

Draw and Paint in Darkness : A Proposal of Visual Art Program, Drawing and Painting for Blind Art Student

Associate Professor Dr. Pairoj Jamuni
Department of Applied Art Studies,
Faculty of Decorative Art,
Silpakorn University,
Bangkok, Thailand.

1. Addressing to the conference and Introduction

1.1 Addressing to the conference

Mr. President of the meeting, the Dean of the Faculty of Art, Burapha University, faculty members, fellow lecturers, art instructors, researchers from all institutions, artists, architects and designers and all guests participating in this international conference, ladies and gentlemen

I would like to express my gratitude for inviting me to present my paper in this honorable place of meeting, also my sincere thanks to Dr Kriangsak Khiaomang, the deputy dean of the Faculty of Fine and applied Arts, Burapha University who had spent his precious time discussing with me about the problem of art education for the disable and finally decided to invite me to present my paper.

1.2 Introduction

This article is written from the personal experience, when the author began his job as associate advisor of a PhD student. The author whose expertise as professor of art had to consult a PhD student to establish a training session for a group of visual disable students. The PhD student has to use a specially prepared program to help the blind student to study art lesson. The project begun about June 2010, the study was in progress and most blind students began and enjoy the art work shop. Later, about the end of the year 2010 an idea came to the author mind, why should the art program confined only at the primary or secondary school level, there should be some means to develop at least a visual art, design or art education program for the blind.

About June 2011, the author was invited to give a lecture on the appropriate topics and methods for PhD level. All students in the class are normal, how ever the author had spent a brief period of tie discussing with Dr. Kriangsak Khiaowmang, the deputy dean of the Art School of Burapha University about the art program for disable persons. The associate dean replied that the project was not an easy one there were a lot of bureaucratic problem, rules

and regulation. About three month later, in August 2011 the author met the deputy dean again. The author said, "I do not want the change in rules and regulations of the school, but if some blind students are permitted to study in the class of a normal student, in the class of sculpture or design, and doing some possible art project, it will be a very important step for us to a very important goal in future, the art program probably BFA in design or art education of which now seems to be impossible for the blind but one day it will be not a dream but reality.

(Remarks: PhD student-Sanchai Santives, Phd candidate Faculty of Decorative Art, Silpakorn University)

2. The present education for the blind

The author had done some studies before writing the article. The history of education for the blinds had begun more than half a century. In the presents there are schools for blind not only in Bangkok but also Khonkhaen, Cholburi and some other cities. At Salaya Nakorn Pathom the Rachsuda College has bachelor programs in Sign Language and developing capabilities for the disable, however the art program to educate art teacher designer or artist are still something too far.

The author does not intend to criticize the present practice, he believes that these school and college for the blind have to choose the priority which fit the current need of the disable. But the author desire to propose other alteration or a possible plan of future.

The art program for the blind or other disable to develop their full potential to be art teacher / designer / artist or architect. These peoples for many decades had been deprived, some of them for lives waiting to be properly educated to develop their full potential to be the professional art teacher, designer, artist or architect, to by the most productive as the can strive to be.

3. How the author began:As a PhD Thesis Advisor

As a professor of art and professional artist,the author knows that there is no other choice if he want to be the advisor of a PhD student who carrying on a research-art for the blind, the advisor has to learn more about the blind. The first step is seemingly easy but in the profound level it is not easy at all. Close your eye and feel the world you never know about. In the first few minute it is easy - If the audience want to have an experience, how a blind perceive and feel about his environment -, CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR PROFOUND UNDERSTANDING. NOW THE TIP OF YOUR FINGERS WILL SERVE AS YOUR ALTERNATED EYES, TOUCH AND FEEL IT.

Please keep in mind that, for the blind, it takes a lot of patience and courage to cope with problems of understanding things around himself, how to make his way through the permanent world of darkness. With strong will, imagination and developing other sense such

as hearing and touch will help the blind to achieve and go ahead- in some cases such as Stevie Wonders he could be ahead of the song writer with normal eye sight because of his brilliant imagination.

