

# Rethinking Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education

New Museum of Contemporary Art

Edited by Eungie Joo and Joseph Keehn II  
with Jenny Ham-Roberts

# CONTEMPORARY ART and MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Susan E. Cahan | Zoya Kocur

In 2008 the country elected its first president of African descent.<sup>1</sup> In recent years, several states have legalized marriage between same-gender couples. The speaker of the House of Representatives is a woman and a former first lady serves as secretary of state. A recent report found that the “Millennial Generation,” those born between 1978 and 2000, are significantly more progressive than earlier generations were; they are more likely to support gay marriage, take race and gender equality for granted, be tolerant of religious and family diversity, have an open and positive attitude toward immigration, and display little interest in divisive social issues.<sup>2</sup> Are these signs that discrimination and oppression have come to an end in this country? Is racism a thing of the past?

We believe these developments are giant steps forward. They represent increasing recognition and acceptance of the diversity of human experiences, cultures, and choices. However, we also believe there is a need for continued understanding and action against systematic, institutionalized discrimination and oppression. In 2004, the bottom 50 percentile of African Americans in the United States possessed *none* of the country’s net worth, while the wealthiest 1 percent of the overall population controlled 31.2 percent.<sup>3</sup> And the disparity between rich and poor has grown wider. According to a recent study, the wealth share of the least wealthy half of the population dropped from 3.6 percent in 1992 to 2.5 percent in 2004, while the share of the top 1 percent increased from 26.7 to 29.5 percent during the same period.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, inequality, racism, and ethnocentrism have taken new forms. In the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001, fear has been mobilized to demonize entire ethnic and religious groups. Therefore, as spectacular as some of our recent achievements have been, critical work still needs to be done to eradicate institutionalized imbalances of power and wealth and to understand and appreciate the many cultures that comprise our nation and our world.

## Multicultural Education

Since the 1980s, the body of literature on multicultural education in the United States has grown. The range of perspectives reflected in this literature is broad, from the "heroes and holidays" approach and "celebrations of diversity" to radical critiques of institutionalized racism, sexism, and classism within the education system. Despite this scope, literature addressing the visual arts falls into a narrow range. While many promote the study of art from diverse cultures, they overlook the historical and political dimensions of cultural democracy. Conversely, within critical approaches to multicultural education, even interdisciplinary approaches, little attention has been paid to the substantive roles art can play.

*Rethinking Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education* aims to bridge this gap by highlighting the role of art within a critically based approach to multicultural education. Drawing from and expanding upon ideas in critical pedagogy, this book uses contemporary art as the focal point for an antiracist, antisexist, democratically based curriculum, providing both a theoretical foundation and practical resources for implementation.

## What Is "Multicultural"?

The word "multicultural" evokes a wide range of meanings and implications.<sup>5</sup> At its worst, it has been taken to mean little more than a fad that captivated liberals in the late 1980s, launched a handful of careers by allowing a few people of color into the mainstream, and finally passed into oblivion in the 1990s. As early as 1989, performance artist Guillermo Gomez-Peña wrote that many had already grown leery of the word:

[Multicultural] is an ambiguous term. It can mean a cultural pluralism in which the various ethnic groups collaborate and dialog with one another without having to sacrifice their particular identities and this is extremely desirable. But it can also mean a kind of Esperanto Disney World, a *tutti frutti* cocktail of cultures, languages and art forms in which "everything becomes everything else." This is a dangerous notion that strongly resembles the bankrupt concept of the melting pot with its familiar connotations of integration, homogenization and pasteurization. It is why so many Latino and black organizations are so distrustful of the term.<sup>6</sup>

Gomez-Peña's concerns are well founded since misunderstanding and misuse of the term abound. For example, in 2001 art critic Holland Cotter wrote, "Multiculturalism, more than an attitude but less than a theory, was a propelling force behind American art of the last two decades. It will define the 1990s in the history books as surely as Pop defined the 1960s."<sup>7</sup>

On the surface, this appears to be an affirmation of cultural equity. But a deeper reading reveals a problematic correlation between "Multiculturalism" and "Pop." Cotter presents the two terms as if they were parallel: Pop dominated art practice in the 1960s, multiculturalism reigned in the 1990s. The problem with this hypothesis is that the two terms are not equivalent. Pop was an art movement with an identifiable style and a particular aesthetic, which quickly emerged and entered into the canon of art history. The term "multicultural," as we use it, is an attempt to destabilize the very structures that elevate one style of art or one group of artists over another and create the linear succession of dominant art styles that make up the historical canon. It is precisely this hierarchical and linear notion of art history that has prevented work by artists of color from being considered part of the official story. "Multicultural" is not a style that came and went, but a condition of social existence.

