains became more and more blurred and abstract. I tried to get more varied shades of blue. I realized that the painting would look better only in blue. Before I started the interpretation, I had a completely different idea of what I should do, but during the process of interpretation I discovered that I should trust my intuition and feelings. These led me to the creation of an artwork that is something completely new to me. That is exactly what I needed, because previously I was stuck at the point where I didn't know how to continue.

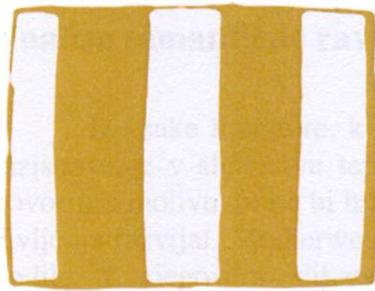
3.2 Example 2



Robert Motherwell, *Elegy to the Spanish Republic No. 34*, 1953–54, oil on canvas, 208 × 259 cm, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo

Models





**Artifacts**

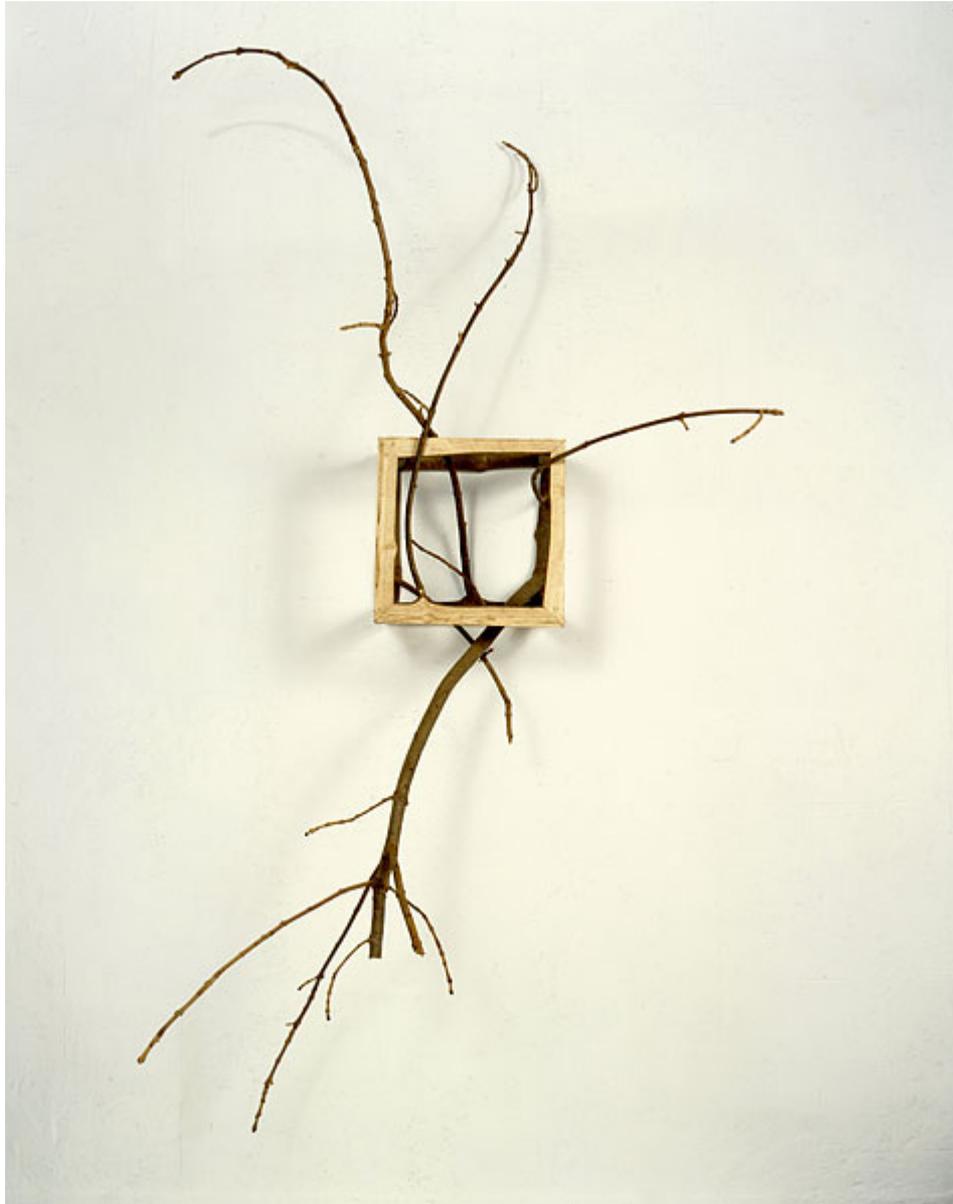


Student B, *Interpretations of Elegy to the Spanish Republic No. 34*, 2009

This student's comments are as follows:

Later on, I limited myself to just black and white. I chose vertical and oval planes as my basic elements. In contrast to my previous works, this time I tried to consciously place the elements within the composition. I made some sketches in black acrylic on white paper. The process of interpretation brought me various benefits, such as how to develop the composition without trapping it in its own format.

