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Lilly Lu

University of Nebraska at Omaha, lillylu26@gmail.com

Hung-Min Chang

Hsuan Chuang University

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Rhizomatic Encounters With Inter/Transmedia Art: A Pedagogy for Learning and Teaching Experiential Contemporary Art

LILLY LU

University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

HUNG-MIN CHANG

Hsuan Chuang University, Taiwan

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Teaching and learning through contemporary art has gained validity as a powerful and effective pedagogy in contemporary art education practice. In this article, we highlight characteristics of contemporary art and rhizomatic learning theory, and then we propose a pedagogical model that combines them for teaching and learning through experiential contemporary art. We also explain how to implement this model by showing examples of students' rhizomatic encounters with inter/transmedia art created by Taiwanese artist teams. As the artworks offered present moments as *sites of learning* or *places in process*, students were triggered by the intersection of sounds and visuals and recalled their memories along with relevant themes; they then re/ created personal meanings and/or new knowledge. Thus, the proposed pedagogy model with the implementation guidelines (autonomy, documentation, and group discussion of collective rhizomatic learning artifacts) is effective. Strategies and challenges for implementing this model in art education are recommended and discussed.

Contemporary art is “a vast arena of diverse styles, techniques, materials, subjects, forms, purposes, and aesthetic tradition” (Robertson & McDaniel, 2017, p. 7). Today, artists are often fluent in several media, including traditional and new media, and freely mix them in innovative ways to meet their art intents. Beyond a desire to express personal emotions and visions or create content that responds to political events, social issues, or other topics, contemporary art—specifically experiential art—can create an emerging art space for audiences to interact with/within the artwork and generate unique experiences (Garoian, 2013; O’Donoghue, 2015; Springgay & Zaliwska, 2017) for self-knowledge construction and personal meaning-making. Thus, contemporary art provides new and different possibilities for thinking about art, learning, and education (Allan, 2008; Jové & Farrero, 2018; O’Sullivan, 2006). In this article, we present the rhizomatic learning of contemporary art as a pedagogical model. We first characterize contemporary art and rhizomatic learning theory and explain why they are good matches for this model. Next, we show sample students’ rhizomatic learning journeys through their encounters with three experiential contemporary inter/transmedia art pieces in an exhibit. We address how to implement this model in a course project and showcase students’ embodied learning through their rhizomatic wanderings, and we further explain how the model helps students transform recalled memories along with new experiences in their art encounters to re/create personal meaning and/or new knowledge. Last, we discuss the potential implementation and challenges in art education.

Emerging Trends and Themes of Contemporary Art

In a globally influenced, culturally diverse, and technologically advancing world, the work of contemporary artists is enacted through a dynamic combination of materials, forms, methods, concepts, and subjects that challenges traditional boundaries and defies easy definition—giving voice to artists’ responding and/or changing cultural identities, values, and beliefs (Art21, n.d.). Artists’ collaboration, inter/transdisciplinary, inter/transmedia, audience contribution/reflection/participatory performance/interaction with art, and sounds are new emerging components in contemporary art practice (Dumbadze & Hudson, 2013). These new components provide audiences with diverse ways to

interpret their emerging experiences and make personal connections during each encounter with contemporary art.

Experiential contemporary art provides new possibilities for contemporary art education (Garoian, 2013; O'Donoghue, 2015). Although an audience's participation, collaboration, and interaction with/within an art piece are required, experiential art is different from typical participatory art. O'Donoghue (2015) explained that experiential art activates a unique/unexpected experience that is cocreated by an individual with no end goals, while typical participatory art situates an individual's experience in artists' specific representations or designed experiences with end goals. Also, Garoian (2010) argued, the emergent experience occurring within experiential contemporary art enables learning that is open to "paths of scattering thoughts, angles of linkages, and trajectories of potential alignments" as "alternative understandings of pedagogy" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 13) beyond exposing, examining, and critiquing the specific or designed content/experience. Thus, experiential contemporary art serves as a constructed situation/performance site, mode of conversation, and site of knowledge production (Garoian, 2012; O'Donoghue, 2017).