### **What Is Multicultural Education?**

Multicultural education emerged out of the context of social activism of the 1960s and 1970s, drawing energy and inspiration from the struggles against oppression by racial movements, feminism, and the movement for gay and lesbian rights. On college campuses, this activism took the form of demands for ethnic studies and women's studies courses and a greater sensitivity to cultural and gender biases. In primary and secondary education, it has concentrated primarily on curriculum reform, in its broadest application calling for a total school-reform effort using strategies such as student-centered pedagogy, community involvement in policy-making and governance, and equitable distribution of resources in order to increase parity for a range of cultural, ethnic, and economic groups.<sup>8</sup> As educational theorist Christine Sleeter has pointed out, "multicultural education has always been grounded in a vision of equality and has served as a mobilizing site for struggle within education."<sup>9</sup> Its purpose is to change the power structure in the wider society in order to foster social and political empowerment for all students.

Over the past three decades, educators have worked to develop curricula that are more pluralistic. While most attempts have moved beyond the "heroes and holidays" approach, few models of multicultural education are geared toward transforming the very conditions that create social and economic inequalities.

### **What Is the Role of Art in Multicultural Education?**

Within the movement for multicultural education, curriculum development and instruction have been particularly slow to change. The models adopted in arts education are often the least likely to transform social and political conditions. Two of the most commonly used

introductory art textbooks, H.W. Janson's *History of Art* (first published in 1962) and Helen Gardner's *Art through the Ages* (first published in 1926), were initially written generations ago, and although they have been updated and revised several times, they still tend to distort or merely add on the history of black African art, the art of the African diaspora, and the art of many other cultures and groups. More recently, *Art History* (first edition 1995) by Marilyn Stokstad reflects social concerns by incorporating such topics as patronage and repatriation. Chapters on Asian, African, and Mesoamerican art are situated throughout the book, rather than being tacked on as afterthoughts. But the way in which contemporary artists are contextualized reflects the trouble art historians have had incorporating a diverse range of living artists into existing canonical narratives. For example, Julie Mehretu, an artist who was born in Ethiopia but grew up and currently lives in the United States, is discussed in the section on African art, while El Anatsui, an artist who has lived in Africa all his life—he was born in Ghana and currently lives in Nigeria—is included in the section on Modern Art in Europe and the Americas.<sup>10</sup> Such confusion results when artists are used instrumentally to support an author's narrative, rather than being addressed on their own terms. The following summary illustrates the narrow scope and pitfalls of the commonly used approaches.

The additive approach, one in which previously neglected movements or styles are added to the traditional list of European art movements, expands the curriculum without challenging the Eurocentric, patriarchal, and exclusionary biases of the overall framework. The glorification of token "masters" such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Romare Bearden, and Frida Kahlo merely reinforces the prevailing art narrative of the "gifted individual" who has been able to rise above his or her community in achievement. By definition, art created outside of these limited (and limiting) criteria lacks value.

In contrast, approaches that focus on signs of cross-cultural contact hold the potential to explore issues of biculturalism and cultural hybridization. However, they tend to emphasize a limited repertoire of historical events (such as the influence of African art on the development of cubism) and almost always stress the incorporation of Third World influences into European art. Occasionally, two-way flows of influence are recognized, such as the Portuguese influence on Benin sculpture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but rarely are artistic developments linked with historical and political events, such as colonialism, global imperialism, or the slave trade, which in many cases set the context for cross-cultural interaction. Furthermore, cross-cultural contacts between indigenous and diasporic groups are generally ignored, as "cultural diversity" is typically conceived as referring to "marginalized minorities" in relation to a white, European center.

