

A Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes

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Abstract

Examined in this research are the application process and produced designs of ‘Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes’ titled “Establishing New Awareness with Land art in Art Education”, which is created and carried out at the bachelor degree level within the scope of project-based education by the project manager in Buca Faculty of Education, Fine Arts Education Department, Painting Main Art Studio Class of 3B Branch in 2016.

This is a structured project. The question raised by this project is: Can we create new awareness in both students and the audience with lines and forms applied upon earth through land art using the application ‘Group Art Project: Land art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes’ within the scope of Painting Main Art Studio Class

This research includes, in line with qualitative research method and techniques, designs produced during the course of the project, an application process, observation of the stages of the project, content analysis and interviews. The project was completed in 4 stages. The first stage (Background Info) involves research and briefing seminars, the second stage deals with designing and determining the stages and, according to designs and arrangements, the natural material to be procured from natural sites and campus yard which will be utilized in the making of land art design; and the third stage consists of obtaining the natural material to be used in the project and formulate plans for their use; determining the practical use of the material; and visual presentations of sketch drawings displaying the first trials. Finally, the fourth stage is concerned with the findings relating to the reflections of the application of the project on the auditors and students.

The chief purpose in the research is to contribute the respective field through an examination of the

creation of new awarenesses, which are to spring from a combination of the Dionysian and Apollonian attitudes - a combination of the ritualistic attitude of Dionysus who unifies with nature and ecstasies and Apollo's rationality deriving from visuality and harmony -, a combination, in sum, of both the cognitive, order-seeking and imaginative, unconsciously-motivated aspects forming the philosophical and artistic background of land art.

Keywords: Land art, Project-Based Education, Dionysian and Apollonian Attitude, Group Art Project.

1. Introduction

The structured project examined within the research, Group Art Project: Land art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes, is a sort wherein the limits of which have been pre-determined by the instructor of the lecture. In this type of artistic project students learn the structure, materials, in short, all the aspects of the project beforehand. In the project, the forms have been conceived through a process of selection using a portion of the natural material, in extensive variety within the natural land, in the plastic arts or visual arts education of bachelor degree level.

“We perceive our environment through forms; traditional or free, yesterday or tomorrow, the one things that does not change is the rule of shaping matter. Of an enormous variety of material in the nature, a specific section is more convenient for efformation than the rest. Humans, as they had grasped the objects and materials that occupy a space within the void, set forth on a process of selection, and tended towards raw materials” (Mülayim, 2006: 191). Raw materials, found in nature, which have not been transformed into an aesthetic work, such materials as rocks, soil, pieces from trees, were included to the technical and practical process according to place of collection, quantity, quality and designs previously created in the art studio process of the project.

The main purpose in visual/plastic arts education, apart from unleashing creativity, is to provide an education of personality and sensitivity. In this art project, too, the objectives included making knowledge into practicable application; bolstering the amount of whatever knowledge and interest each student has regarding land art; as well as helping students develop their aesthetic sensibility and visual perception.

In order for these objectives to be achieved, besides art studio class, planned education programs are required to have each student, who themselves are a part of the nature, to value and take interest in the natural land and the natural in general, to achieve visual thinking in nature and create new designs through

observation, as well as to make invisible visible. All aesthetically wholes or works of art arise through a technical process either simple or complicated. However, technique itself will not suffice for art on its own. Whilst great mastery combined with a sentient technique may produce art, so can the modest with simple technique produce veritable works. What renders an artist and his/her work unique transcends the process of creation, that is, material and technique. Plant, natural product forms of the natural ecological environment, to turn into an artistic product must be converted by man. According to theories concerning creative thinking, the creative individual is aware of his/her environment. Aware individual takes in and accepts knowledge without preselection; and avoids reducing reality. Conversely this individual feels with all of his/her sense organs and listens with heart. Creative person hears all forms and speaks with his/her body (Sungur, 1992:48) According to perceptual theory, motivation for creativity is based on the need to communicate with the outside world. In his book *Metamorphosis*, 1959, Ernest Schachtel explains this theory as follows;

