

Visual Arts

Introduction

1. Visual Arts is one of the elective subjects of the Arts Education Key Learning Area. The Visual Arts Curriculum at senior secondary education level builds on the Visual Arts Curriculum (Primary 1 – Secondary 3). It assists students in their acquisition of artistic and aesthetic experiences, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, all of which contribute to students' whole-person development. It also provides a curriculum framework for senior secondary students who take Visual Arts as a subject, and go through the public assessment process that will replace the existing Hong Kong Certificate Visual Arts Examination and the Hong Kong Advanced Level Art Examination. The senior secondary Visual Arts curriculum is different from the existing Art and Design syllabuses for senior secondary education in that it emphasizes both art appreciation and criticism and art making. There is also a greater emphasis on studying the contextual character of the visual arts. The senior secondary curriculum emphasizes the further development of the mind to which the visual arts can contribute.

Rationale

2. Visual Arts as a subject in the senior secondary curriculum is designed to stretch students' aesthetic and artistic potential and develop their values and attitudes, thus empowering them to be better prepared for their own future and to contribute to that of Hong Kong. Being a place of diverse cultures at the crossroads of change, Hong Kong is influenced by a mix of local, Chinese and Western art. It has become more and more important to rediscover links to the Chinese artistic heritage and connections to the art of Asia and other cultural contexts. Hong Kong is a high tech information society in which communication technologies, web-based, digitized and published visual information abound. Young people in Hong Kong need to have a good understanding of how to construct and interpret the meanings of these phenomena. Visual arts study, therefore, meets the specific artistic, creative and intellectual needs and interest of the community, and students who study the subject will be in a good position to fill the demand for creative manpower.

The following are justifications for studying the visual arts:

- (a) The power and pervasiveness of the aesthetic experiences found in the visual arts contribute to the quality of life. The visual arts embody physical, cultural and spiritual aspects of life¹. They function as an important communication system through which meanings are construed in ways that are different from other language systems. The study of the visual arts helps students explore insights and attitudes towards the world and human experience that cannot be explored through other means.
- (b) The study of the visual arts contributes to the development of cognitive abilities that are particularly relevant in that it invites imaginative and diverse perspectives and interpretations. The study of the visual arts promotes the development of abilities to think beyond right-or-wrong modes of inquiry, and the capacity to deal with multiple perspectives, make judgments in ambiguous situations, understand the relationships between parts to whole, solve qualitative problems, and exercise self-monitoring and self-awareness².
- (c) Studying the visual arts develops individual and social values. One of the ways human beings come to understand each other better is by creating and sharing their own values and culture through art. Students' pursuit of artwork in diverse social and cultural contexts contributes to the cultivation of an interest in other people and their cultures, and an appreciation of these.
- (d) The cross curricular links between the visual arts and other Key Learning Areas strengthen the learning process. Many students learn best when presented with multi-modal information such as is often found in the subject of Visual Arts. The development of reading, writing, and verbal language skills enhances students' abilities to investigate and discuss the visual arts with teachers and peers, thus strengthening their critical appreciation and their artistic production.
- (e) Studying in the visual arts stretches and nurtures the aesthetic potential of young people and enables them to participate in the fast growing creative industries of Hong Kong. There is a wide range of visual arts-related creative industries, including professional fine art, visual communication, fashion, industrial design, interior decoration, creative crafts, museum and gallery curatorial work, photojournalism, advertising, film and video production, art and film criticism, architecture, and cultural history.
- (f) The skills and abilities developed through studying the visual arts can be applied in

1 Fowler, C. (1996). *Strong arts, strong schools*. New York: Oxford University Press, p.12. As stated in *A statement on the arts for Australian schools* issued by the Curriculum Corporation (1993), Part 1 Aesthetics and the arts, p.4, aesthetic questions are a form of enquiry which provides valuable insights not only into the nature of the arts but also into the importance of broader aesthetic considerations relating to our physical, cultural and spiritual environment.

2 Eisner, E.W. (2002). *The arts and the creation of mind*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

many aspects of daily life and work. Visual communication skills help people to present their ideas more clearly at work. Heightened sensitivity and observation skills enable people to care more about visual detail, thus enabling them to make greater efforts in the pursuit of a quality life.