Among emerging experiential contemporary art, inter/transmedia art has been considered as one contemporary art genre in the art world (Higgins & Higgins, 2001) and art education practice (Knochel & Patton, 2016). Inter/transmedia combines many different types of media or work across multiple platforms "as a space for, or ingress to, new media convergences" (Elwell, 2006, para. 7). Within such a space, an artist or artist team across disciplines can create various kinds of interaction scenarios and design multisensory and multi-modal experiences for participants. Inter/trans-media art is interdisciplinary work often located at the intersection of dialogue/messages among and between different media (the interplay among the visual, musical, and textual features of a happening) that are perceived, interpreted, and/or cocreated by participants. McLuhan (1994/2013) stated that each medium generates a different *message* or *effect* on the human sensorium; therefore, conversations about inter/transmedia are an effective way to process, analyze, and denote the combined impact of a key message and its surrounding media.

Content, identity, body, time, memory, place, language, science, and spirituality continue to be common themes that many contemporary artists examine and associate with cultural, historical, societal, and/or political contexts in their practices (Robertson & McDaniel, 2017). In this section, we focus specifically on the themes of time, memory, place, and language as they are more relevant to the specific inter/transmedia art exhibition that students visited for the rhizomatic learning journeys presented in this article.

Time is an abstract concept in art with no direct visual means of representation. Humans' awareness of time stems from personal experience (the aging body), societal concepts (calendars), and tradition (cultural events). Time can be seen in terms of events in our history, and it can be captured and represented (motion and speed) in works of art. Due to the invention of digital technology, artists can produce moving images in film, video, and digital media to present, expand, and enrich artistic content in time-based modes.

The passage of time has a strong association with human memory. According to Robertson and McDaniel (2017), the texture of memories is emotional, unreliable, and multisensory. They claimed that "memory as a motivating theme in making art allows for and thrives on the emotional, personal, imaginative dimensions of the slanted perspective" (Robertson & McDaniel, 2017, p. 184). In memories, we store our personal stories about people, places, events, objects, and collective events in history. We use our senses to encode information in three main ways—visual (pictures), acoustic (sound), and semantic (meaning; McLeod, 2013). Some memories remain vivid while others fade. We often forget and lose meaningful memory of ordinary objects and events consciously or unconsciously over time.

Based on psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's memory theory and practice, repressed and lost memories can be retriggered by a particular sense (such as smell, taste, or sight; "Repressed Memory," n.d.). The ability to recover lost memories (access, retrieve, and remember collective history or personal stories in memory) can be heightened through viewing documents and artifacts from the past. Also, we often reinterpret and add new layers of information and thoughts

onto the “original” versions of events in memories (Gibbons, [2007/2019](#)). Retrieved memories are important assets for contemporary artists in the process of producing artwork. Gibbons ([2007/2019](#)) analyzed the work of French American artist Louise Bourgeois and stated that “for Bourgeois, the function of memory is not only to recall, reconstitute or reconcile the past but also to construct and represent the present” (p. 16). Retrieved memory is not only about the past, but also the present; memories are reconstructed based on what artists and viewers are experiencing (feelings, emotions, and/or thoughts) in the here and now.

Robertson and McDaniel ([2017](#)) noted that “memory is often closely connected to place along with time” (p. 182). The place or places where one has lived and visited—with individual physical, historical, cultural, political, and psychological traits—affect what is known and seen. The place is an event, as well as a collection of tangible materials, and it changes over time. Places in time or places in memory (i.e., home, elementary school, or travel location) usually carry literal and symbolic value messages and contain much information contributing to a person’s story and identity. We recall aspects of places quickly because a place encapsulates our impressions and activities interacting with others in our visual memory. A place provides strong references to who, when, what, why, and how in our memory.

Language (words and sounds) is a key element in new media arts, such as performance art, video art, computer-based art, and sound art. Particularly, in the 2000s, there was an emerging interest in and effort to incorporate sound (both verbal and nonverbal) into visual arts projects; sound art pieces are more closely associated with art than they are music and are usually presented in museums, galleries, or alternative spaces (Gál, [2017](#); Robertson & McDaniel, [2017](#); Rogers, [2011](#)). In particular, the intermediated capability of video technology makes two things possible: (1) composers can “visualize” their sound work, and (2) artists can “sound” their time-based visual work. Thus, a song with lyrics, music, or sound effects can help viewers visualize a mental image in depth or trigger a visual experience in memory and time.

