

## **The Future of Art in Society**

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Due to the fluid world we live in, it is difficult to make accurate predictions about the future. Twenty years ago no one could have foreseen the inventions we have today, making it is just as difficult to predict what will happen twenty years from now. In the last decade, technology witnessed tremendous growth that exceeded what was previously accomplished in an entire century. This technology turned the world into a small city, which will make it even smaller in the future.

We believe by 2035, the learning environment will continue to be housed in physical spaces. There is an irreplaceable value to direct discussion and engagement in the classroom. Although, we do believe there will be additional resources provided through advanced technology like live online discussions (much like today's world), virtual class sessions, and the use of holograms. On the other hand, we think artists will have wider channels to show their art, and communication with their fans will become easier. Cyberspace will act as an art gallery and audiences will be maintained online. Future arts administration students must consider several thoughts and ideas in their Art in Society course ranging from technology to sustainability in the world.

Our first module question is "What is the impact of technology on art, art worlds and participation?" We collectively decided that it would be best to begin the class with a broad question about one of the most prominent influences in society:

Technology. Technology often defines how society communicates, interacts, and grows. This then leads to how we create, consume and participate in art. The impact of technology on art and art worlds in the past ten years was unpredictable. Trying to

imagine how much more it will impact art in 2035 is difficult to fathom, but the possibilities are endless. The future may bring holograms, teleportation, flying cars, or robots.

Since the students of 2035 grew up in a generation with the iPhone, we would like them to think about the impact technology is having on art. Consumers will have endless access to entertainment and art in their homes, making it a bigger challenge to market the value of a live performance. As Ivey and Tepper write about the ‘curatorial me’, “Handed the capacity to reorganize cultural offerings at will through new devices like the iPod or TiVo, citizens are increasingly capable of curating their own cultural experiences — exploring new types of culture; choosing when and how they want to experience art and entertainment; searching out communities of like-minded fans with whom to dig deeper into the substance of what they see and hear” (2006). All of these devices and means to curating our own art worlds through technology will only grow deeper in breadth. Will technology begin to affect art and art worlds in a more positive or negative way as the impact of technology on our lives increases?

We believe art managers and administrators will have to focus more on the impact and affect technology has on art practices. It is likely to become an integral part of maintaining current audiences or a solution to making art more accessible to a wider audience. Art managers will have access to interact with participants and artists at a new level because of technology, and we must learn the best ways to take advantage of that technology. These trends in technology will likely have a hand in developing new aesthetics in the arts.

Our second module question is “How do big media, celebrities, and advertising companies affect aesthetics?” We believe that the influence of media and advertising on

society will grow exponentially in the next twenty years. These influences have already begun to shape the way society defines aesthetic but will continue to become an essential part of consumerism. Ivey and Tepper explained, "...as new media industries emerged, the United States moved away from thick cultural engagement. As art and art making were integrated less into everyday life, we experienced a type of thin participation, defined more by national celebrities, professionals, experts, spectacle, big media, and passive participation" (2006). Although they later discuss society developing a thicker participation, we believe participation will thin due to the influence of celebrity icons and business moguls. With a rise in exposure to media and advertising through our social media accounts, cellphones, daily commutes, and televisions, society will continue to define aesthetics based on that overexposure. Celebrities on the screen or in politics will become the new critics and sellers of products that might affect aesthesis in the future. Has the rise in such influences cheapened aesthetics? How will this influence continue to progress? We want students to explore how these influences and influencers affect the priority of the artist. Due to the accessibility and constant presence of art, it has become a consumable product that can be purchased and produced at anytime. In twenty years, will the majority of artists focus on quality of art, which may not result in monetary success or focus on quantity of art to profit from mass consumerism? It is unlikely this mass consumerism will only affect the U.S., but rather it will affect our global society.

Our third module question is "How has the expansion of international relations affected art and art worlds?" We predict that there will be a major development in access to international cultures and relations, which will then affect how art worlds are created and how art is produced. Individuals will have access to international art and

culture through an expansion of technology, education, travel, and cultural diversity. Technology will provide experiences by exploring art through virtual tours, holograms, and cross-cultural communications. Artists, consumers, and art managers will have increased access to interact with international art worlds.

Opportunities through education, such as study abroad and exchange programs, the expansion of international resources for students, and a much more diverse population of pupils, will provide a more worldly view of art and culture. The ease of international travel will allow artists to more conveniently observe and interact with other artists and cultures around the world, therefore affecting the art they produce. Additionally, consumers and participants will have more access to opportunities across the world through international art fairs. Art fairs bring together artists, musicians, collectors, curators, administrators, and patrons all in one place, which acts as a catalyst for new and upcoming ideas, projects, and collaborations. The workshops and conferences at these fairs will have live streaming, so those not in attendance, can still access these resources via the Internet. Through these learning opportunities, art administrators will gain more well-rounded, diverse backgrounds, making the field more competitive. As our society and population grows globally, we must consider the affects on the ecosystem.

Our fourth module question is, “How will sustainability affect art in our world?” We believe that sustainability will continue to grow as a national and international trend, so we can only assume it will become a common daily practice over the next twenty years. The focus on sustainability across practices will affect the way art is produced, managed, and consumed. Our question for the students of 2035 will take the idea of sustainability and encourage them to consider how it will, or will not, continue to

impact art, art practices, and art worlds. Students should focus on how sustainability has affected art worlds thus far with things like eco-friendly art installations and pieces, as well as efforts to educate artists on how to be both ecologically and economically thoughtful in the creation of art. Artists are currently using recycled materials to create art pieces, as well as living products like moss, trees, and stones. We also believe the use of digital materials will become more prominent over time, especially as these technologies become easily accessible for the general population. For example, artists will likely use laptops or tablets to create visual art and music. Additionally, art venues or organizations may employ the use of digital programs to reduce paper use. Students should explore how this sustainability will continue in the next twenty years. What steps need to be updated? What practices can be dissolved? What new practices could artists and art participants consider?

In order to extend thinking on these module questions, students will complete a final essay project. Students will draw from each of these questions to conduct an interview with an arts manager. The art manager that they choose must have 15 or more years experience in an arts area of the student's interest. Each student will ask their chosen arts manager about the past and present art world he or she is currently employed, as well as what they predict for the future of their art world. Use of technology is not allowed in this interview, except for contacting the arts manager to set up a time for the interview. Since 2035 will not know a world without technology, we hope to offer a new perspective for these students. They should gain communication and interpersonal skills through these exercises and also gain an understanding of what it may have been like twenty years ago for the arts managers they are interviewing.

Students should include a reflection of the technology-free process, as well as the interview material.

The great artist Pablo Picasso once said, “To me there is no past or future in art. If a work of art cannot live always in the present it must not be considered at all. The art of the Greeks, of the Egyptians, of the great painters who lived in other times, is not an art of the past; perhaps it is more alive today than it ever was.” After discussing the future of art in society, we cannot help but wonder if Picasso would say the same about the current and future art trends and aesthetics affected by each of these influences.