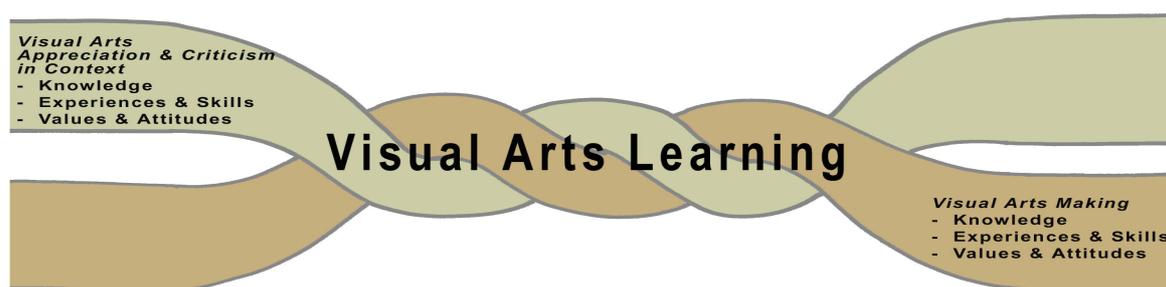
Curriculum Aims

3. The aims of the Visual Arts curriculum are to enable students to:
- ✧ enrich their aesthetics and arts experience;
 - ✧ strengthen their abilities to appreciate and create various forms of visual arts work aesthetically and critically;
 - ✧ develop perceptual abilities, generic skills and meta-cognition through autonomous and open-ended processes of inquiry in visual arts learning;
 - ✧ enhance multiple perspectives, and cultural and cross cultural understanding through exploration of the visual arts of diverse cultures;
 - ✧ cultivate personal refinement, values and attitudes, self-identity and a sense of commitment towards the community, the nation and the world; and
 - ✧ acquire a foundation for pursuing educational and career opportunities in the visual arts and creative industries.

Curriculum Framework

(This part should be read in conjunction with the section “Curriculum Framework” of the Main Document. It should be noted that the curriculum framework suggested below is for initial consultation only. Feedback from the public will be taken into account and further details will be provided in the next stage of consultation.)

4. In the Visual Arts curriculum, students learn through a balanced programme of study consisting of two intertwined and interrelated strands: *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* and *visual arts making*. These form the basic Visual Arts curriculum framework. The strands are closely related and should be learned in an integrative way. The relationship of the two strands is illustrated in the following diagram:



The Two Strands of Visual Arts Learning

Visual arts appreciation and criticism in context

Visual arts appreciation and criticism in context refers to all the processes in which students engage in direct response to the sensory appeal, and critical appreciation and judgment of artwork and art phenomena created by their own efforts and those of artists of a wide range of different contexts. Students are expected to understand knowledge, develop skills, enrich aesthetic and artistic experiences, and cultivate positive individual and social values and attitudes through the learning of *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context*.

Visual arts making

Visual arts making refers to all the conceptual and practical processes in which students apply knowledge and experience acquired in *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* to create a variety of visual arts work. Students are also expected to manipulate the skills of handling media, materials and art language, to enrich their aesthetic and artistic experience, and to cultivate positive individual and social values and attitudes through the learning of *visual arts making*.

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives in the two strands are categorized into three aspects: knowledge, experiences and skills, and values and attitudes. The relationship between the two strands and three aspects of visual arts learning as two dimensions of a framework is shown as follows:

	Two Strands of Learning	
	<i>Visual Arts Appreciation and Criticism in Context</i>	<i>Visual Arts Making</i>
Aspects of Learning	Knowledge Experiences and skills Values and Attitudes	Knowledge Experiences and skills Values and Attitudes

The learning objectives and focuses for the three aspects of learning in *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* and *visual arts making* are indicated in the following table:

Knowledge

<i>Visual Arts Appreciation and Criticism in Context</i>	
Learning objectives	Focuses of learning
<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand how artists, craftspeople and designers of various contexts use art formal knowledge, forms, media, materials and techniques to express moods and feelings, and present ideas - acquire an understanding of the historical, social, cultural and technological contexts of other people’s work - acquire an understanding of the contemporary context in which artwork is perceived - develop conceptions of what counts as art in different contexts - describe, analyze, interpret and judge artwork and art phenomena in context 	<p>Study artwork/art phenomena selected from: at least two cultural contexts (e.g. Chinese, Western, local and Asian) and two different time frames (e.g. Ancient, Middle Ages, Modern, Contemporary) and focus their learning on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - art formal knowledge (e.g. visual elements and principles of organization) and knowledge of art forms, media, materials, techniques - symbols and signs in different contexts - image development strategies: e.g. abstraction, realism, representational, non-objective - modes of artistic presentation: e.g. expression, representation, presentation - historical factual knowledge: e.g. historical, social, cultural and technological contexts of artwork and artists, accounts of the development of the arts and of individual art objects, and the contemporary context in which the artwork is perceived - narrative knowledge: understanding of how to interpret the meaning of artwork and art phenomena
<i>Visual Arts Making</i>	
Learning objectives	Focuses of learning
<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an increasing level of complexity in using art formal knowledge in context - demonstrate an increasing competency in using materials and techniques in context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - apply knowledge acquired in <i>visual arts appreciation and criticism in context</i> to create images for exploring emotions, ideas or personal response to the world, and expressing moods, feelings and presenting ideas

Experiences and skills

<i>Visual Arts Appreciation and Criticism in Context</i>	
Learning objectives	Focuses of learning
<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop personal response to artwork, art phenomena and the visual environment that are highly significant to them - explore works of art as expressive and unique objects - develop notions of individual styles - develop perceptual skills, sensitivity, association, imagination, observation and creativity through looking at and responding to various works of art and visual phenomena - use critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret meanings and evaluate works of art and art phenomena - employ communication skills to respond to, reflect on and evaluate artwork in verbal and written forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acquire experiences: (e.g. psychological experiences: psychological effects of colors, rhythm; aesthetic experience: aesthetics of natural and human-design environment; and artistic experience: artistic styles, artists' perceptions) through exposure to artwork, art phenomena and visual culture - participate in a series of interrelated and interdependent visual arts appreciation and criticism process - express feelings and communicate ideas towards their own and artists' visual forms of communication verbally and in writing
<i>Visual Arts Making</i>	
Learning objectives	Focuses of learning
<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explore their motivation and emotion, and feelings, perception, concepts and ideas towards themselves and the world - select and manipulate media, materials, techniques and visual language for expression and communication - transform experiences, emotions, feelings, and ideas into visual forms - develop self-reflective skills and attitudes towards their own visual arts learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explore their own deeply felt experiences which influence their selection and investigation of subject matter or themes for expression - develop themes and ideas through research - experiment with at least two visual arts media (e.g. painting, drawing, ceramics, sculpture, fashion design, graphic communication, video, installation, new media) - select and manipulate media, materials, techniques and visual language for expression and communication in context - participate in art production process - act as an audience of, reflect on and evaluate continuously their own learning process and artwork

Values and attitudes

<i>Visual Arts Appreciation and Criticism in Context and Visual Arts Making</i>	
Learning objectives	Focuses of learning
<p>Throughout the process of learning in the two strands, students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cultivate positive individual and social attitudes through the pursuit of aesthetic and artistic values in the arts - develop an understanding of the various functions of the visual arts and of their significance in different cultures through personal and perceptive study, analysis, criticism and judgment, and develop positive attitudes towards these - find an identity and role of their own - nurture concerns, curiosity, sensitivity, enthusiasm and appreciation of other people and the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nurture positive values and attitudes throughout the process of visual arts learning

Suggested Sequence

5. Due to the intertwined and interrelated nature of the two strands: *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* and *visual arts making*, they should be learned in an integrative way. The lesson time should be flexibly and effectively organized and used to cater for individual students' learning needs. The creative process in visual arts learning cannot be promoted in periods so brief that time for imagination, experiment and reflection is denied. In addition, set-up time and clean-up time must be taken into account.