This thematic framework can serve as an interpretive lens for exploring and examining various levels of meaning that

contemporary artworks embody, in addition to analyzing materials, techniques, and form. Almost all contemporary art can be viewed from a perspective of more than one theme.

In art education practice, teaching, learning, and communicating through contemporary art has gained validity as a new pedagogy (Graziano, 2015; Irwin & O'Donoghue, 2012; Jové & Farrero, 2018; Leake, 2014; O'Donoghue, 2015; Romanski, 2019; Venäläinen, 2012). Many art educators have recognized the significance of teaching contemporary art due to its multidimensional, multisensory, and complex nature (Venäläinen, 2012). They view contemporary art as a field of activities, a process, and a journey of creative actions that involves both the artist creating the piece and the person experiencing it. Thus, contemporary artworks serve as both sites of artistic knowledge and learning environments for audiences to perceive, interpret, and respond to—as well as reflect on—their art experiences to construct meaningful connections and develop self-knowledge.

Rhizomatic Learning Theory and Art Education

The rhizome theory received wide currency in many fields as a contemporary mode of knowledge and a model for culture because it best represents and interprets knowledge as fluid, nonhierarchical, nonlinear, and decentered (Robertson & McDaniel, 2017). The concept of rhizome was metaphorically used by French philosophers Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to describe the organic nature of nonhierarchical knowledge networks that allow for multiple entry and exit points. Just like a botanical rhizome such as ginger or crabgrass extends its horizontal stems and shoots from nodes, knowledge (research and thoughts) is interconnected but has neither beginning nor end nor even particular pathways in the system.

The two essential concepts of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) work are *assemblage* and *becoming*. An assemblage collects pieces of things gathered into a single context; it is a multiplicity, a "body without organs" (p. 161) with no underlying organizational principles. An assemblage might refer to machines or particular arrangements within a context for which pieces of heterogeneous human, material, and nontangible elements, conditions, or forces interact to coproduce something in the process of becoming. Becoming is a process of

change, flight, or movement within an assemblage. Becoming can also be viewed as whatever product emerges at the end that avoids imitation or analogy; instead, the product brings about novel experiences/learning/knowledge/insights.

One exemplar of a rhizomatic model of knowledge in contemporary times is the inter- net. The internet can be viewed as an assemblage. The learning process engaged when users explore, navigate, and visit several websites to find new and needed information is an example of becoming. Another exemplar is the artist Keith Tyson's (2006–2007) contemporary artwork, *Large Field Array* (Figure 1), which conceptualizes the rhizomatic ways of accessing knowledge.

Cormier (2012) offered the principles for implementing rhizomatic learning. Rhizomatic learning can start, stop, and re/connect to any access point with no mandated structures. Such learning can grow and spread organically and freely, and its movements or breakages can be traced on a map. In addition, this learning is an experiment in uncertainty (with no specific objectives, expected outcomes, or singular answers) within a context or complex domains. A strong example of these principles of rhizomatic learning applied is performance artist Matthew Goulsh's (2000) book *39 Microlectures: In Proximity of Performance*.



Figure 1. Keith Tyson's contemporary artwork, *Large Field Array*. Digital image. © 2021 DACS/Artimage.

Rhizomatic relationality affects how we have changed our view of knowledge from fixed and abstract concepts to “an embodied living inquiry, an interstitial relational space for creating, teaching, learning, and researching in a constant state of becoming” (Irwin et al., 2006, p. 71). With their quests and knowledge construction, learners can engage in the knowledge network as a rhizome by moving in, out, and around, making connections freely in a personal way. Allan (2012) called such learning journeys *rhizomatic wanderings* based on personal experience and knowledge. Through uncertainty, without any definite model or purpose, viewers/students can navigate, process, and construct knowledge from any entry point and its connected points and stop at any exit points. For this reason, rhizomatic learning matches the characteristics of contemporary art—serving as both sites of artistic knowledge and learning environment and featuring a vast arena (assemblage) of diverse formats that allow viewers/students to get hooked/triggered differently through their sensory experiences. Viewers/students can situate their own sites of learning or places in process within the process and context of contemporary art to create self-knowledge and/or engage in self-reflection connected to their unique life experiences.

