

Using E-Learning Portfolio Technology To Support Visual Art Learning

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Inspired by self-directed learning (SDL) theories, this paper uses learning portfolios as a reflective practice to improve student learning and develop personal responsibility, growth and autonomy in learning in a Visual Arts course. Students use PowerPoint presentations to demonstrate their concepts by creating folders that are linked to e-portfolios on the University website. This paper establishes the role of learning e-portfolios to improve teaching and learning as a model of reflection, collaboration and documentation in the making of art as a self-directed process. These portfolios link students' creative thinking to their conceptual frameworks. They also establish a process of inquiry using journals to map students' processes through their reflections and peer feedback. This practice argues that learning e-portfolios in studio art not only depends on a set of objectives whose means are justified by an agreed end but also depends on a practice that engages students' reflection about their actions while in their art-making practice. Using the principles of **the maker** as the intuitive and reflective practitioner, **the making** as the process in which the learning e-portfolios communicate the process and conceptual frameworks of learning and the eventual product, and **the made** as evidence of that learning in light of progress made, this paper demonstrates that learning-in-action and reflecting-in and-on-action are driven by self-direction.

With technology, students bring their learning context to bear with the use of SDL. Students' use of PowerPoint program technology in making their portfolios is systematic and builds on students' competencies as this process guides students' beliefs and actions about their work that is based on theory and concepts in response to a visual culture that is Trinidad and Tobago. Students' self-directed art-making process as a self directed learning, models the process of articulated learning. Communicating about learning in this way provides a complete and whole picture approach of all the variables of thoughts collected and presented to allow students to see themselves as learners positioning themselves to test the validity of their beliefs and actions within their communities in and out of the classroom.

The e-learning portfolios are succinct in the way they scaffold students' intentions and realize students' appraisal of new ideas tested on how learning has occurred. They see a total package of their ideas that engages their audience whether live or electronic. Students see the conceptualization of their ideas as concepts of whole self, whole learners in defining their sense of space in this culturally diverse place of Trinidad and Tobago.

SDL Model, The Maker, the Making and the Made

The e-learning portfolios of Art Studio will demonstrate the self-directed model in fostering learning in the classroom. The SDL model emancipates learning and social action. Students are the change agents in looking at their process of art making while negotiating within their community of learners, their world in and outside of the classroom. The self-directed learning of these portfolios generated concise goal-oriented objectives and articulated learning of students' autonomy during their art making process, which became evident in the portfolios.

This paper will also view students' reflections and the part it played in seeing students move from content/skills to application of theory through practice and creation of new knowledge in the art studio of the second year at the University of the West Indies. The learning e-portfolios:

- Viewed the degree of structured support and changes in curriculum and teacher reflection as to how learning in the classroom was facilitated by the teacher in self-directed learning process vis a vis learning outcomes of a learning-centred course syllabus.
- Described reflective practice as it relates to Journal as a self-directed process.
- Located in the portfolios, reflective practice and demonstrated how students set up their learning personal autonomy, personal growth and personal responsibility.
- Looked at self-assessment and peer evaluation as mechanisms that promote learning and standards in self-directed learning.
- Looked at critical thinking rubric within the formation of the learning portfolios.
- Viewed a strong case for self-directed learning portfolios.
- Set up a design framework for the inclusion of learning portfolios in the curriculum.

The SDL grounded theory demonstrates the extent of the facilitation by the teacher and how it impacts on instructional and planning activities, self-directed by the learner in the classroom to engage in discussions about problem-solving and critical thinking to the full benefit of discovery by the learner. It demonstrates the critical practice of SDL and gives a visual account of what students' ideas may look like in practice. What do e-learning portfolios have within them that recognize self-directed learning?

• **“Structure”**: The e-learning portfolios were designed to have within them a structure that is driven by philosophical and pedagogical goals. Students identified their objectives as predictable and unpredictable outcomes that saw its alignment to the art-making process and the eventual products as qualitative results to the teaching and learning enterprise. The portfolios emphasized students' processes and articulated learning through their reflective practice as evidenced in their journals and the structure of the portfolios.