6. The study of the subject is sustained by theories and practice in a wide range of visual arts forms. Students should progress along a continuum, from acquiring a range of different art experiences to work on a self-selected style, and from teacher-directed learning to independent learning. Concurrent with increasing knowledge, skills and experiences in the visual arts, students are encouraged to engage more broadly and deeply into their own personal pursuit of the visual arts and to consider career opportunities in the creative industries. In the earlier stages of learning, students will be introduced to basic art concepts and the practice of art analysis and criticism. They will also have opportunities to develop increased independence and competence in the selection and application of a variety of media, and to acquire studio techniques. To prepare them for more independent learning in the later stages, students will explore ways of searching and researching, and extending researching into practical work. To broaden their views and strengthen their abilities for visual arts learning, students will also learn to relate art to its socio-cultural and historical

context, as well as their own context. From the foundation of knowledge and skill acquired through teacher-directed learning, students should be encouraged to move into areas of individual exploration. Exploration work should be done in consultation with the teacher.

7. The scope of study means that students will study artwork/art phenomena selected from at least **two cultural contexts** and from **two different time frames**, and experiment with at least **two different visual arts media**. However, students can be encouraged to investigate and do more according to their interests and aptitudes. An example illustrates a more teacher-directed learning and teaching design which covers the recommended scope of visual arts learning, and enables students to acquire a range of different visual arts experiences, knowledge and skills at senior secondary level is provided for information. (Please refer to Annex for the example)

Learning and Teaching

8. At senior secondary level, students should be allowed to explore alternatives, develop multiple perspectives and construct knowledge with breadth and depth. More importantly, students are expected to become active, life-long learners. Therefore inquiry-based and experiential learning approaches, which address the needs and concerns of learners and promote the development of inquiry skills and attitudes, are preferred. In inquiry-based learning, students are assisted to identify questions of their own and to construct knowledge through active involvement in the process of learning. Experiential learning requires students to have personal and direct experience of a task and to participate actively in inquiry-based activities. Furthermore, students are also encouraged to form art-learning communities in which they learn how to communicate and collaborate with others, learn with increasing autonomy, initiative and self-reflection, thus developing skills and attitudes for life-long learning.

9. In the effective implementation of inquiry-based and experiential learning approaches, the teachers' role remains extremely important. Teachers are expected to know and understand students' interests and abilities, provide them with appropriate learning challenges and help them to progress to the next step of development. A teacher can help students in various ways. A teacher can be an informant fostering students' understanding about art and the ways that art communicates meaning; an advisor in helping students construct knowledge and skills in the process of exploration and investigation; a facilitator in providing students with various art experiences and stimulating them to develop ideas, concepts and themes for further individual pursuit of the visual arts; and a critical friend to provide students with comments and suggestions, and encourage reflection in critical dialogue and writing.

Suggested Learning and Teaching Strategies

Several learning and teaching strategies are suggested in the following paragraphs:

Independent study

Independent study engages students in researching visual and textual materials, such as visual arts works in museums, galleries and public spaces, and published materials, literature and internet resources relevant to *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* and *visual arts making*. The success of independent study relies on students' own initiative, self-reflection, self-monitoring and self-awareness and other learning skills. These skills will, at the same time, be developed and enhanced through independent study.

Critical dialogue and critical writing

Through critical dialogue, students hear their own words and the responses from others about what they see, think, and feel. This allows them to rethink and explore further, or elicit differing interpretive thoughts. Dialogue helps students develop their critical thinking skills and positive attitudes. In the process of dialogue, students hear others' views, enlarging their own understanding of artwork and developing multiple perspectives. Through critical writing, students go through a process of translating what they see and feel to verbal forms of expression. This helps students explore the narrative dimension of artwork, clarify and structure their own concepts, communicate concepts with others and invite comments for further exploration.

Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is an effective way for structuring art experiences and facilitating interactive communication during the learning process. Students are encouraged to work with their peers and in groups. Through working together, students have a chance to construct their understanding through research and hands-on experience, and to share their insights about art with others.

Portfolio

Keeping a portfolio involves having a student make a collection of initial plans, drafts, self evaluations, feedback from peers and teachers, works of art which the student likes or dislikes, references and collections of their own artwork³. It serves the purpose of developing self-reflection, self-monitoring, self-awareness and meta-cognitive skills, through encouraging the student to look at early sketches and mistakes, strengths and weaknesses, and alternative ways of dealing with artwork. It provides a means of continuous assessment of student learning throughout the senior secondary school.

³ Gardner, H. (1989). Assessment in context. In *Learners, learning and assessment*. London: the Open University Press

Visual diary

Students are encouraged to make a visual diary to record daily visual impressions and experiences and personal feelings towards events or visual phenomena as their personal data bank for independent study and future artwork. Video shooting and photo taking are also effective ways of observing and recording experience.