“Creativity stems from a perceptual hunger that allows for one to approach an object through various and different points of view. This perceptual action exists together with intensive interest and cannot be restrained by rules that govern conventional thought” (trans. Sungur, 1992: 50-51) In light of the perceptual theory the main purpose in this research is; - in the formation of the content of creative applications of group art project which will be exhibited to audience in a bachelor’s degree (junior) level within the scope of Painting Main Art Studio Class in the second semester of the year 2016 on the natural land of the faculty campus - is to contribute the respective field through an examination of the creation of new awarenesses, which are to spring form a combination of the Dionysian and Apollonian attitudes - a combination of the ritualistic attitude of Dionysus who unifies with nature and ecstasies and Apollo’s rationality deriving from visuality and harmony -, a combination, in sum, of both the cognitive, order-seeking and imaginative, unconsciously-motivated aspects forming the philosophical and artistic background of land art.

2. Problem and Method

The question raised by this project is: Can we create new awareness in both students and the audience with lines and forms applied upon earth through land art? As the center method in the formation of this project Dionysian and Apollonian attitudes that constitute the philosophical and artistic background of the land art were applied to recreate with lines and forms through land art the harmony, beauty and imaginary (symbolic) mysteries hidden in the natural material and land, obtained from the Campus Yard-Natural

Land of Buca Faculty of Education which, though we inhabited by us, remains unnoticed. It is expected that participant students and the rest of the audience will acquire new awarenesses in the project through a combination of the ritualistic attitude of Dionysus who unifies with nature and ecstasies and Apollo's rationality deriving from visuality and harmony; a combination, in sum, of both the cognitive, order-seeking and imaginative, unconsciously-motivated aspects.

In the designs produced within the scope of the project, a contemporary, artistic, original, creative, and subjective interpretation is realised following the theme of the concept of an apparition or 'trace', belonging to post-60s' contemporary land art, - and not as representing a definite image (figure, flower, etc.) -, bringing into view a thought or concept unseen. Each student have consequently been engaged in research, observation and examination concerning the selection of useful material among a lot of irregular and unordered substance scattered around the natural land.

In the course of the study, starting from the process of creation of the project's idea, methods included the seminar on land art given by the project's managing instructor in the art studio class; a creative brainstorm; library research; three stages of all four observation and briefing stages; and before the creation process and the outdoor project application, taking the opinions and direct observations of the students in written form for the evaluation pre-shop class applications. Activity research method had been employed in terms of participant observation and qualitative researches in order to examine the development of "learning how to learn" attitudes and the ability to link theoretical knowledge with application through the guide of experience in the process of gathering, - applying and - transferring knowledge in education, with a population of 10 students from the branch 3B of Painting Main Art Studio Class.

2.1. Project Stages and Application

The project consists of 4 stages.

1. Stage (Background-Information): Research, Reading, Watching, Interview. Land art, Alternative Pursuits in Contemporary Art and Education, presentation of a briefing seminar with the theme Reading of Exemplary Work. Written and oral briefings regarding Apollonian and Dionysian attitudes in art and, especially, Land Art.

2. Stage: Designing, Determining

Students form the informational background on the subject in the 1st stage. In this stage, too, they are asked to determine and design the type of work they are required to produce. In this process, materials and

the setting of the work they designed have been determined. The process have been completed wherein the natural spaces that will be used in the production of land art design and natural material to be obtained from campus garden according to designs and arrangement.

3. Stage: All the students participating in the project had obtained the required natural material. They had planned how to use these materials. In this stage, the natural material to be used have been tested. Determination of usefulness; throughout the project a course of determination for compliance have been conducted. In this process. trials have been carried out. Sketch drawings reflecting the first trials, as well as the visual presentation have been prepared. A first evaluation have been conducted following the trials. The students have been asked whether they would succeed with the application techniques and materials they decided on to proceed with. A review having been performed, following the completion of the projects' stages, each student participating in the project have made a prior presentation and carried out an application on the date 12 May 2016.