• **“Learner climate”**: Establishes a reflective learning environment that helps students go beyond accumulation of knowledge to the analysis of how, when and why they have learned. Promotes thinking about what lies ahead for improvement and future learning. Students provided the context of their learning based on their experiences and personal narratives of their choices upon which they constructed meaning based on the final outcomes and intended objectives they set. They built a community of trust

to test their beliefs, intentions and actions with their peers within the first public space of the classroom.

• **“Learner engagement”**: Engages students in a process of inquiry into what they have learned by researching and identifying facts and skills with an emphasis on application and use of knowledge. Students were able to document, reflect, collaborate and communicate on their creative process to demonstrate their personal growth while in their art-making process.

• **“Learner competencies”**: The e-learning portfolios provided students with a model for demonstrating the outcomes of learning by developing conceptual frameworks that pertain to learned knowledge and application pertaining to visual language, structures, form and vocabulary through research and practice. The e-portfolios,

1. Developed conceptually strong ideas and revealed important insights by demonstrating a keen and passionate, intellectual and creative curiosity towards the work.
2. Demonstrated a comprehension of knowledge of many contexts that is personal, social, cultural, historical, philosophical, technological, environmental, economic and aesthetic.
3. Solved problems related to task in a highly expressive manner showing a personal signature that demonstrates outstanding achievement towards stated goals and objectives.

It is difficult to look at e-learning portfolios without recognizing the learning context and the changes to the course curricular in terms of learning outcomes and how those outcomes matched with assessment of the portfolios. Its facilitation allowed structure through an emergent plan that is responsive to students' needs. What emerges for the learner is his participation in “learner choices, objectives, content, methods /materials and student's evaluation of work done in a setting whose climate is supportive and collaborative [1].”

Non-visual cues to problems: Students contrived learning, evident of surface learning was sporadic, lacked depth, unifying themes and their products (paintings) connected to skill rather than concepts. I was subversive in my teaching in order to find balance between the learners' intuitive thinking and the accepted order of the learning outcomes in the curriculum so as to foster a personal narrative that related to self and a sense of place. Students were reluctant to share their cross-curricular connections in their work for fear of what the presiding teacher would say. As a result students felt that they had to find new ideas, new ways of working without seeing the possibilities of their ideas, as contiguous support in other subjects which led quickly to student fatigue. The curriculum imposed its own limitations that related to expectations of time and depth of practice that was evidenced by lack of sequential, logical and conceptual issues around students' art processes.

Visual cues to problems: Students saw critique as a private engagement between teacher and student. Critiquing work only in the medium of traditional practice provided a one sided view to practice and a way of thinking about image making. The cues that were both visual and non visual by nature were cited and necessitated the change.

The change in perspectives allowed the rewriting of the learner outcomes that were more student-centered in both the drawing and painting of Art Studio for the academic Year 2007-2008. Student-centered curriculum identified two

important components that were relevant to changes within the structure of the curriculum. The use of reflective practice and the demonstration of self-assessment allowed students to communicate their own learning process to their peers in the public space of the classrooms as re-enforcement of building their own communities from within.

These changes in implementing strategies of the self-directed model laid the groundwork for the research that took place in second semester, which relinquished my control to students in order to provide more autonomy in self-directing their learning. The stages of autonomy developed in increments that were realized between students and teacher. The SDL model examined my own teaching process, and saw the merging of my beliefs and actions as practitioner and teacher change around my philosophy and pedagogical goals.

The educational legacy of a teacher-centered classroom is still prevalent today in higher education. Students entered feeling that the teacher must be the center of their world, however, through the learner-centered approach used in teaching practice, they soon realized that they were the center of their world. Initially, students had a difficult time accepting a paradigm shift. Despite these setbacks, students stood on firm ground because of their prior knowledge, beliefs and actions about the culturally diverse world they live in. Students were initiated into understanding the complexities of core concepts. Through practice they brought their new experiences of skill and application to bear on their prior knowledge within the social, philosophical and cultural context of their experiences while observing, analyzing and evaluating by doing, making and communicating.

In reflection there are several questions that I have asked myself regarding assessment.