Ethnically based approaches shift the center of inquiry to the culturally specific criteria that a particular society uses in creating and appreciating its art. The most effective approaches

integrate the study of art into a broader social, cultural, political, and historical framework. Yet in its usual emphasis, an ethnically based approach presents art in ways that make it seem distant and “other,” keeping at arm’s length questions pertaining to power relations in our own society.

Approaches to multicultural education that consider not only the art object and its function but also the culturally specific processes by which it was made and the sociopolitical dynamics shaping its reception are more complex; they take into account the cultural and social values and beliefs—including cultural biases—of teachers and students.<sup>11</sup> As Brian Bullivant points out, “culture” is not a set of artifacts or tangible objects, but the very way that the members of a particular group interpret, use, and perceive them.<sup>12</sup> “Use” includes intellectual uses by teachers and students within the educational process. Education thus becomes self-reflexive as students become more aware of their role as cultural interpreters and of the real ethical and social responsibilities accompanying that role.

The most common approaches for connecting the study of art with studio production are based on medium and form. (For example, students study African masks and then are assigned to make their own masks. Or, students examine the use of circular forms in art from a variety of cultures and periods and then create their own circular works of art.) Instead of enhancing cultural understanding, these methods reduce cultural artifacts to empty forms devoid of historical or social significance. The superficiality is apparent to students, who rightly question why they should care about issues that appear to be fabricated simply for the purpose of classroom study. Such approaches also tend to subsume art from every culture and context under narrow formal or technical concerns, which are themselves derived from European modernist aesthetic frameworks.

Generally missing from multicultural art education is an approach that connects everyday experience, social critique, and creative expression. When the focus is shifted to issues and ideas that students truly care about and that are relevant within a larger life-world context, art becomes a vital means of reflecting on the nature of society and social existence.

### **Contemporary Art Textbooks**

Recently published textbooks on art of the post-World War II era include more women, artists of color, out gays and lesbians, and other previously excluded groups than ever before. The call for cultural equity has reached a point where most authors recognize the need to include at least some diversity in their selection of artists. However, inclusion alone does not eradicate the differential treatment of art. Many surveys of contemporary art contain a section that clusters artists of color, women, and other groups in a discrete chapter on identity or “alternative” art. The problem here is not only one of segregation in the guise of integration but also one of point

of view: who decides what is an "alternative" and what is considered the normative center? In other cases, gendered or racialized themes provide the pretext for such segregation, such as addressing the theme of domesticity exclusively with works by women. Often this approach wrenches artists and artworks out of their historical contexts in order to have them support a particular theme.

A second problem apparent in recent art history texts about art since 1960 is that they sometimes invoke the Civil Rights and Antiwar Movements as general backdrops to discussions of art of the era, without acknowledging the political challenge these movements posed to the very narratives of art history contained in these texts. Often authors use pictures of key moments in the Civil Rights Movement as background illustrations that reference historical developments in the 1950s and 1960s while excluding artists of color who were actually working at this time. In one text, a prominent author cites the Civil Rights Movement by stating that the "countless displays of extraordinary and anonymous courage on the part of black protestors with their handful of white allies" inspired the development of Happenings in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Yet this same author includes only one artwork by one artist of color among the 116 illustrations in this book.<sup>13</sup>

The second-rate treatment of works by artists of color was pointed out by art historian Richard Meyer in his insightful review of the year-by-year art history textbook *Art Since 1900* by Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, and Benjamin Buchloh.<sup>14</sup> In the first of the book's two volumes, which covers 1900 to 1944, two entries address movements dominated by artists of color: the Mexican muralists and the Harlem Renaissance. These sections were written not by the primary authors, but by a writer who is not even credited. In sharp contrast to the crisp scholarship found in most of the book, these sections are written without rhetorical intensity or critical sophistication. Meyer writes, "While gesturing toward inclusion, *Art Since 1900* sets black and brown artists of the prewar period within a separate sphere of simplification."<sup>15</sup>