The chief application have been performed on the set date (June 2nd, 2016) as official permits had been granted and announcements made (posters, etc.)

4. Stage: Reflection. Prior to a single-day project application to be realized on the Campus yard on the date June the 2nd, 2016 and after the Shop Class pre-project application, a written and oral statement have been asked of the students regarding reflections on land art works produced in the project and opinions concerning the first three stages - direct observations have also targeted the same feedback. On the day the project application will be carried out each student will place the forms they had designed on spots previously determined. These works were conceived as material to be dissolved in the nature in time. In the Main Project application, photos will be taken to exhibit all the land art designs more permanently in future, and along with prior sketch drawings these photographs will be displayed in the Art Gallery of the Fine Arts Education Department of Buca Education Faculty on the 8th of June, 2016. Photographs of the project's works will be taken to Rees Pavilion Education Museum for permanent display.

3. Findings and Interpretation

Within the scope of the project starting with the 1st stage, a contemporary, artistic, original, creative, and at times baffling, Postmodern and subjective interpretation is observed, in the designs of the Painting Main Art Studio Class students of the participant 3B branch, following the theme of the concept of an apparition or 'trace', belonging to post-60s' contemporary land art, - and not as representing a definite

image (figure, flower, etc.) -, bringing into view a thought or concept unseen. Each student have consequently been engaged in research, observation and examination concerning the selection of useful material among a lot of irregular and unordered substance scattered around the natural land.



Picture 1. Art Studio pre-application, detailed image and sketch drawing of the student participating in the ‘Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes’ titled “Establishing New Awareness with Land art in Art Education.”



Picture 2. Art Studio pre-application and sketch drawing of the student participating in the ‘Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes’ titled “Establishing New Awareness with Land art in Art Education.”

In the formation of the project's content, designs have been reviewed in terms of Dionysian and Apollonian attitude forming the philosophical and artistic background of land art. The most important point in the studies was the combination of the ritualistic attitude of Dionysus who unifies with nature and ecstasies and Apollo's rationality deriving from visuality and harmony. The combination of both the cognitive, order-seeking and imaginative, unconsciously-motivated aspects could be obtained in the works thanks to the abundance (bird feathers acquired from the zoo in the campus, tree branches on the campus yard, leaves, pine cones, snail shells, rocks etc.) of the natural material as desired. A particular attention was paid to make certain that no unnatural material was used in the works. By this measure the aim is to create in the students as well as the audience, new awareness, and sensibility towards environment and the aesthetic, revealing the natural landscape and beauties that go by unnoticed even though encountered on a daily basis. This goal will be accomplished when the designs produced in Painting Main Art Studio Class are exhibited as the main project application in the campus yard on June the 2nd with 3rd Faculty Spring Festival.



Picture 3. Art Studio Class pre-application and sketch drawing of the student participating in the 'Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes' titled "Establishing New Awareness with Land art in Art Education."



Picture 4. Art Studio Class pre-application and sketch drawing of the student participating in the 'Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes' titled "Establishing New Awareness with Land art in Art Education."

In this research it was observed that students, by only utilizing the natural material found in the yard of Faculty Campus, could reproduce, through land art, the hidden harmony, beauties, imaginary (symbolic) mystery, with lines and forms either in the mentioned project or in the rest under the guidance of instructor/project manager, as part of the contemporary art education with this group art project (structured).

In these studies, which will be conducted again on the campus yard with the same procedure, in using the natural environment as the most important element determining the form in the land art, 1) creation of new mediums by the artist or 2) altering a greater environment that existed before, have been prioritized as methods. Elements that exist on their own in the natural environment (trees, grass, rocks and soil etc.) will be arranged in the placement of the works according to the visibility and size of the designs as well as contrasts and value.



Picture 5. Art Studio Class pre-application and sketch drawing of the student participating in the ‘Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes’ titled “Establishing New Awareness with Land Art in Art Education.”