- Will progress and improvement be assessed?
- What is the role of student reflection in the assessment?
- Does consistent practise necessarily improve students' work?
- Is good work tied to the way we think about practice?
- Why is my assessment tool formatted this way and how does this assessment have implications on practice as rigors of experimentation that is not only determinable by exploration? This assessment tool must allow students to demonstrate through their work the rigors of exploration, move testing and hypothesis testing. The assessment must be able to value and assess in students the need to change and to be able to carry out and not ignore the resistance to change [2].
- Students must eventually see that problem solving is a part of the larger discourse of problem setting.
- Does the assessment criteria affect teachable learning outcomes and how does this information have implications in the learner outcomes of a student- centred syllabus?

These are but few of the samples coming from data collected during the first semester of both painting and drawing to re-enforce the importance of reflection as an activity which will be looked at within the second semester. These reflections demonstrate students' meta-cognition that developed and moved from stasis to action as they register and act on their learning experiences.

Student Narratives of Self Reflection: "I felt this was a helpful session because it dealt with the requirements for our

journal and portfolio; it was also interesting to enter into discussion about how we draw and more importantly why we draw. What are we learning and how are we applying our knowledge."

"I think I am now able to come to terms with exactly what is expected of me and how I am prepared to approach my drawings. The statement of intent and the process of creating are processes of self discovery which has focused me to reflect and admit to myself that I am not only growing as an artist during my experiences here at UWI, but I am also growing and developing as a person."

"I felt like giving up today. My work still does not reflect what I see. I need time to practice. I want to come to class and not struggle with getting the form down. Today was different...in class we had a lot of internal reflections from Mrs. Woodham. It was encouraging."

"After seeing the video, I saw a great use of space, which I later applied in my piece by locating an angle that allows the elements to intersect the model to create an interesting spatial composition."

"Listening to the account of the film director on how he created composition to convey what he wants to say was meaningful. Composition is taking into consideration what you want the viewer to see in your piece. Editing, lighting, position along with other things help reveal your composition's focus. This improves my own creative imagination and power in interpreting 3-dimensional space on the 2-dimensional surface. I see the setting up of space, which can create deeper physiological significance and can be used to effectively set up discussions to contrast with other important narratives. Pre-production planning, setting up and making judgments on what is observed, is necessary in the decision-making."

Why E-learning portfolios?

What is significant about the e-learning model is the evidence that bears heavily on the critical thinking process of putting together the portfolio. The ongoing collaboration between peers in the classroom, its eventual communication by learners as a result of writing and analyzing on their reflective process, managing technology, and allowing for their written narratives to identify who they are as learners is a symbiotic relationship between thinking in images, writing and making. It does not take for granted the audience to whom the portfolio is directed. In fact it sets up what the artist wants his audience to know and in this case the conceptual frameworks around the art making process of the work. While students engage in the production of the paintings, they are made aware of the integration of the process and how they fit into the content of the portfolio. For purposes of this presentation the portfolios allow students to give feedback and collaborate on each other's work on problem solving, analysis and reflection throughout the process. The digital format of the portfolio for this presentation does consider the possibilities about the interactive nature and the kinds of relationships and connections that are possible beyond the classroom.

Now that the portfolios are completed, students can look at ways these considerations can be met as further feedback and implications for the Art Studio in their 3rd year. In providing a structure for clearer understanding of the level expected in student work as it relates to learner outcomes and the assessment of student work for quality and best practice to gain insights into value systems of what should be changed and what should be added to the curriculum.

The following are excerpts from the course outline in Art Studio second semester 2007-2008. This is a Studio Course in Painting where students are expected to complete a body of work that expresses a unifying theme or idea/concept [3].

The chosen theme for this semester is taken from The Interpretations of Ordinary landscape. These readings will provide students with themes that provoke explorations of what they define as place.

Using this reading for exploring, researching, recording landscape axioms, students create no less than 6 paintings size 3' x 5. These axioms provide the learning context to spawn students' imagination to engage their understanding of place that are clues to culture, through landscapes as "History, Habitat, Problem, Wealth, Artifact, and System" The participants were made up of 17 students in the second year at the University Of The West Indies in the 2007-2008 class. This paper looks at a sampling of 5 students e-learning portfolios based on students' interpretation of the topic "Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes" by Meininig et al., (1979) to determine conceptual framework to research and reflective analysis of their concepts and learning that is inclusive of attitudes, values and habits that affect academic success.