The final problem that has emerged is that the histories of works by artists of color are often reinvented for the convenience of the author. For example, *Art Since 1900* dramatically misrepresents the 1993 Whitney Biennial. In the authors' discussion of what they consider to be the exhibition's preoccupation with the use of African American stereotypes in art, they cite seven artists. Three of these artists were not in the show: Rotimi Fani-Kayode was born in Nigeria but lived in England; Yinka Shonibare is British; and Kara Walker, born and living in the United States, was actually included in the 1997 Whitney Biennial four years later.<sup>16</sup> Such distortions remove the artists from history and treat them as if they were game-board pieces that can be rearranged at will to suit an author's agenda.

**Contem**

Many tea  
comforta  
anything  
As art cri  
become r  
response:  
materials  
has "with  
establish

Th  
the past t  
and critic  
as the "p  
challengi  
heteroger  
concrete,  
In this ne  
new weig

Th  
to build s  
and abili  
oppress  
connecti  
and histo  
perspecti  
in ways t

**A Socia**

The term  
to descri  
participa

Ec  
st

### Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education

Many teachers shy away from using contemporary art in their teaching because they do not feel comfortable with their own level of knowledge and are reluctant to introduce their students to anything they may not have mastered themselves. This response is not unique to educators. As art critic and historian Lucy Lippard has pointed out, the field of contemporary art "has become mystified to the point where many people doubt and are even embarrassed by their responses."<sup>17</sup> To make matters worse, teaching resources are scarce. The absence of curriculum materials about contemporary art reflects the attitude that the only valuable art is that which has "withstood the test of time." This attitude, in turn, reflects the belief that it is possible to establish universal cultural standards that remain fixed and permanent.

The relevance of contemporary art to multicultural education cannot be overstated. Over the past two decades, a significant shift has emerged in the sensibilities and outlooks of artists and critics, producing what philosopher, theologian, and activist Cornel West has referred to as the "politics of difference."<sup>18</sup> The features of this new cultural politics of difference include challenging monolithic and homogeneous views of history in the name of diverse, multiple, and heterogeneous perspectives; rejecting abstract, general, and universal pronouncements in light of concrete, specific, and particular realities; and acknowledging historical specificity and plurality. In this new art, issues of what constitutes difference and how it is determined have been given new weight and gravity.

The study of such art can enhance multicultural and socially activist education by helping to build students' understanding of their own place in history and emphasizing the capacity and ability of all human beings, including those who have been culturally degraded, politically oppressed, and economically exploited.<sup>19</sup> We advocate an approach that stresses the vital connections between students' lives inside and outside of school within a framework of social and historical analysis. This approach not only encourages students to speak from their own perspectives, but also encourages them to critique their environments and confront social issues in ways that are synthesized with the study of art.

### A Social Reconstructionist Approach to Art and Education

The term "social reconstructionist" has been put forth by Carl Grant and Christine Sleeter to describe a type of education that prepares students to become active citizens who fully participate in society. According to Grant and Sleeter:

Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist ... attempts to prepare students to be citizens able to actualize egalitarian ideology that is the cornerstone of our



democracy. It teaches students about issues of social equality, fosters an appreciation of America's diverse population and teaches them political action skills that they may use to deal vigorously with these issues.<sup>20</sup>

A social reconstructionist approach to art education requires a change in the content and organization of the curriculum, as well as a shift in instructional methods. Students are encouraged to bring their own existing knowledge and experiences into the learning process, lessening the privileging of one dominant "voice." This process of democratizing classroom discourse is of great importance, particularly given the increasing cultural diversity in schools.

At its best, multicultural education challenges and rejects racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination in curricula and pedagogy, and fosters institutional practices that promote structural change. Multicultural education uses schools and cultural institutions as sites from which to critique larger social and political conditions that create injustices in the culture at large.

