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Teaching/Learning Strategies through Art: Art and Basic Design Education

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Abstract

“The ultimate aim of any creative activity is building... architects, sculptors, painters, we all must become craftsmen again... no essential difference exists between the artist and the craftsman, the artist is a craftsman of heightened awareness... but the basis of craftsmanship is indispensable to all artists. It is the prime source of all creative work”, Walter Gropius, from Bauhaus Manifesto of Foundation/Basic Course, 1919. “Basic Design”, also known as “Foundation Courses” or “Enseignement Pre’liminaire”, formed the basis of the pedagogy of the classical schools of design and architecture. That is, the “Vhutemas”, the “Bauhaus”, the “Chicago Bauhaus”, and the “Ulm School” (Hochschule Fur Gestaltung). This teaching approach, which has undergone multiple changes since the 1920s, lost much of its importance from the 1960s onwards, and at times even disappeared from educational programs in Germany. However, the past 20 years or so have witnessed a rebirth of “Basic Design Education” through many debates and pedagogical propositions (Boucharenc, 2006). In the light of this truth, it can be said that, the basic design has the same importance at all disciplines, although it differentiates on applications in the educations, and this importance is being increased day by day. In the context of this research, especially it will be focused on the basic design education in art and architecture and this concept will be related with these disciplines. The aim of this research is to put forward the right definitions for basic design concept and to evaluate it with relating its own elements and principles, if the design steps are built with a concept, it will be able to see the differences in its properties and right thought, in producing an idea and the effect of composing a concept on defining design power.

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1. Introduction

Basic Design has the content formed by the information that will help students to adapt themselves into a discipline providing visual education who received verbal education during secondary schools. Since Basic Design is far out from memorization, it activates and enriches the student opinions. Students are tried to be provided to have skills on building coordination among eye, mind, and hand during the process of constructing-animating the image in mind and transferring this image onto the design area in visual way through the applications towards development of visual perception, visual language, and visual expression. The effort on development of students' visual thinking ability underlies this approach. Another purpose of this effort is to help mental, understanding, and intuit ability of the student, open up new horizons, enrich, and elaborate.

2. Basic Design Education

2.1. *The History of Basic Design Education*

The industrial revolution occurred at the end of 18th century is the reason for a new method based on mechanization instead of different requirements and production systems, but spiritless objects were produced with the limitation of the knowledge and ability of technicians and experts. In 1847, Henry Cole founded the association of Art Manufactures and advocated the transformation of machine products into aesthetic forms (Atalayer, 1994). Instead of commercial determination of industrial revolution in art and design, it was begin to spread reflections from England. Against to industrialization, it was advocated to eliminate the difference between art-craft and reformation of production based on hand work (Sozen & Tanyeli, 1992). In this way, an art movement was emerged named as “Arts and Crafts”. William Morris lead the movement which advocates the understanding of a design produced by hand instead of cheap and poor quality mass production (Becer, 2005, p99). Morris wanted to reform the art education, to have new art education for the new requirements, and to make it part of everyday life (Atalayer, 1994).

The first school on design education with the name of “Bauhaus” was founded by the presidency of Walter Gropius in Germany in 1919. At the approach of Gropius' Bauhaus, it was aimed to create a unity of hand crafts which is able to combine picture, sculpture, and architecture. It was purposed to raise designers and craftsmen who have the ability to create beautiful and helpful object convenient to new life system through developing a program based on hand crafts. Bauhaus combined both the design education and elements of fine arts. In Bauhaus school, a program was formed that the students were able to contribute to building design and various internal hardware through gathering visual arts and technique. It is the school that provided the opportunity to perform courageous experiments and use imagination through considering the purpose of design (Ozsoy, 2003).

After Bauhaus School abolished by the Nazi regime in 1933, many of the teachers went to different countries and tried to spread the Bauhaus philosophy. Among them, Josef Albers immigrated to America in 1933, Vassily Kandinsky immigrated to France in 1933, Paul Klee immigrated to Sweden in 1933, Walter Gropius immigrated to Great Britain in 1934, to America in 1937, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy immigrated to Holland in 1934, to Great Britain in 1935, to America in 1937, Marcel Breuer immigrated to Great Britain in 1935, America in 1937, Herbert Bayer immigrated to America in 1938 and Walter Peterhans immigrated to America in 1938 (Bauhaus Archive).

In world, the basic design education has been implemented by different names such as “Visual Design”, “Foundation Design”, “Applied Design”, “Introduction Design”, “Gestaltung Lehre”, “Formund Gestalt”, “Designo Communicatione” (Atalayer, 1994).

2.2. *The Definition of Basic Design Education*

The source for human knowledge is senses. However, not all of the knowledge obtained through senses is true. Human explores the shapes, structure, and existing qualitative-quantitative features of nature, universe, and finds the rules. Human convert the existing qualitative-quantitative truth of the universe into knowledge which is only the product of human mind and stated through the concepts produced by abstraction. The formation of human,

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