Assessment

(This part should be read in conjunction with the section “Assessment” of the Main Document.)

10. Assessment is the practice of collecting evidence of student learning. The aims of assessment are to improve learning and teaching as well as to recognize the achievement of students. It is an integral part of learning and teaching. Assessment in the Visual Arts will be designed in line with the curriculum aims and learning processes of the subject. The expected learning outcomes will be developed at a later stage for discussion.

11. Learning in both strands: *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* and *visual arts making* will be assessed. To cater for individual learning preferences, students may choose to focus more on either visual arts appreciation and criticism in context or visual arts making. The assessment is made up of two parts: (a) internal assessment and (b) public assessment.

(a) Internal assessment refers to the assessment practices that schools employ as part of the learning and teaching strategies during the three-year study in Visual Arts. It aims at helping students understand their progress, their strengths and weaknesses, and where they need to make improvements. Students’ performance in *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* and in *visual arts making* will be assessed continuously in school through various modes, such as peer critique, student self-reflection and teacher assessment. Students are required to use a portfolio to record and present their learning progress.

(b) Public assessment of Visual Arts leads to a qualification in the subject to be offered by HKEAA. In the public assessment of Visual Arts, a standards-referenced approach will be adopted for grading and reporting student performance. The purpose of this approach is to recognize what each student can do in each subject at the end of the 3-year senior secondary education. Each student’s performance will be matched against a set of performance standards, rather than compared to the performance of other students. It makes the implicit standards explicit by providing specific indication of student performance. Descriptors will be provided for the set of standards at a later stage.

Public assessment consists of two parts: external assessment and School-based Assessment (SBA). For external assessment, students will participate in a public examination consisting of two parts: art making and written presentation of how ideas and meanings are developed and conveyed in works of art from a range of different contexts. Samples of external assessment questions will be provided at a later stage for consultation.

The percentage weighting within external assessment is as follows:

External Assessment	Duration	Weighting
Studio work: create one piece of artwork on an assigned topic and Written presentation involving critical appreciation of works of art (factual information on the works of art is provided)	3-6 hours	40-50%

Public assessment will include an SBA component that will take up 50-60% of the total weighting. The merits of adopting SBA are as follows:

- (i) SBA is able to provide a more valid assessment than external assessment, since it can cover a more extensive range of learning outcomes through introducing a wider range of assessment practices than is possible in external written examinations.
- (ii) SBA enables the sustained work of students to be assessed. It provides a more comprehensive picture of student performance throughout the period of study rather than just consider their performance in a one-off examination alone. Students will submit a portfolio consisting of:

Presentation on *visual arts appreciation and criticism in context* in relation to *visual arts making* (e.g. text-based research, video / media presentation supplemented with text), it includes:

- evidence of research into the socio-cultural and historical contexts of more than one culture;
- criticism of works of art/art phenomena/visual cultures from different perspectives and aesthetic values;
- the development of ideas for personal artistic expression;
- a statement of articulation between the artists' work and the student's own work; and
- explanation, reflection, analysis and criticism of the student's own work

Studio work:

- a series of visual arts work developed for the presentation of a theme/message;
- exploration of different media for the presentation

The percentage weighting of SBA components is as follows:

School-based Assessment	Weighting
Presentation on visual arts appreciation and criticism in relation to visual arts making (e.g. text-based research, or video / media presentation supplemented with text), and Studio work: create several pieces of artwork on self-selected theme/topic(s), media and materials	50-60%

It should be noted that SBA is not an “add-on” element in the curriculum. Assessing student performance through such practices as class discussion and class observation is a normal in-class and out-of-class activity. The modes of SBA selected in the Visual Arts will be appropriate to the learning objectives and processes to be assessed. The design and implementation of SBA should aim to avoid unduly increasing the workload of both teachers and students.