### **Museums and Arts Organizations: Into the Classroom**

The role of museums and arts organizations in providing art education to public school students has increased dramatically over the past two decades. The impetus for much of this growth was the defunding of arts in public schools that began in the late 1970s. As illustrated in the timeline below (p. 14), public school funding for the arts has been in decline, if not in crisis, for nearly twenty-five years. During the 1980s, in response to the disastrous cuts to the arts that began in the prior decade, government agencies such as the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and state and local arts councils joined with private foundations, creating initiatives to bring arts back into the public schools, especially to the most underserved. Arts organizations responded by doing outreach, creating new programs, and partnering with schools in expanded ways. Museums, theater groups, dance companies, orchestras, and a wide range of other arts organizations all stepped in to fill the gap left by decreased school funding, often as the sole providers of art instruction in the schools they served.

The New Museum's High School Art Program (HSAP) was one such initiative. The program attracted federal, state, and private funding and was able to expand from serving three schools in 1980, when the program was founded, to more than a dozen the following decade. Government funding (with matching private funds) also supported the development and publication of the first edition of this book. Distinct from typical museum programs offered to schools (a museum visit and perhaps a follow-up with a museum educator), the HSAP was a multiweek program that introduced students and teachers to contemporary art, aesthetics, and social issues by integrating these into the schools' existing curricula. Though modest in size when it began,

the HSAF  
school str  
expanded

Ef

Eventual  
New York  
Partnersh

W

strength.

educating  
programs

of those e

1980s ar

to govern

to elimin

reverbera

New Mus

Th

cuts at al

### **Painting**

The perio

in our sch

(one that

education

quantifi

areas, in

Th

success a

2002 No

identifies

math and

decline i

A

increased

the HSAP was the first program of its kind, both in its focus on serving inner-city public high school students and in its emphasis on contemporary art. By the early 1990s, the program had expanded to partner with a dozen New York City high schools serving "at-risk" students.

Efforts such as these brought innovative arts education to schools that had few resources. Eventually, broader efforts were organized to respond to the crisis in art education in schools in New York, such as the Annenberg-initiated Center for Arts Education (CAE) and the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE).

While the arts were being cut from the schools, the multicultural movement was gaining strength. The momentum of multicultural education as a viable and important means for educating a nation of students from diverse backgrounds was a key component of many arts programs implemented in schools by outside partners; the first edition of this book was a product of those efforts. The backlash against multiculturalism and the rise of conservatism in the late 1980s and 1990s, which was made manifest in the culture wars of the 1980s, eventually led to government censorship, elimination of funding at the NEA for individual artists, and attempts to eliminate the NEA itself, all of which created a negative impact on arts institutions that also reverberated in schools. (NEA funding for the first edition of this book was contingent upon the New Museum signing the NEA's "anti-obscenity clause.")

The struggle to keep arts in the schools has taken place against the backdrop of funding cuts at all levels of government and the political battles over the stakes of multiculturalism.

### **Painting by Numbers (or Not Painting at all): Standardized Testing**

The period since the mid-1990s has seen a continuation of the ups and downs of art education in our schools. One of the largest factors influencing public arts education in the last decade (one that we would characterize as more negative than positive) has been the general trend in education toward standardized testing, which has led to an overwhelming emphasis on achieving quantifiable results in reading, writing, and math at the expense of learning in other subject areas, including not only art but also history, social studies, and science.

The centerpiece of the federal drive toward standardization, based in evaluation of academic success almost entirely through the standardized measurement of reading and math skills, is the 2002 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, signed into law by President George W. Bush. NCLB identifies ten core subjects, art among them, but requires schools to measure and report only math and reading test scores. The push to improve test scores in these two areas has resulted in a decline in instruction in other subject areas, according to research from multiple sources.

A 2008 study from the Center on Education Policy found that among school districts that increased instruction time for English language or math (therefore reducing time spent on other

subjects), 72 percent of the schools reduced the classroom time for one or more of the nontested subjects by at least 75 minutes per week. Among districts reporting a decrease in instruction time since the passage of NCLB, 23 percent reported decreasing the total instructional time for arts and music by 50 percent or more compared to pre-NCLB levels—a greater reduction than felt in social studies, science, and physical education.<sup>21</sup>