4. The blind's world and his potential

When you are visually deprived use what is left touch sound smell, etc in their full potential During the past two years whenever I have Chance to visit Khonkhean I went to the school of blind, talk to the deputy director- he will tell you a lot- his explanation and advise are very useful for me to help my advisee,

When a blind student draw the picture of a chair it looks very strange for us who has normal vision but the rectangular shape with four legs projecting out in different directions- if you think about the touch basis of perception it makes a lot of sense. (See illustrations X)

When the teacher with normal eye told his blind student "An automobile appears smaller when it was far away. It will appear bigger as it move closer to us.. . "No I do not believe you, the car can not be bigger or smaller, its size is constant!. Replied a blind student.

The author asked the student to sit tightly on his chair and said "Listen to the sound when I use my fists hitting the table. Distant sound make you feel as if the sound is not so loud, the sound seems louder INFACT IT IS THE SAME LEVEL OF LOUDNESS BUT THE SOURCE IS MOVING CLOSER TO THE LISTENER, if moves closer to you so is your vision ,the picture of an automobile, if the eyes fail to see the change in size of an object you will not be able to make conclusion whether an object is moving closer to you or far away from you.' If our eyes are made to see an object, near or far of the same size, this is fatal because we not be able to interpret the moving object towards us. An automobile, a motor cycle or a piece of furniture viewed by our eyes from the front, if we see the object bigger it is moving closer to us and we should run away, trying to escape or else be hit or killed.

In 2010 when the author began to work as an advisor for a Ph.D. student working on his thesis, computer art program for teaching art for the blind. In a test session helping the blind student to be familiar to the computer program the author found that the blind can use their touch so effective that geometric shapes of sand paper glued to on smooth surface of smooth white paper can be easily identified by the blind. It will take a blind student only 1-3 seconds to identified these geometrical shapes such as triangle, rectangle, pentagon, hexagon or circle. If a person of normal sight is blind fold and has to perform the same task it may take 5-15 seconds for the similar level of accuracy.

After the observations from 2010-2011 and talking to many teachers and administrators of the school of blind, the author decided to make a research, the main method of study is interview. So the paper will be presented with the following headlines:

5. Purpose / Statement of the Problem

Subproblems and Need for Study

5.1 Purpose

: To find the appropriate principle and practice to teach 2D visual art for the blind

5.2 Statement of Problem

: Statement of the Problem To find the most appropriate principle and practice of visual art, teaching drawing and painting for the blind.

5.3 Sub problems

: Sub-problem 1 : Study the students worldview and his potential

Sub-problem 2 : Test the drawing painting session

Sub-problem 3 : Let the students talk about their expressions.

Sub-problem 4 : Interview the teachers and administrators,

5.4 Hypothesis

: The blind has more potential than most people ever though, his sense of touch is very fine, as if he could see by touch.

5.5 Need for study

: Most of education for blind aimed at self sufficiency, general education but art craft design as professional or preparing for BFA eg art ed and visual art are still limited.

Delimitation

: Only the non congenital blind school level are subj of studies age range 10-15.

6. Related Literatures

Articles

ทวี เชื้อสุวรรณทวี (2552) "มองความคิดผ่านแนวคิดและทฤษฎี", กรุงเทพมหานคร : บริษัทนาเพรสจำกัด MVB p 15_L☺Blindstudio1BlindStudio1-5Eng.doc page 15FIFTEEN //ทวี เชื้อสุวรรณทวี และคณะ 2548 แผนแม่บทฟื้นฟูสมรรถภาพคนพิการอำเภอยุทธมณฑล นครปฐม

Books and magazine

ที่ระลึกพิธีเปิดป้าย โรงเรียนธรรมิกวิทยา (โรงเรียนที่มีซึ่งวิชาความรู้และการประพฤตินในความดี) Prayad Poo-Nhongrong the tauché holder, p34-

Internet

"Stevie Wonders", From Wikipedia, the Free encyclopedia, [http://en.wiki.StevieWonder./](http://en.wiki.StevieWonder/)

"Blindness and Education, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blindness and education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blindness_and_education)

/"ประวัติ ดร ทวี เชื้อสุวรรณทวี. / Internet-email: Tavee98@yahoo.com and rstdd@mahidoL.ac.th.

Interview of the teacher and school administrators

Vinij Moonvicha, deputy director of the Khonkhaen School for Blind, About September 2010 and (October 4, 2011).