### 3.3 Example 3



David Nash, *Ash Branch Cube*, 1988–1989, ash wood

## Artifacts



Student C, *Interpretations of Ash Branch Cube*, 2010

This student focused on the interesting interaction between format and composition in Nash's work, in which the branches pierce the format and construct the composition space outside the format borders. The student thus tried to experience what different solutions and variations of such an interaction could bring forward.

As I see them, these three examples of student interpretations support the proposed artistic approach to critical inquiry as follows: when the students were asked to approach the interpretation, they assumed that they would mainly have to verbalize and theorize, and so they were not very keen on it and thought it would be just another theorist's approach to critical inquiry. However, when they realized that they would be actually engaging in artistic and practical activity, their motivation for interpretation grew significantly, as the quality of the artistic results of their interpretations shows. They were obviously eager to develop their own artistic creativity on the basis of another artist's work.

Nevertheless, some objections may come to mind when viewing and reflecting on such artistic interpretations from a theoretical distance. Because the main emphasis in these interpretations is obviously on the artistic form and on the practical experience of this form, the objection could be raised that such interpretations are too formalistically oriented and that they overvalue formal qualities at the expense of meaning. (Note 3) This may be a valid claim, but it seems overly simplistic to me. Namely, no method of interpretation is universal because all of them—especially those used in education—are constructed to achieve specific educational goals. In this case, the goal is artistic competence, and so it is quite natural that a method intended to develop artistic competence is primarily formally oriented because artists are most interested in producing forms and in “in-forming” a meaning, not in meanings as they theoretically stand for themselves. The meaning component is thus not really excluded from this method, but instead integrated and subordinated to the formal component.

Therefore, since the intent of this method is to stimulate artistic competence, one should evaluate it on that basis. As the student examples presented clearly show, the method seems to be effective in doing so because it encouraged the students to develop new artistic forms based on the artworks interpreted.

#### 4. Conclusion

My educational point of departure was the difference in critical inquiry activities that can motivate fine arts students and art theory students. I discovered that an appropriate educational activity of critical inquiry should first consider the educational goals of the specific types of students, and then the method or procedure for the appropriate critical inquiry should be adapted to them. As a teacher of fine arts students, my primary concern was to provide them with a method of critical inquiry that would be in line with their basic educational goal, which is the development of artistic competence. Because the prevailing methods of teaching art interpretation are mainly verbal and art theory oriented, my first task was to delineate an art-critical inquiry that would “speak” artistically and visually and, second, procedurally adapt it to the university level. As the concrete examples of my students’ works clearly show, the key characteristic of the proposed art-critical inquiry is in enabling students to strengthen and develop their own artistic competences, while also studying and experiencing the artistic problems that other artists had already previously confronted. This approach to critical inquiry also makes a contribution to the issue of motivation discussed at the outset. Because the art interpretation activity becomes an artistic experience on its own, students link it with their own artistic work and adopt it as a creative strategy in developing their own artistic abilities. This also helps them recognize the educational value of such an artistic approach to art interpretation.

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## Notes

Note 1. Two broader sociological issues are linked with the values in the motivational equation, which are not extensively addressed here but should nevertheless be mentioned. The first is connected with the question of whether students have any goals at all, or whether are they totally amotivated and not merely demotivated. Namely, if demotivation is a pedagogical issue (because this assumes that students are willing to learn, but that the educational activity offered does not lead to the competences they desire), which an educator can resolve by providing an appropriate educational activity and educational environment, amotivation is linked to much broader social difficulties (because this assumes that students lack the will to do anything), which can be resolved only by providing appropriate stimulation in the social environment (i.e., family, friends, etc.) and cooperation between peers.

The second issue concerns the nature of the motivators—internal or external—that dominate in society and the relationship between them. Although internal and external motivators are not mutually exclusive, a student who is motivated primarily internally (1) chooses an activity more readily, (2) participates in it with more determination and interest, and (3) persists in it for a longer period of time (Valle et al., 2003: 73). Conversely, when external motivators take primacy over internal ones, performance quality drops significantly, as demonstrated by the everyday examples of working people. As long as they engage in an activity for the sake of the pleasure derived from developing their competences, they are good workers. However, when they start to work just for the money, the quality of their work declines. Therefore, in order to increase the quality of educational activities, internal motivators must be high and external motivators moderate (participating only as “hygiene factors”; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Unfortunately, studies suggest that the current Western perspective in institutional education prefers external motivators—such as assessment, pleasing parents, profit, and so on—over internal ones (Lin, McKeachie, & Kim, 2003).

Note 2. Figure 6 is illustrated in order to make the content more comprehensible. The male person who is presented as a *pars pro toto* is simply a projection of my own body image and should not be misconstrued as representing any particular point of view (such as racism, sexism, etc.).

Note 3. One of this article’s reviewers mentioned this with regard to Itten’s method and subsequently also the method I constructed using Itten’s principles. Consequently, the reviewer also remarked that my reference to interpretation methodologies in the article was “not up to date” because I only referred to the (presumably outdated) method by Itten. My response to this is: I did not base my method on Itten’s educational work because I am not up to date with more modern critical methodologies, but simply because no methodology that I came across is really artistically oriented. All methodologies are oriented toward verbal theorizing, but none toward a practical artistic experience (which has also been noted by Lori A. McPherson [2005]).