A 2004 survey of 965 elementary and secondary principals from New York, New Mexico, Illinois, and Maryland published by the Council for Basic Education examined the curricular changes in schools effected by NCLB and found that 25 percent of schools had decreased their instructional time for the arts, while 75 percent had increased instructional time for math, writing, and reading.<sup>22</sup>

As quantitative analysis has become the preferred or required mode of evaluating the arts—displacing qualitative methods such as portfolio-based assessment—education and arts advocates have shifted their emphasis as well. In the past decade, organizations such as Americans for the Arts and other advocacy groups have turned to statistical analysis to communicate the severity of the crisis in arts education and to create awareness and support for restoring arts funding. Among the main areas of research are studies designed to demonstrate the positive impacts and value of art education for all learners and analyses of the impacts of NCLB on students' education.

### What Now? What Next?

So what is the state of art education now? The results of the 2008 follow-up to the first national Arts Report Card were released in June 2009. The National Assessment of Educational Programs (NAEP) survey reported that 16 percent of students went on a school trip to an art museum, gallery, or exhibition in the last year, down from 22 percent in 1997.<sup>23</sup> In New York City, according to the Department of Education's (DOE's) *Arts in Schools Report* for the most recent completed school year, 2007–08, only 8 percent of elementary schools comply with the state law requiring that instruction be provided in all four art disciplines (visual arts, music, theater, and dance). Only 29 percent of middle school students are provided with the minimum required instruction in art mandated by New York state law. According to the DOE report, in 2006–07, 20 percent of schools did not have an art specialist in any area.<sup>24</sup>

*Out of Tune: A Survey on NYC Students' Access to Arts Education*, published by the Office of the Public Advocate for the City of New York, found that of the schools surveyed in its study, 75 percent of elementary schools offered only one period per week—an average of 45 minutes—of arts education to third graders, despite state regulations recommending that students in grades 1–3 receive the equivalent of five instructional hours of arts education per week.<sup>25</sup>

It concludes, "The DOE report shows that despite a decade-long effort to restore arts education in public schools, a large percentage of New York City public school children still do not receive any or receive only limited arts education."<sup>26</sup>

Data provided by the DOE also shows that schools with the most low-income students offer the least arts education. According to Richard Kessler, executive director of the Center for Arts Education,

Of over one thousand public schools analyzed in 2006–2007, the higher the percentage of low-income students at a school the less likely it is to have an arts teacher and the less likely it is to have students visiting a museum or gallery, contributing work to an art exhibition, attending or participating in a dance, theater or concert performance."<sup>27</sup>

In the absence of arts funding in schools, parent associations have provided substantial funding for arts and other "extra" programs. Although school communities with enough resources to supplement or entirely fund arts programs clearly benefit, few low-income communities have the ability to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars to supplement the budgets of their local schools. Despite the efforts of advocates, it appears that the fight to include and support the arts in every school, without regard to the financial resources of parents, will remain an uphill battle. As reflected in these realities and the DOE data, the message seems to be that art is for the privileged.

Meanwhile, the trend toward provision of arts instruction in public schools by outside arts organizations is becoming a more permanent part of public school art instruction. The DOE's 2006–07 Arts in Schools report states that more than 430 arts and cultural organizations worked in NYC public schools in 2006–07. According to New York City's cultural affairs commissioner, 1,400 nonprofit cultural organizations were prepared to offer learning experiences in city classrooms in 2008.<sup>28</sup> As a result, programs like the New Museum's, and the thousands of other arts programs across the country that serve public schools, will continue to be a vital and essential component of art education in our schools going forward.