**3B Resim Anasanat Atölye IV
ÇEVRESEL SANATLA YENİ FARKINDALIKLAR OLUŞTURMA
PROJE UYGULAMASI**

Proje Yürütücüsü ve Katılımcıları:

Doç. Dr. C. Arzu **AYTEKİN**

Nur **ACAR**
Merih **ALTINOLUK**
Tulin **BATI**
Çiğdem **ÇAVDAR**
Yiğit **ÇELİK**
Yağmur **ÇINAR**
Aslı **GÜZEL**
Asera **KIZAR**
Melik **SÖZER**
Dilek **YILMAZ**



Tarih: 12 Mayıs 2016 (perşembe), Yer: B.E.F. Dekanlık Binası Yanı - Kampüs Bahçesi
Proje Uygulaması: 09" - 14", Açılış: 14."

Picture 6. 2016 “Establishing New Awareness with Land Art in Art Education Project” application poster.



Picture 7. Working with the Group the Land Art Project

Opinions of 10 participant students as to the project have been received through a feedback form. The opinions of these students regarding preparations for the shop class, process of application, course and products of the ‘Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes’ titled “Establishing New Awareness with Land art in Art Education.”

Overall, students have informed us that involvement of philosophy with art and the variety of natural material used during studies made them enjoy the process, and that with limited natural material exquisite results have been achieved. One of the students who had used tree branches and leaves, and remarked that life is hidden within eternity and spiral cycle, and that he/she could feel what was behind light in his/her soul, tells that he/she had unified everything with nature within him/her as a part of the nature in his/her design (Image 5) in the process of study. His/her opinions regarding the project are as follows;

“I liked this project very much, because to produce an artistic description with naturally existing material, and to reveal the beauties and mysteries of nature is indeed quite a success. The most efficient area where this could be attained is nature. The awareness has been created, and this could be used even to further reveal the nature lost within modern world.”

In another student’s project process, course and product — in his/her opinions as to the project as well — this meeting of contemporary art and environment has been reviewed as a remarkable and impressive project. This student used similar expressions with his/her peers: “I enjoyed this immensely and prepared my work under much thoughtful impressions in a great zest. Its presentation has been another source of delight and pleasure.”

The students have been asked to evaluate their designs in regard to the use of Dionysian and Apollonian attitudes which form the philosophical and artistic bases of Land Art and this project. One of

the interviews said: “Thinking that Dionysian and Apollonian attitudes hold a place in human relationships, and within humans themselves, and knowing myself more prone to a Dionysian attitude, I wanted my study be predominantly Dionysian.

4. Conclusion

Land art, a progressive artistic attitude, - also known as: Nature art, Earth art, Environmental Art, ‘ecologic art’ and ‘art in nature’ -, which have formulated the conceptual framework of application process and project designs of ‘Group Art Project: Land Art in Dionysian and Apollonian Attitudes’ titled “Establishing New Awareness with Land art in Art Education,” is an art movement centered on abolishing the limitations between traditional painting, sculpture and other similar disciplines; containing infinite amount of material; orientation toward nature; products of all surface, volume and site art on the scale of natural space; and the ideal of bolstering human awareness for the preservation of nature.

In this project the following have been achieved on bachelor’s degree level: properties of works of avant-garde art in US in 60s; non-art or anti-form movements of contemporary art; inability to express with any artistic -ism; human intervention on vast spaces in nature; usage of rocks, soil and a number of natural materials; diking in nature; land burial; and even using fertilizers, rock or human built environmental objects in the Gallery; working in harmony with nature using natural material; and transference from nature towards art. That Land Art pieces disappear, that land-art is a movement protesting the indoor and gallery organization, that works are literally unsellable, inability to reform the prior arrangement — all of which exist in the students’ works participating in this study.

Due to its difference from traditional art works, which could be distinguished in a single glance, and that its size could only be grasped by strolling around its structure and or through a photoshoot in a plane (because of its large scale), Land art, designed as natural or built environment art, requires a space where the audience is remarkably effective (Like a Faculty Campus). Opposing the commercialization of art; reorientation towards nature; using land art as a common tool for enhancing human awareness and the evaluation and application of such art project still maintain its significant position in art education.

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