Several art educators have implemented rhizomatic learning models through contemporary art education practice (Garoian, 2012; Irwin et al., 2006; Jové & Farrero, 2018; O’Sullivan, 2006; Wiebe et al., 2007). Art educators Irwin and O’Donoghue (2012) and Jové and Farrero (2018) launched so-called rhizomatic wanderings through contemporary art in their art education practice. As preservice art teachers engaged in rhizomatic thinking by visiting contemporary art pieces and/or working with artists in the courses, they enjoyed the freedom to create knowledge and reshape their understanding of education. In a similar spirit, many recent experiential contemporary artworks could be viewed as assemblages or sites of learning/places in process for students during rhizomatic encounters that expanded, challenged, and enriched student learning. However, very few art education practices and few research studies focus on rhizomatic encounters of experiential trans/ intermedia arts.

A Pedagogical Model: Experiential Contemporary Art +

Rhizomic Learning Theory

We believe that rhizomatic learning theory is effectively used for learning and teaching contemporary art as artistic knowledge and learning environment. In the proposed model, each rhizomatic wandering with/through experiential contemporary art is a unique learning opportunity for self-knowledge. Based on individual knowledge and experiences, viewers respond to whatever they are triggered by in any of these new and emerging components and move into new entry or exit points. In this way, they can better perceive, interpret, understand, and respond to contemporary art in a reflective or meaningful way for their own learning.

As for pedagogy, we follow Cormier's (2012) rhizomatic learning principles and develop the following three simple guidelines to design project activities and facilitate student rhizomatic learning. First, in a given context or site of learning, students initiate learning with no predetermined objectives, outcomes, or organization in content or during the wandering. Second, to help process and optimize their emerging learning outcomes, students are required (or strongly encouraged) to document their encounter experiences by note-taking and taking photos during the process for further reflection and contemplation. Third, after the museum visit, students present, discuss, and exchange learning artifacts in the classroom setting. Such collective rhizomatic wanderings can transform art classrooms into more inclusive learning spaces (Allan, 2008, 2012) because students can engage in learning not only from their own, but also others' rhizomatic wanderings when sharing artistic knowledge construction and perspectives in an educational setting. In this way, the proposed pedagogy, rhizomatic encounters with experiential contemporary art, can provide a new and open learning space with different possibilities, unconstrained by traditional set pathways, to gain inspiration and construct meaningful learning experiences and knowledge.

Student Rhizomatic Encounters With Experiential Contemporary Inter/Transmedia Art

In this section, we present one coauthor's approach to implementing this pedagogical model and share her student rhizomatic learning journeys as examples. For a course project, her

students had rhizomatic encounters with three contemporary Chinese inter/transmedia artworks created by three teams of Taiwanese musicians/songwriters and artists in a contemporary art exhibit titled “Where Have All the Flowers Gone”: These Flowers. Musical Memory & Art Exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei in 2019.¹ The purpose of this project was to “portray each other’s memories, using popular music to recreate the lost rhythm and to recall the melodies buried in our reminiscence” (Fang, 2019, p. 8). The artist teams presented their work via inter/ transmedia presentations (mixed-media installations and music) in unique ways—the sense of hearing/music or sound art materializes the bone structure of memory; the sense of seeing/visuals visualizes the details of memory. These multisensory and multimodal art pieces are “relational, inviting viewers to interact with the works that help to trigger individuals’ recollection of memory” (Robertson & McDaniel, 2017, p. 193).

During the 2019 spring semester, the author taught a graduate research symposium in the College of Design at Hsuan Chuang University in Taiwan. The purposes of this elective graduate course were to help students explore/identify personal research interests for their theses and apply research inquiry skills to produce/advance knowledge in art and design–related fields. To meet these purposes, one of the author’s instructional strategies was for students to understand, respond to, and discuss contemporary artworks by visiting an inter/transmedia art exhibit.