Students are asked to make mini presentations that reflected their creative process objectives to determine peer feedback and evaluation of whether students' goals had been achieved.

Students were asked about their teaching and learning experiences in art studio and this was documented in the form of a questionnaire which students filled out at the end of the year.

The axioms are not ends in themselves. They merely serve as catalysts to bring learners' social, cultural biographical and intuition as reasons for interpreting the landscape as art practitioners to the forefront.

During the production of 6 paintings, students use their journals to register and document their ideas of their art-making process. Students observe individual journals and record the intuitive and retrospective practice being investigated to determine the quality of the inquiry and learning. The journals provide a strong case for documenting the level of engagement that reflects an interest in detail, the juxtaposition of imagery and an exploration of technique between the student and his work. What is evident is the creative process and what Lytton calls the four stages of the creative process as "Preparation, Incubation, Illumination and Verification" [4].

Students establish their choices by preparing to collect information, from everywhere ("Preparation"). The materials are collected and organized ("Incubation"), the point at which the student uses their intuition to solve problems with clear insight ("Illumination") and ("Verification") the final acceptance that the ideas are finalized and the concepts dovetail into their beliefs on achieving their objectives.

These ideas form the basis for their creative insights that are part of the contents as an essential detail in communicating their process through the e-learning portfolios.

The Analysis of the Data

Students saw their growth and development in many ways and progressed from having no confidence--to--confidence building. The portfolios demonstrated the huge strides students made in terms of their skill level. For some, the conceptual framework was difficult to realize because rigid barriers constructed over many years were difficult to break. The reflective practice helped students to think and analyse their work. Students were aware of the motivational factor in the teaching and how much they were able to accomplish and press beyond the difficulties. When end of term reflections were analyzed students saw the value of their learning experiences and they pointed to

the methods of problem solving as a technique of learning. The slides presented confirmed initial conceptual understandings, the process, the application of research and conclusions based on the satisfactory completions of their goals and objectives.

The e-learning portfolios presented a wide variety of applications of medium. These were snapshots of the process under their initial objectives that the students had set. On the whole, they saw the nature of the feedback from peers and teacher as encouraging personal growth and artistic development as well as empowering and developing confidence in the class as a community. Students saw the reflective process as extremely helpful in self-analysis to ascertain whether objectives were being met. The bi-weekly presentations of paintings to be critiqued, prepared students to communicate their objectives and intent of their practice to their peers. Says one student, "I think psychologically it enables us to accept critique and internalize our feelings around our work because it comes across as casual conversation between our peers and the lecturer."

The e-learning portfolios looked at the degree of structured support facilitated and made changes wherever possible to curriculum by way of deepening the connection of theory and application while in practice by using the self-directed learning process as the model. The portfolios locate within them references to reflective practice and demonstrate how students set up their learning, personal autonomy, personal growth and personal responsibility. Reflection requires action or is it action, which requires reflection? For practitioners, knowledge comes from doing. If this is our practice and this is the way by which inquiry is determined then practice alone will indicate a contrived production of products that have no purpose or sense of inquiry. Unless there is a synergy of practice and theory the two will forever remain as separate entities.

Within the critical thinking rubric the e-learning portfolios are assessed using the following articulated learning [5]:

Students were able to use the interpretation of the landscapes and express their own ideas that connected them to their emotional, socio-economic, political, psychological and cultural understanding of the place and space that they live in ("Clarity"). They used their research findings and referred to facts as points in which to cite and critique the similarities /differences and new approaches to doing and thinking in their work. ("Accuracy") In the making of the six paintings, some students were able to use the underlying theme /conceptual frameworks within their work to sustain their initial intent, when they moved away from the initial intent students provided evidence for their choices and the relevance of those decisions were articulated in the work. ("Relevance")

Students connected through their reflective practice and peer-feedback of their work and answered to important questions in their work when it came to problems of sustaining themes/conceptual frameworks, application of medium and the issue of time, ("Depth") while considering alternative points of view of others ("Breath"). On the whole, students were able to connect to their objectives that followed a logical and sequential scaffold of ideas that led to completion of six paintings. The PowerPoint presentation allowed for the representation and scaffolding of ideas as students moved from paintings 1 to 2 to 3 to 4 to 5 and to 6. ("Logic"), In conclusion students were able to speak to whether they felt that their goals were achieved and how successful the experience was for them.