## Selected Timeline: Art in Schools, 1975–2009

- 1975** Citywide arts curriculum is established in New York City public schools.
- 1975–76** NYC fiscal crisis; over 14,000 teachers, including a majority of art teachers, are laid off.
- 1978** California passes Proposition 13, cutting property taxes and resulting in dramatic cuts in school funding and arts education.
- 1984** Arts Partners is formed by several NYC agencies: Department of Cultural Affairs, Youth Services, Mayor's Office, and Board of Education; joins with arts organizations to provide arts in the schools.
- 1991** Board of Education data shows that two-thirds of NYC schools have no licensed art or music teacher.
- 1992** Eighteen arts organizations are working with twenty-two school districts through the Arts Partners program.
- 1992** Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) is founded in response to the lack of art teachers in that city's schools (where art teachers were teaching up to 1,400 students per week).
- 1994** National standards for core subjects, including the arts, are established by the US Department of Education.
- 1996** New York State implements a minimum set of requirements in each subject area, including art.
- 1996** NYC is awarded a 12 million dollar arts challenge grant from the Annenberg Foundation. In response, the NYC Board of Education, the Mayor's Office, and the teachers' union (UFT) create the nonprofit Center for Arts Education (CAE), awarding grants to thirty-seven partnerships in the first year.
- 1997** The National Center for Education Statistics releases its first comprehensive findings: "Eighth-Grade Findings from the National Assessment of Educational Progress."
- 1997** NYC hires 500 art and music teachers.
- 1998** In NYC, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani creates a dedicated funding stream for the arts, Project ARTS (Arts Restoration Throughout the Schools).
- 2001** *Arts in Focus: Los Angeles Countywide Arts Education Survey* is published in Los Angeles County, the largest in the country, with 1.7 million students. It finds that 37 percent of school districts have no defined sequential curriculum of arts education in any discipline, at any level, in any of their schools.
- 2002** President Bush signs the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act into law.

2002 NY  
high  
pur  
2007 De  
sch

**Statistics**  
Americans f  
*Annual Arts*  
htt  
*Arts in Focu*  
Art  
*Arts Partners*  
Ed  
Burnaford, G  
*Int*  
NJ  
*The Center f*  
*Out of Tune:*  
Adv

### ENDNOTES

- 1 Barack Ob
- 2 David Mac  
for Americ
- 3 Arthur B. F  
Federal Re  
feds/2006
- 4 Ibid., 11.  
wealthiest
- 5 The term v  
applied in  
Los Angele  
was presen  
the late 19  
space in L

- 2002 NYC Department of Education reduces Project ARTS funding to \$52 million (from a high of \$75 million, or \$63 per student, in 2000 and 2001) and eliminates dedicated purposes for the funds, resulting in a 50 percent reduction in arts education spending.
- 2007 Dedicated arts education funding (Project ARTS) is eliminated in New York City public schools.

**Statistics for the timeline were gathered from the following sources**

Americans for the Arts, [www.americansforthearts.org](http://www.americansforthearts.org)

*Annual Arts in Schools Report, 2007–2008*, New York City Department of Education, available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/Documents/AnnualArtsReport08.pdf>

*Arts in Focus: Los Angeles Countywide Arts Education Survey* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Arts Commission, 2001).

*Arts Partners Program Report, 1992–93* (New York: New York City Board of Education, Office of Educational Research, Brooklyn, 1993).

Burnafor, Gail, Arnold Aprill, and Cynthia Weiss, eds, *Renaissance in the Classroom: Arts Integration and Meaningful Learning, Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education* (Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2001).

*The Center for Arts Education: A Decade of Progress* (New York: CAE, 2007).

*Out of Tune: A Survey on NYC Students' Access to Arts Education* (New York: Office of the Public Advocate for the City of New York, June 2008).

**ENDNOTES**

- 1 Barack Obama was the first US president of acknowledged African descent.
- 2 David Madland and Ruy Teixeira, *New Progressive America: The Millennial Generation* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2009).
- 3 Arthur B. Kennickell, "Currents and Undercurrents: Changes in the Distribution of Wealth, 1989–2004," Federal Reserve Board, Washington, DC, 2006, available online at <http://www.federalreserve.gov/pubs/feds/2006/200613/200613pap.pdf>
- 4 Ibid., 11. In simple terms, the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans control a third of the country's wealth, the next wealthiest 9 percent own another third, and the remaining 90 percent of Americans share the last third.
- 5 The term was borrowed from the field of educational theory, where it emerged in the 1970s and began to be applied in art contexts around 1980 with the exhibition "Multicultural Focus: A Photography Exhibition for the Los Angeles Bicentennial," curated by Sheila Pinkel. Planning for the exhibition began in 1979, and the show was presented at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Barnsdall Park, during the 1980–81 season. Earlier, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Dr Samella Lewis, an art history professor at Scripps College, ran an exhibition space in Los Angeles called Multi-Cul Gallery. The gallery focused on the work of black artists.