The instructor implemented her pedagogy based on rhizomatic learning concepts such as assemblage and becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) and rhizomatic wandering (Allan, 2012) and applied Cormier’s (2012) implementation principles. Based on our developed guidelines, the project activities included field trips to a contemporary art exhibition, class presentations of student journeys and reflections, and discussions of collective rhizomatic wandering artifacts. To enable students to self-initiate their rhizomatic wanderings, the instructor avoided giving specific instruction to guide students’ interaction with/within the artwork for the scheduled field trips but provided the following guiding/open-ended questions as the given context or domain and possible access points:

1. What are the rationales and purposes of the exhibit?
2. Based on your reflection and insights inspired from your chosen artwork, in your opinion:
 - a. What is the artist's intent in the art piece?
 - b. What are your responses to the art piece?
3. How will you integrate your responses, reflection, and insights into your future art practice, design, or research?

When students arrived at the exhibition sites, they were free to look around the exhibition. Autonomously, they chose any art piece and determined their entry and exit points—what to observe, how to interact, and what information they wanted to learn about the art piece—in the exhibition spaces, participating in a rhizomatic encounter by interacting with/within the experiential art and processing meaning-making or knowledge construction. Based on their perceptions, observations, and initial responses at that moment of encounter with the art pieces, students took notes and photos to document the art and their interactive experiences with the work for later reflection. After visiting the exhibitions, the instructor and students reviewed, discussed, and reflected on the information and experiences they collected individually in the classroom.

Examples of Students' Learning Artifacts From Rhizomatic Encounters

In this section, we present the most successful examples to show and explain students' learning from their rhizomatic encounters with the three selected art pieces. We use Robertson and McDaniel's (2017) thematic framework (particularly memory, time, place, and language) to check if students could examine the meaning of these art pieces by responding to the relevant themes.

The inter/transmedia art *One Way*² (Figure 2) actively triggered students' personal and collective memories and experiences of burning paper offerings for the deceased (a Chinese cultural tradition) and then transformed a mourning ambiance for the dearly departed into a dance party atmosphere on the site. It enabled students to process their perceptions and learning by linking to recalled cultural traditions/events/experiences and further pondering the possible

messages. This art piece inspired Student 1 to reflect: Among the artworks, my favorite piece is the traditional paper house offerings. It breaks the traditional established viewpoint and transforms the paper house form burned to the deceased into a happy and lively party event [with party upbeat rhythm and shining disco lights in the exhibit space].

This reflection indicates that Student 1 recalled the traditional Chinese event (cultural objects, place, and time) from her memory, which is closely connected to place and time (Robertson & McDaniel, 2017). She noticed that the culturally “sad” event was relocated as a party event in the museum. Based on such experience, she further noted the key message she interpreted and learned was breaking and transforming the cultural tradition.



Figure 2. *One Way* (left and right). This Taiwanese-style papier-mâché offering house used colored paper cutting to decorate the exterior of the house. Photographs courtesy of Student 1, 2019.

Viewing the imagination of an afterworld paradise in *One Way*, in her reflection, Student 2 described and examined cultural taboos, commented on the new perspective (humor and a joyful moment in another world) that the artist presented, and noted a new attitude she just learned as a result of this new experience. She also noticed that the sound effects (upbeat party music) contributed to her experience (Figure 3). She wrote:

This work surprised me. In daily life, most people usually avoid getting involved in the various sacrificial offerings in funerals [as cultural taboo], including the paper house burned to the deceased [except in the case of a family funeral]. The artists boldly pack traditional paper house offerings with humor and upbeat party music. Saying goodbye to the deceased is not necessarily sad. It is also a party-like and joyful [moment] in another world.

Two students recalled their naïve child-hoods and happy memories of watching the cartoon *XiaoDingDang* when delving into the interactive installation work, *XiaoDingDang in My Dreams*³ (Figure 4). Student 3 stated:

This installation work, *XiaoDingDang in My Dreams*, is linked to childhood time. Using the universal memories of the audience in Taiwan, artists make us relive the old dreams of childhood and return to the youthful time with toys/objects scattered on the floor to satisfy all kinds of wishes and dreams.

After moving around and seeing her body reflection on the projected screen, Student 4 grasped the anxiety of growth and the passage of time from the experiential artwork and addressed her own becoming. She noticed that the distorted, human-shaped traces of time projected into the space could represent a viewer's blurry memory over time and the indication that the passage of time can never flow backward. She described her experience within the interactive artwork when associating with sounds and visual effects, memory, time, and place in the process and explained how her insights/new knowledge emerged as a result as follows:

This piece of work is very special. When you walk past, all visitors, including me, integrate into the work and interact with music and visuals. Your swing shows different curves, just like jumping notes in music. This makes me feel that childhood memories are becoming more and more blurred. The traces of time are visualized in space, and concurrently it makes people retrieve the childhood memory.