The portfolios provided a structure that students planned and managed. This process has been very enlightening and engaging as I look at learners' commitment into what modifications were necessary to facilitate the process of

change. How did change affect students' work and why was change desirable? It also begged the question as to what evidence do students have that they are better learners. Apart from the product that students produced, their learning portfolios provided other types of evidence to support and encourage thinking, evaluating and reflecting on process that are undervalued while in practise.

Apart from the e-learning portfolios, data was also collected at the beginning, middle and end of the course. The exit questionnaire at the end of the course spoke to questions focused on teaching/ learning-centered orientations of leaning outcomes of the curriculum.

Teaching-Centered Orientation Questions	Learning-Centered Orientation Questions
How well did you think your learning was supported in the classroom?	In what new ways has theory connected to your practice and what conceptual changes has the work undergone as a result of new knowledge?
What opportunities did the teacher provide for making it easy to understand and develop concepts?	What expertise have you developed as regards changes in thinking about your process?
How has the teacher been effective in demonstrating how knowledge can be used?	What did you do to negotiate meaning and understanding about your process to others?
	How would this new knowledge guide your way of working in your final year at the Center and what goals can you set for yourself in the coming year ahead?

At a glance I would like to compare the midterm reflections of the 1st semester to the end of term reflections. One of the largest increments has been the letting go of the control to give students their autonomy in learning. The letting go has turned into the best way to facilitate learning and approaches to learning using grounded theory in active learning models. Although the response to learning for the first part of the semester was on content, to look at the same question in the second semester sees students, while engaging in practice move away from content to develop and apply deeper understanding and meaning to their practice as they shifted focus from me as the central figure to the application of techniques and theory within their practice. Their responses for the same question in the feedback have to do more with what other people think about their work and how they respond to feedback from their peers and the classroom as a valid resource for feedback in providing a sense of community.

The impact of evaluation has offered key insights into students' minds and how they formulate new meaning, new approaches to the process of art making. This kind of evaluation offers and allows students to claim autonomy in leading their learning. Students responded to key themes in their work and provide conceptual frameworks for their products. They are able to establish their new concepts and to some extent the assessment of these new concepts as they rely on their own judgement. Students made rubrics and assessed in each other's work what they valued. Where the challenge lay for both teacher and learner is in setting of standards and by whose standards the completed works were to be judged.

Assessment is seen as multiple layers of the portfolio in which it plays a pivoting role in trapping the learner outcomes of the curriculum while capturing students' learning and their engagement in learning.

Students are able to demonstrate deep analysis of their learning that stems from deep reflection so that transformation and internalization can take place in their practice.

Portfolios establish a collaborative and supportive class climate of concern that values the ethic of care as students respond to their peers' works in giving critical feedback. This caring allows students to be responsive and receptive in developing the construct of self in a dialectic approach to caring and autonomy in self directed learning.

Conclusion

As a result of this reflective process I have been guided this year to look for deeper meaning in students' process of self evaluation by giving them more opportunities to reflect on their learning; to establish within their concepts the research component to existing knowledge and to develop new knowledge by establishing students' ideas, aims and questions to the underpinning of particular theories and concepts about art making practices.

While I am aware that students need to see the practical side of drawing and painting in Art Studio, I see students' development as giving them the tools that are necessary so as to foster in them a sense of inquiry so that they can build upon other ways of image making, by developing qualitative changes in thinking. While teaching content is important, my primary goal is to develop problem solving and sound reasoning skills parallel to engaging students in their content area bringing a balance between the engagement of ideas and practice. Consideration of the cultural context of learners and what they bring to the table from their personal view of place (Trinidad and Tobago) serves to develop students' ability to evaluate their intuition and observation. I want them to have a sense of place and I want to teach to that sense of place. I am interested in how students come to know and how these very expressions of culture, prior and intuitive knowledge serve their artistic freedom.

