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The possibilities of integrating queer pedagogy in fine art curricula

This master thesis explores the possibilities of integrating queer pedagogy in the first year of a fine art curriculum, specifically the impact it can have on informing the students' social and artistic identities. I address fine art mostly from a perspective that focuses on the students' self-development at an intellectual level, reflecting in its turn on their personal and artistic growth and maturity. Furthermore, I explore modes through which education can facilitate frameworks for individuals to build their intellect and personality by informed choices and not through presumed parameters that constrain individuals to non-negotiable positions.

Here, queer pedagogy is concerned with the weight mainstream education has on the students' identity formation; it questions how knowledge is taught through western canons, it strives for social inclusion without the imposition of norms or names, and it aims at the empowerment of the students' agency. Having these principles as the core, I structured my research around the following question: how to design a combination of critical theory and contemporary art that confronts students with their identities?

The practical side of my research suggests a set of lessons – workshop(s) – to activate queer pedagogy as a method of content delivering, moderating a discussion and including exercises that help reach the content itself. I tested three lessons – workshop(s) – which showed that students gain verbal skills to better articulate what their work entails and to position themselves within their own social context. They also generate new forms of coexistence through and thanks to their mutual sharing and this suggests a combination of critical theory and contemporary art that help students in forming their social and artistic identities.

Building on what queer pedagogy can be, this research aims at integrating and exploring ontological differences that amplify notions of respect and compassion within a class. It also leaves room for further research to explore long term effects that can work towards creating a more respectful environment within educational art institutions.

External critic: Prof Johnny Golding (Professor of Philosophy & Fine Art; Director, Centre for Fine Art Research (CFAR) – ARTS DESIGN MEDIA FACULTY – BCU, Head, radical Matter in Art & Philosophy Research Theatre of Excellence – CFAR, Programme Leader, radical Media Arts Philosophy – Arts Based Masters (ABM Programme), Birmingham School of Art)

A series of cards bearing keywords pertaining to the Masters Education in Arts programme on one side and forbidden associated phrases on the other, provide the starting points of a game designed by Juan and Mariana for the Graduation Presentation. Replete with buzzers and timers, the game asks players to reflect on the possibilities and limitations of language, as well as the vocabulary necessary to make ourselves understood within a given context.

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<div class="imagecreditfernandes2">Ana Salomé Paiva</div>

<div class="imagecreditfernandes3">Ana Salomé Paiva</div>

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