“Khru Kai”, a teacher of the same school about September 2010 and October 4, 2011;
Mr Komol Malaitong, Deputy Director of Academic Affairs,
Miss Anchalee, the Thai Language teacher and Mr Prasit Umpim, the music teacher.

Video

John M. Kenedy, “Eref Armagan: The Blind Painter”

Summary of the Related Literature

Because of the time limit, I have to make the summary of these related literature, the first group especially the work done by Mr Tawee Saichua concerned with two issues, the activities that institutions for disable persons try to help and provide opportunities for disable students to be self sufficiency however society still do not understand and see the true potential of the students. Some rules and regulation in our society, in many cases does not help but reduce the chance for the disable to make his progress.

When I made an interview with Mr Vinij Moon Vicha. the deputy director of the Khonkhaen School for blind, he pointed out that the teaching to increase blind students capability is very important, such coursed of study function as the ladder, an effective tool helping blind student to acquire more knowledge or making advance practice possible such as dance with the same group of the normal vision dances.

The internet about Stevei Wonders suggests that some blinds, regardless of helps and chance he could be ahead of the song writers with normal eye sight.

Terms and Definition

In this concise version the author will select only 6 terms to be discussed

Art = Tradition of practice with high standard of draftsmanship specific purpose of art and strict convention of style of a certain race. Art change from one period to the next

Art Theory= In aesthetic, art theory is a philosophical answers to the question what art is. There are nine theory: Imitation, Voluntary; Experience; Expression; Escape; Organic; Form; Institution and Culture.

Blindness. type of = In this study, all students in the school are consisted of partial blind of different type such as narrow visual field and blur vision, some are entirely blind (visual field-zero), some are congenital blind.

BFA= A bachelor degree program emphasized on art, design or art education.

Curriculum = Group of courses of studies with specific contents, requirements and teaching method for each program of studies such as BFA, BSc. A good curriculum is planned by experts and reviewed in every 3-5 years.

Rules and Regulation= Criteria and standard practiced in educational institute. Student must obey and follow the rule. Judgment of individual student to be qualified to graduate depends on the rules and regulation plus academic performance.

7. Methodology

... Since the study is subdivided into four sub-problems

Sub-problem 1 Study the students worldview and his potential

Sub-problem 2 Test the drawing painting session

Sub-Problem 3 Let the students talk about their expressions.

Sub-Problem 4 Interview the teacher.

The first, second and third are observation and talking to student. The last one is interview/

7.1-7.3 Observe, then analyze the art class and student's art work.

P 16 ///Let the students talk,

7.4) Interviews the school teachers and administrators.

Question for the Khonkhaen School for Blind,

it should be at that place/ usniver etc

Question for the Khonkhaen School for Blind

Do you think it is possible to establish a BFA program in art ed/
fine art sculpture or design in Thailand?

7) If so where should be the first, Khonkhaen/Silpakorn or etc?

Why that school?

If so what should be the most appropriate curriculum? Or

How should the curriculum be planned?

How should the school begin or adjust for the project.

What should the teachers of the KK school of blind prepare

8. Result

The result of interview indicated that all the teachers agreed that it will be a wonderful chance if blind students will have the chance to study for bachelor degree program in art, design or art education. We should make the dream come true but this is not easy at all.

The first step is in the school levels, primary to high school, the art class had to be not only for regular students but advance art class to prepare student towards art professional

sculpture/ design or art education need a strong foundation and readiness for art and design professions.

Dream can come true by hard work and proper training for both teachers and students of the school for blind. For an art teacher of the school for blind it means to readjust the standard of teaching, the course content and proper teaching methods for drawing painting sculpture and designs are necessary. Some of the school teacher teaching studio courses such as sculpture, drawing and painting need teachers who has professional artist background, the BFA in sculpture painting and print makings are necessary. The teacher must have strong studio background as professional artist but he also needs special training to understand and communicate to the blind.