The SDL theory in Higher Education and in light of our educational legacy where students may not be proactive or self-actualizing, or self-sufficient needs to encourage students in the ideals of the standards of what good practice is. Although students connected to their ideas and provided thematic consistency throughout their production, the quality of students' products in both areas of drawing and painting became difficult for students to determine and assess. This was based on perceived set of standards that students understood had to do with what the teacher's criteria required although students were instrumental in setting the rubric for evaluation. Although students felt better about communicating their ideas within the classroom community, in some instances the quality of painting needed much more time and experiential approach to application and practice than the curriculum provided. The standards were varied as it related to the quality of painting which led me to believe that there is insufficient practice and evidence of practice connected to course overload and students' efficacy in achieving learner outcomes because of time constraints within the curriculum and the provision of adequate and functional space to model good practice. A look at course overload and redesigning curriculum to look for curriculum gaps will provide a deeper case for students' self-direction as self-sufficiency as well as self-direction as learner control over instruction in the assessment of work. It is difficult to implement standards when practice

overtime is an important and influencing factor to the setting of standards. Students must move from a position of knowing to a position of experiencing from the **maker**, to the **making** and eventually the **made**. There is need to direct learners to the understanding and achieving of balance between ideas that come from observation, and practice that is knowledge and ideas that are intuited and observed as a result of practice while in action that makes new knowledge. When defining instructional practice, students' engagement and experience from practice is mandatory.

Students can no longer create products without engaging in their ideas as learners that come from doing and making. Practice that sets up the doing in the mind rather than the doing that comes from making over time results in contrived work that acts as a panacea for students' practice

Critical questions

- What changes would you make in your teaching strategy/curriculum to engage reflection as a self-directed process that will connect theory to the scholarship of application?
- As a result of this application how does critical thinking connect, inform assessment and learning outcome strategies?
- How would one connect students to the scholarship of research as an integral part of establishing conceptual frameworks that are relevant change agents of students' personal practice?
- How does portfolio theory and application change assessment?
- What criteria should be used to implement an assessment that would unite creative thinking and expression of students' goals and course goals, curricular teaching and student effort?
- What are the University's goals and performance objectives and how are they essential to an integrated, learning-base academic programme?
- How does the Visual Arts Department sustain and maintain the e-learning portfolios as an overall strategy of teaching and learning in the third and final year?

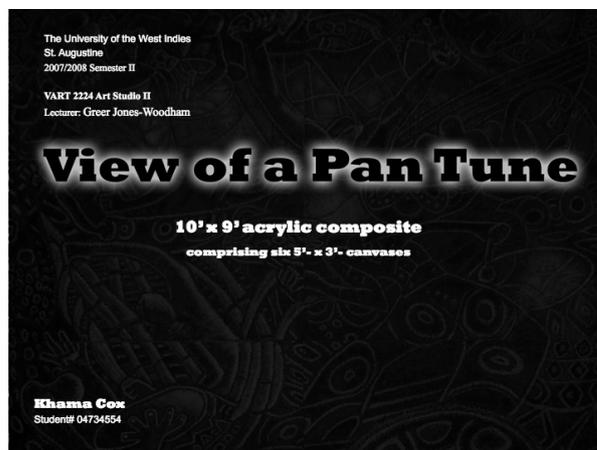
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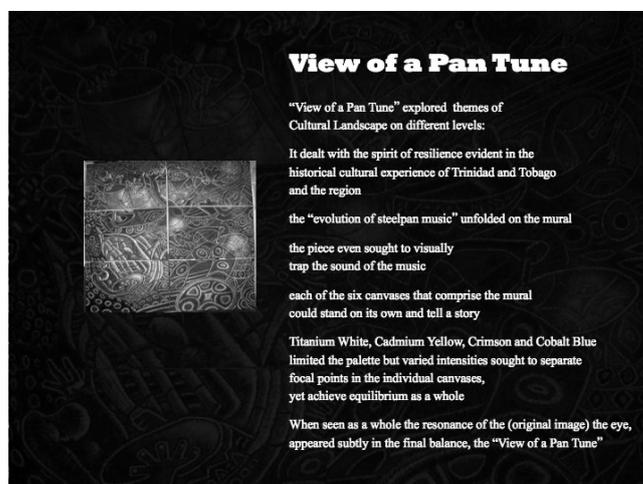
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E-learning Portfolio: Khama Cox 2007/8