- 6 Guillermo Gomez-Peña, "The Multicultural Paradigm: An Open Letter to the National Arts Community," *High Performance* 12 (Fall 1989): 26.
- 7 Holland Cotter, "Beyond Multiculturalism, Freedom?" *New York Times*, July 29, 2001, Arts & Leisure section.
- 8 For three excellent references, see James Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks, eds, *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1989); Christine Sleeter, *Empowerment through Multicultural Education* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991); and Sonia Nieto, *Affirming Diversity* (New York: Longman, 1992).
- 9 Sleeter, *Empowerment*, 10.
- 10 El Anatsui is also included in the section on contemporary African art.
- 11 See Robyn F. Wasson, Patricia L. Stuhr, and Lois Petrovich-Mwaniki, "Teaching Art in the Multicultural Classroom: Six Position Statements," *Studies in Art Education* 31, no. 4 (Summer 1990): 234–46.
- 12 Brian M. Bullivant, "Culture: Its Nature and Meaning for Educators," in Banks and Banks, *Multicultural Education*, 27–65.
- 13 Thomas Crow, *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).
- 14 "Richard Meyer on Art Since 1900," *Artforum* 44, no. 1 (September 2005): 57; review of Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, and Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2004).
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Foster *et al.*, *Art Since 1900*, 642–43.
- 17 Lucy Lippard, *Mixed Blessing: New Art in Multicultural America* (New York: Pantheon, 1990), 7–8.
- 18 Cornel West, "The New Cultural Politics of Difference," in Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Cornel West, eds, *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures* (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 19.
- 19 See *ibid.*, 34.
- 20 Carl Grant and Christine Sleeter, *Turning on Learning: Five Approaches to Multicultural Teaching Plans for Race, Class, Gender, and Disability* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 212.
- 21 *Instructional Time in Elementary Schools: A Closer Look at Changes for Specific Subjects* (Washington, DC: Center on Education Policy, 2008). A copy of the report can be accessed through the website of Americans for the Arts, at [http://www.americansforthearts.org/networks/arts\\_education/arts\\_education\\_015.asp#](http://www.americansforthearts.org/networks/arts_education/arts_education_015.asp#)
- 22 Claus Von Zastrow and Helen Janc, *Academic Atrophy: The Conditions of the Liberal Arts in America's Public Schools* (Washington, DC: Council for Basic Education, 2004); available online at [http://www.americansforthearts.org/information\\_services/arts\\_education\\_community/resource\\_center\\_016.asp](http://www.americansforthearts.org/information_services/arts_education_community/resource_center_016.asp)
- 23 Results are available at [http://nationsreportcard.gov/arts\\_2008/](http://nationsreportcard.gov/arts_2008/). In the survey, 7,900 eighth-grade students were tested. This is compared with assessments in other subjects, such as the 2007 assessment in which the department tested 700,000 students in reading and math, and 29,000 in history.
- 24 *Annual Arts in Schools Report, 2007–2008* (New York: Department of Education, 2008), available online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/Documents/AnnualArtsReport08.pdf>
- 25 *Out of Tune: A Survey on NYC Students' Access to Arts Education* (New York: Office of the Public Advocate for the City of New York, June 2008), 4.
- 26 Ibid., 13.
- 27 Richard Kessler, "Closing the Education Gap," *El Diario/La Prensa*, February 5, 2009.
- 28 *Out of Tune: A Survey on NYC Students' Access to Arts Education*, 11.

FUTU  
THE A  
Where L

CH

The words kept  
now ... We are  
moment match  
and literature o  
with the kind o

Here we  
important, *une*  
on the one han  
material good  
struggle of mar  
to drink. Such  
myriad change  
how best to pre  
exceptionally o

A numb  
resulted in a c  
for multicultur  
immigration, th  
and the centra  
viewing conten  
identity—spec  
emerging platf  
Shifts in our so  
arenas of intell  
contemporary a