Entrance examination for the bachelor degree level needs modification, for example, for a blind student, sculpture should be a substituted require course of drawing. Course of studies in 2nd drawings and paining need modification in the case of the visually blind student. Courses of study from freshman to sophomore also need appropriate criteria in grading. A blind art student can do sculpture but he can not do the realistic drawing and painting that observation of model or objects by eyes are required. Criteria of grading, some course of study may be co ed study of both the visually disable and normal eye sight students.

The first generation of class which is expected to be graduate within the next 4 to 5 years will help art educator to learn a lot. The newly graduate should be a good art instructor for the next generation of blind art students. Teaching experience for the visual disable students is not an easy task but the experience is worthwhile for curriculum planners and art teachers teaching studio courses to develop new teaching method and improving course contents. The improvement is necessary for making better chance of effective learning for the next class.

Newly graduate visually disable art teacher should be a very helpful members in the new art and design education circle. Teachers teaching studio courses such as art history and aesthetic need adaptation of both contents and teaching method.

References

Articles

ทวี เชื้อสุวรรณทวี (2552) “มองความคิดผ่านแนวคิดและทฤษฎี”, กรุงเทพมหานคร: บริษัทธนาเพชร จำกัดP17//ทวี เชื้อสุวรรณทวีและคณะ 2548 แผนแม่บทฟื้นฟูสมรรถภาพคนพิการอำเภอพุทธมณฑล นครปฐม

Books and magazine

ทีระลึกพิธิเปิดป้าย โรงเรียนธรรมิกวิทยา (โรงเรียนที่มีสิ่งวิชาความรู้และการประพุดติในความดี)

Prayad Poo-Nhongrong the tauché holder, p34-

Internet

“Stevie Wonders”, From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, <http://n.wiki Stevie Wondoer./>

"Blindness and Education, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blindness and education /](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blindness_and_education/)

"ประวัติ ดร ทวี เชื้อสุวรรณทวี. / Net =? (e mail: Tavee98@yahoo.com and rstdd@ Mahidol.ac.th.

Interview

Vinij Moonvicha, deputy director of the Khonkhaen School for Blind, About September 2010 and (October 4, 2011)

"Khru Kai ", a teacher with normal eye sight of the same school about September 2010 and October 4, 2011

Mr Komol Malaitong, Deputy Director of Academic Affairs, Miss Anchalee Runerod, Thai Language teacher Mr Prasit Umpim, the music teacher. (The questions of interview see the methodology)

9. Epilogue

To make The dream come true is difficult but I think worthwhile to try.

It will be such a hard work for both teachers and students , curriculum planners and professional persons teacher, art instructors, artists and designer working together to help our students. Finally my poetry : My dear students, I know you are blind. But this teacher with normal eyes tries, To reach you in the darkest pit;

To make your creative potential lit

Igniting like candle in the dark,

Regardless of mocking voices bark,

Draw paint draw sculpt , make relieve,

Nothing is waste and meaning so deep.

The precious thing to let fellow human see,

Your expression: lines and colours are free,

The beauty that normal eyes never seen

Four your have your own world, red-yellow-green

The strange paradise I have never been

For You the world builder, construct the scene.

THIS IS NOT AN EASY JOB AT ALL, IT DOES NEED A LOT OF TIME, EFFORTS AND COOPERATIONS, ONLY ONE SCHOOL OR ONE NATION MAY NOT BE ABLE TO DO IT BUT INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO REACH THE GOAL MAY BE REQUIRED. I ENCOURAGE ALL OF YOU THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO JOIN TOGETHER AT LEAST YOUR IDEA AND SUGGESTIONS WILL BE VERY HELPFUL TO MAKE THE DREAM OF THE DISABLES COME TRUE.

I – as an artists should use my imagination and creative power to help the disable to explore and develop their full potential.

I – as a curriculum planner will try to find the most appropriate curriculum, course contents and teaching methods.

And as a human being I ask all the deans, university presidents to ease and modify your rules and regulations to give chance to the disable to be sculptors/ designers or art educators.

I am not asking any thing for my self, not for my reputation or award but the precious gift that we will be able to give to the disabled younger generations who is deprived of the chance to be sculptor, designer, art educator oreven architect/ painter etc....CAN WE MAKE THEIR DREAMS COME TRUE? Thank you for your kindly attention to my presentation.

มหาวิทยาลัยบูรพา
Burapha University