2nd Year Student University of the West Indies,
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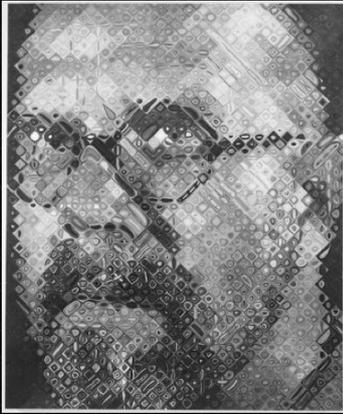
1



2



3



Chuck Close
Self Portrait

His images are built by applying one careful stroke after another in multi-colors or grayscale.

For Chuck Close, it is the process of description that renders meaning, rather than the subject itself.

For me, his mastery of guiding the eye with the use of simple shapes and his achievement of natural flesh tones commanding seemingly unrelated pigments are exemplary.

4



Winston Branch
St Lucian Painter

Whimsical use of line in Branch's aptly titled "View from the Fire" waives ideas of static even in the face of statuesque figures.

8



Khama Cox
Nine-piece composite
Self Portrait
"Reflections"
(54" x 72")

Inspired by
American
Contemporary Artist

Chuck Close

5



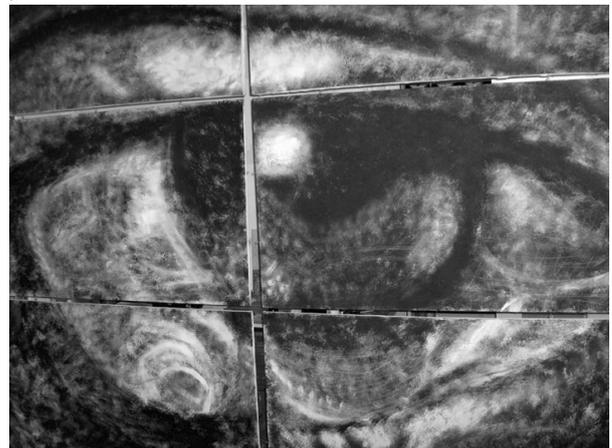
Khama Cox
Photocopy of
sketch entitled
Pan Phoenix
(1996)

9



"Reflections" detail

6



10



**Thecla
Puruntatameri**

Australian
Aboriginal
"Wihwama"
(Bushfire)
1993

The use of pattern not only creates exciting contrasts between shapes but also provides the elusion of depth.

7



11



12

- ▶ According to D. W. Meinig, editor of *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes – Geographical Essays*, in the chapter 'The Beholding Eye – Ten Versions of the Same Scene', he states that:
 "Just as scientist look through the façade of obvious elements and sees processes in operation, so others may see those same elements as clues and the whole scene as a symbol of the values, the governing ideas, the underlying philosophies of a culture." – p.42
- ▶ For me, that statement immediately had my mind wondering about The Corner, and how I grew up in an area where the corner was not only a literal fixture in the community; but a symbolic location in which converging were several people, of varied backgrounds.
- ▶ A significant influence was the song "The Corner", lyrics provided by the artiste Common featuring Kanye West and The Last Poets. It articulates a lifestyle of blacks in America, their strife, something not too far from my life in Trinidad (lyrics can be found in student's journal).
- ▶ My intent is to highlight "The Corner" through a referential treatment of a developing discourse on MEMORIES and how that impacts upon my understanding of that cultural landscape.