Figure 3. Audience members gathered in the disco light of *One Way*, put on headphones, and listened to upbeat party music. Photograph courtesy of Student 2, 2019.

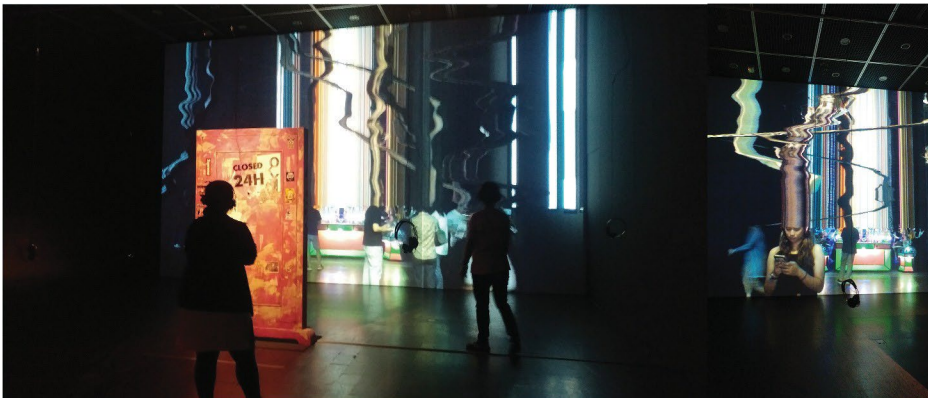


Figure 4. *XiaoDingDang in My Dreams* (left and right). The artist turned the magical door in the cartoon animation into a video camera that secretly recorded, traced, and projected visitors' movements on the big screen. Photograph courtesy of Student 3, 2019.

Student 5 particularly commented on the use of music when she responded to the music in *Incomplete Memories*⁴ (Figures 5 and 6). In the panorama video installation, the electronically synthesized music was created based on traditional Taiwanese folk tunes to represent the fusion of contemporary culture and folk culture. Looking at this art

piece, Student 5 sensed harmony while simultaneously perceiving visuals, sound recordings, and music in that exhibit space. The folk tunes, human voices, and music helped her trigger a visual experience in memory and time (Wahl, 2013). She wrote about her aroused feelings and recalled memory, place, time, and particularly traditional/aging objects “full of flavors”:

Among all installations that combine music and visual works, the first thing that attracted me was a series of five paintings depicting the artist’s hometown. The oil paintings are based on the projection of light and shadow on various early old houses. They are full of flavors, evoking people’s imagination of the nice old simple life. Then I noticed the video installation showing old pictures played frame by frame, describing people and things recorded in traditional photos. Playing frame-by-frame old-fashioned documentary film gives a sense of nostalgia. As for the music part, electronic music may only be enjoyed by certain young people. It is better to have [such] music [played from] traditional Chinese instruments, early record music styles, or general modern pop music.



Figure 5. The painting series, *Incomplete Memories*. Old tiled wall (above) and old iron window (below) featured the artist’s native home. Photograph courtesy of Student 5, 2019.

Besides evoking memories (nostalgia, happy childhood, and family funerals), some students (Student 1, Student 2, Student 4) integrated takeaways from their rhizomatic wanderings with current practices or future research interests. Student 1, specializing in visual communication design, is currently working on a project about college student learning of computer graphics. The new interpretation of the papier- mâché offerings, *One Way*, incorporating dance party music inspired Student 1 to consider possible unconventional methods to help young people learn in a nontraditional way. She commented:

The artist brought the “taboo” paper house that was used to burn to the deceased in the traditional funeral to the art museum. The party dance music was used to echo people uploading information to the cloud and expressing various things that they did not want to forget. I have always been interested in how to inspire us, the young generations, to understand traditional folk customs in a way (such as a digital platform) [that is] familiar to us. This work seems to show me the way.