The breakdown of percentage weighting in the public assessment, incorporating SBA components and external assessment components, is as follows:

School-based Assessment	Weighting
Presentation on visual arts appreciation and criticism in relation to visual arts making (e.g. text-based research, or video / media presentation supplemented with text), and Studio work: create several pieces of artwork on self-selected theme/topic(s), media and materials	50-60%
External Assessment	
Studio work: create one piece of artwork on an assigned topic, and Written presentation involving critical appreciation of works of art (factual information on the works of art is provided)	40-50%
Total score:	100%

Supporting Measures

12. The Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority will jointly issue a Visual Arts Curriculum and Assessment Guide.

The supporting measures to be provided will include:

- ✧ Curriculum and Assessment Guide
- ✧ Learning and teaching package with exemplars of teaching scheme
- ✧ Learning and teaching exemplars developed by schools and revised through try-out teaching

- ✧ Learning and teaching resource materials with professional development programmes to be jointly developed with different partners. Topics include:
 - understanding the New Senior Secondary Visual Arts Curriculum
 - appreciating art in context
 - context and themes in learning and teaching of the visual arts
 - application of critical dialogue in the classroom
 - assessment of visual arts learning in the classroom
 - writing art critiques with reference to Hong Kong art and the art of different cultures
- ✧ Sample questions

Further information on supporting materials/measures can be obtained from the CDI homepage (<http://www.emb.gov.hk/cd>).

Example illustrates the recommended scope of visual arts learning for information

Time Block (about 2.5 hours per week)	Theme/ Topic	Scope of Study		
		Appreciation and Criticism + Context	Making	
			Presentation + Theme	Production + Selection of media, materials, and techniques
3 weeks	Theme: My identity Topic: Who am I?	1. Select some artists' portrait paintings, focus on observing and describing the visual elements, compositions and/or symbols used in those paintings.	1. Create a picture to tell somebody about self, not a likeness of self	⇒ 2-D collage
6-8 weeks	Topic: What is my role at home/school/church?	1. Study artists such as Rauschenberg who combines paint, collage and other materials, focus on talking about the materials and techniques used, how they enhance/affect the message conveyed, and what the students can learn from the artwork. 2. Write a critique on students' own finished work, in terms of the selection of materials, techniques and compositions and how they enhance the expressiveness of the portrait. 3. Study 3-D work of several local designers/artists. Select two artists' work and write one paragraph on each artist's work: comprehensive feelings of individual artwork, analysis and interpretation of how the artwork used space, other visual elements, materials and techniques to convey messages, and the significance of the artwork in the local context.	1. Develop at least 3 compositions of self and surroundings 2. Select one of the compositions and further develop it into a finished painting 3. Create a piece of 3-D artwork about self and one's home/school/church	⇒ Use paint and other materials ⇒ Assemblage of objects and mixed media
4-6 weeks	Topic: How would I like people to perceive me?	1. Research portrait paintings of the Expressionists, the Cubists, the Realists, Chinese contour drawing (白描) and free-style drawing (寫意), briefly describe the historical information, analyze and interpret some examples of these conventions in historical and technological contexts. Construct a paragraph on each example.	1. Capture a good likeness of self for a self portrait, create a mirror in the style of an artist or artistic convention with self as the reflection	⇒ Explore a variety of dry and wet drawing materials ⇒ Choice of media for constructing the mirror is open
4-6 weeks	Topic: What would I like my national / cultural identity to be?	1. Study a variety of patterns from at least 3 different regions (e.g. China, India, Australia, South Pacific) and make brief notes about the origin, meaning, functions, etc. of each pattern. 2. Study some examples of household utensils (3-D) (e.g. table ware) with patterns, briefly describe and analyze the characteristics, functions, symbols/patterns and forms of two selected examples, and comment on the examples in terms of the relation between form and function.	1. Produce a set of household utensil decorated with symbols / patterns that show one's cultural identity	⇒ Explore various materials and techniques such as clay and plaster for the artwork

Time Block (about 2.5 hours per week)	Theme/ Topic	Scope of Study		
		Appreciation and Criticism + Context	Making	
			Presentation + Theme	Production + Selection of media, materials, and techniques
4-6 weeks	Topic: How would I introduce myself to others?	1. Study a variety of publication work (e.g. newsletter, promotional brochure, magazine, etc), make brief notes about the functions of the publications, and analyze the relationship between the content/message and form (typography, colors, layout).	1. Produce a pamphlet introducing self and one's artwork	⇒ Use computer graphic software: e.g. Photoshop and PageMaker for the production of the pamphlet

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