3

E-learning portfolio: Daniella Carrington
 2nd Year Student, University of the West Indies
 St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago 2007/08

Art Studio II Presentation
THE CORNER
 By: Daniella Carrington
 (ID# 806006165)

1

Development of Theme
 Process and paintings

4

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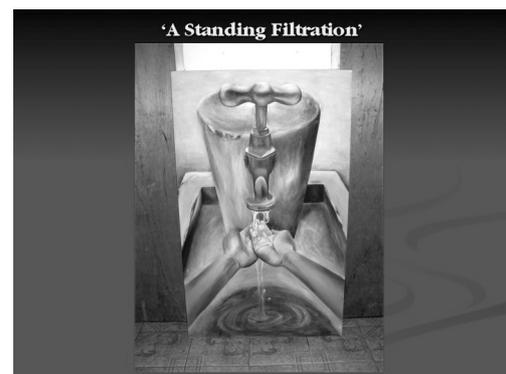
- ▶ Introductory Letter to Lecturer
- ▶ Development of Theme – process and paintings
- ▶ Closing Letter to Lecturer

2

Objectives

- ▶ To take aspects of elements of "The Corner" and treat them as symbols.
- ▶ To allow the piece to communicate the absorption and release of memories, as if someone's about to drink from a tap.
- ▶ Reference to the artist Jack Vettriano, with regards to stylistic approach in painting, which to me, is effortlessly real and provocative.
- ▶ **IMPORTANT NOTE:** - 1. I have to be simple and precise, 2. Not realistic just real and 3. Paint what I feel, not what I see.
- ▶ Reference images, both researched and actual photos taken can be sourced through student's journal.

5



6

'The Stoop'

(painting #3)

7

Objectives

- ▶ To project 'The Stoop', as another one of the symbols associated with "The Corner".
- ▶ To highlight the issue of very insightful conversations that went on at the stoop between so-called 'ghetto youths'. As well as, conceal and reveal the information.
- ▶ To add value to the object in such a way as to praise or even exalt it in a kind of shrine-like depiction.

8

Reference Images

9

Art Movements Researched & Referenced to

- ▶ Realism – a style of painting that depicts the actuality of what the eyes can see. (to aid in understanding the painting's need for a realistic portrayal.)
- ▶ Symbolic Art – the use of symbols to concentrate or intensify meaning, making the work more subjective than objective. (to assist the painting's expressive nature.)
- ▶ Byzantine Art – certain artistic traditions that originated in the Byzantine Empire, particularly in regard to icon painting and church architecture. (to uphold the desire of the painting to be treated as that... an icon.)

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Byzantine Art (note aura-like enclosures around the central figure)



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Conceptual Sketch



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'The Stoop'



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Overall View on Feedback

- ▶ The level of intensity used within the painting was somewhat of an experimentation. The desire is to better connect with the subject matter of the paintings (the memories theme) and pinpoint aspects of it that are unlikely and introspective in nature.

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Peer Feedback

- ▶ Once again, people were appreciative of the amount of research that went into this painting.
- ▶ The technique employed in doing the painting, as well as the use of colour contrast intrigued some viewers.

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'Shop of Proof'

(painting #5)

16

Objective

- ▶ To not be contrived in the actual preparation and research for the concept of the painting and just rely on memory, something that has been the overriding principle and focus of the series of paintings so far.
- ▶ To seek and record people's reactions and interpretations of what the piece is about without any explanation granted.

17

'Shop of Proof'



18

Overall View of Painting

- ▶ I did no sort of sketching, or extensive research as I would have done for previous paintings, instead I opted to strictly use the images in my mind, and value the manner in which the piece was completed, no matter if it did not adhere or correspond to previous depictions.
- ▶ The questions that arose was; What if, I no longer set my objects in a context? And what meanings would it evoke if I cease to be so meticulous, and just be expressive?

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Closing Letter to Lecturer

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The experience I had with participating in such a project, enriched my life in various ways. It helped me not only learn and understand the value of intuitive as well as creative thought, but it also revealed that everything conceived has an underlying meaning and purpose. The theme, "The Corner" served as a jumping off point, to assist me in developing an appreciation for not only process but the community that enhances one's own perceptions on learning and life. The ultimate goal behind this project for me, came into being as I took part in the grueling and intense work proposed, which was to discover and acknowledge my own desire to think outside of my painting confinements.