The same mixed-media installation, *One Way*, surrounded by hanging headphones, also invigorated Student 2, who was interested in using clay to convey Taiwanese customs. She had an “aha” moment while listening to the party music and standing under the disco light in front of the paper offering house. She elaborated and connected her insights to her current art project. She stated, “It redefined the meaning of sacrifice. Paper house offering is a traditional Taiwanese craftsmanship. This has given me a lot of inspiration for the zodiac clay dolls I am creating.”

Student 4, a beauty shop owner, gained insight from the experiential art piece *XiaoDingDang in My Dreams*. She wanted to adopt a new attitude of fun and novelty in her life and started planning how to transform the customer experience into a relaxing and cheerful one in her shop. She explained:

This artwork is intended to awaken the imagination that exists in our body [life] but is buried because of our “growth” [to adulthood]. I hope that I can keep the fun and novel attitude to see everything and the

world. This piece also made me think about how to transform the current working space so that customers can enter my space [store] to release all the annoyances and connect with the most innocent self.



Figure 6. *Incomplete Memories*. Frames of images show a series of photographed figures of older generations in the panorama video installation. Photograph courtesy of Student 2, 2019.

These integrated insights and new knowledge processed by students during and after their rhizomatic encounters are unique and meaningful. They retrieved memories from the past and reconnected them by adding and (re)interpreting new layers of information and thoughts onto the “original” version of events or experiences in memories (Gibbons, [2007/2019](#)) as new, emerging knowledge/ insights and meaning-making.

Recommendations and Challenges for Future Practice

The learning artifacts above demonstrate students’ rhizomatic wanderings (Allan, [2008](#)) while they were undergoing their own learning journeys based on personal experience and understanding. Through uncertainty, without any distinct model, students self-explored the selected experiential contemporary Chinese art by

Taiwanese artists and constructed their artistic knowledge in their rhizomatic encounters. Through the intersection of visuals and music (songs and/or sound recordings), inter-media presentation, and themes (time, memory, and place), students could delve into their encounters with the chosen art pieces from any entry point and exit point with autonomy. Students' reflections verify their becomings (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), from which they could actively construct new personal knowledge with their own interpretations of their emerging experience activated within the experiential artworks. Students also demonstrated that they could integrate their contemporary art experiences and learning into their future art practice or research. These learning artifacts are consistent with other art educators' practices, which indicate that students can situate their sites of learning within the process and context of contemporary art (Irwin et al., 2006; Jové & Farrero, 2018). Thus, the proposed pedagogy model, rhizomatic encounters with experiential contemporary art, with the implementation guidelines (autonomy, documentation, and group discussion of collective rhizomatic learning artifacts), is effective.

All but two students in this course could successfully describe and demonstrate their takeaways or learning artifacts and integrate them into their future practice or research. One possible cause for these exceptions is that students may not have been able to easily adapt to this rhizomatic learning because it requires students to freely decide their entry and exit points with no specific directions from the instructor. This could be a barrier for students who are used to typical, linear ways of learning in traditional classrooms.

Another possible cause could be that students had limited experience of contemporary art and might be overwhelmed by perceiving artwork from multiple access points (i.e., inter/transmedia, a mix of themes, and sometimes complex content). To eliminate students'

challenges, students who had limited experience with rhizomatic learning or contemporary art need to take time to adapt to the approach. Their instructor can prepare students with some exercises or activities in class to speed up these students' transition prior to their rhizomatic wanderings.

This proposed pedagogy model, rhizomatic encounters of experiential contemporary art, not only provides new possibilities but also challenges for thinking about art, learning, and education (Garioian, 2013; O'Donoghue, 2015). First, making objects with material properties is still the dominant art practice in the current art education curriculum (O'Donoghue, 2015). Are art teachers comfortable teaching students to "make" an experiential contemporary art piece that might have no substantial material properties? Second, the proposed pedagogy for the experiential contemporary art is based on rhizomatic learning, which discourages predetermined controls by others to enable students to be open to any emerging experience activated within the art piece and the self-constructed knowledge or meaning of such experiences. Are art teachers comfortable teaching a lesson on experiential contemporary art with no or very limited and specified learning objectives and expected outcomes for every student? What valid and effective method (reflection journals, presentation, photos taken during visits, or more) will be used to assess student rhizomatic learning of contemporary art? Third, the instructional strategies in this proposed model include photo taking and guiding questions. Taking photos is required because students must document what they see and experience at that moment for their reflections and contemplate the images and their experiences later for insights, meaning-making, and knowledge construction. The guiding questions in the course project example specify the given context for learning or provide open-ended questions as additional access points for students to ponder in the assemblage during encounters. These guiding questions could be different case by case, depending on course purposes or learning domain. However, following Cormier's (2012) implementation principles is key.

Conclusion

In this article, we provided a brief overview of contemporary art's characteristics and common themes as an interpretive framework. Also,

we explained the rhizomatic learning theory and proposed a pedagogical model, rhizomatic encounters of experiential contemporary art. Transpiring through the intersection of sounds and visuals, the three selected inter/transmedia artworks instantly transform into complex, rich art spaces that provide a network of visual, sonic, and thematic triggers for audiences to perceive, recall, contemplate, and reflect on their own pasts and current moments—making meaningful connections and constructing personal/professional knowledge in the process. Applying this pedagogical model, we explained our approach with guidelines and presented learning artifacts of students' meaning-making and knowledge construction during their rhizomatic wanderings. We conclude that this rhizomatic pedagogy can work and facilitate student learning about experiential contemporary inter/transmedia art, acknowledge the challenges, and make recommendations for students and teachers. More research and art practices are needed to provide more strategies and assessment options for contemporary art education.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ The purpose of the These Flowers project was to “portray each other’s memories, using popular music to recreate the lost rhythm and to recall the melodies buried in our reminiscence” (Fang, 2019, p. 8). Several musicians/songwriters and visual artists teamed up and presented their work via inter/transmedia presentations (mixed-media installations and music) in unique ways—the sense of hearing/music or sound art materializes the bone structure of memory; the sense of seeing/visuals visualizes the details of memory. Their multisensory art pieces are “relational, inviting viewers to interact with the works that help to trigger individuals’ recollection of memory” (Robertson & McDaniel, 2017, p. 193).
- ² This mixed-media installation was cocreated by musician Ying-Hung Lee, the Hsin Hsin Joss Paper Culture organization, and fashion designers Hans Chiy and Lee Chia Chuan.

Art Info:

<https://www.mocataipei.org.tw/tw/ExhibitionAndEvent/Info/%E6%9F%A5%E7%84%A1%E6%AD>

%A4%E4%BA%BA%E2%94%80%E5%B0%8F%E8%8A%B
1%E8%A8%88%E7%95%AB%E5%B1%95/%E3%
80%8A%E6%9C%89%E5%89%8D%E7%84%A1%E5
%BE%8C%E3%80%8B.

Video:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/as6kspoi8ic4fga/IMG_3844.MOV?dl=0
(video courtesy of Author, 2019).

³ This interactive multimedia installation was created by the artist Cowper Wang and the band EggPlantEgg.

Art Info:

<https://www.mocataipei.org.tw/tw/ExhibitionAndEvent/Info/%E6%9F%A5%E7%84%A1%E6%AD%A4%E4%BA%BA%E2%94%80%E5%B0%8F%E8%8A%B1%E8%A8%88%E7%95%AB%E5%B1%95/%E3%80%8A%E6%88%91%E5%A4%A2%E8%A6%8B%E4%BA%86%E5%B0%8F%E5%8F%AE%E5%99%B9%E3%80%8B>

Video:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/h25lok49x01eoyh/IMG_3845.MOV?dl=0 (video courtesy of Author, 2019).

⁴ This panorama video installation was cocreated by musicians Lim Giong and Point Hsu as well as artists Huang Pang-Chuan and Tsai Meng Chang.

Art Info:

<https://www.mocataipei.org.tw/tw/ExhibitionAndEvent/Info/%E6%9F%A5%E7%84%A1%E6%AD%A4%E4%BA%BA%E2%94%80%E5%B0%8F%E8%8A%B1%E8%A8%88%E7%95%AB%E5%B1%95/%E3%80%8A%E5%8F%B0%E7%81%A3%E6%98%AF%E5%A5%BD%E6%89%80%E5%9C%A8%E3%80%8B>

Video:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/x4lf0u932j6vce8/IMG_3858.MOV?dl=0

(video courtesy of Author, 2019).