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“ON THE SHOULDERS’ OF GIANTS”: SUSTAINABLE ART DIALOGUE

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*Contextualising Nobel Prize Teachers Summit, Stockholm, 2023***Resume:**

This paper, shared amongst colleagues at the Nobel Prize Teachers Summit in Stockholm 2023, delves into the intersection of Art Practice and Art Theory, has far-reaching implications for sustainability education. By examining the eco-conscious underwater biodiversity themes prevalent in Cecilia's work and dissecting them through Paul Atkinson's rigorous theoretical lens, the paper illuminates a powerful pedagogical approach. This innovative synergy between creative expression and academic analysis not only deepens students' understanding of environmental issues but also empowers them to convey complex sustainability concepts through artistic means. The paper showcases how incorporating such interdisciplinary methods into Sustainability Education (SDG4) can inspire a new generation of environmentally aware artists, imaginative scientists and thinkers. This transformative pedagogical strategy, intertextually linked to war time crisis management of Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) for Ukraine, not only equips researchers with the skills to address pressing global challenges but also nurtures a profound sense of creative ownership and social responsibility, with the aim of igniting the capacity to drive positive change in some stagnant teaching regimes and sustainable practices in the world. The implications of this research and its originality were affirmed by Nobel laureate panels in 2021 during the Covid19 pandemic, highlighting how art in education can serve as a catalyst for fostering a more sustainable and culturally conscious society.

Key words:

sustainability education, creative expression, complex sustainability concepts through artistic means, social responsibility, the Nobel Prize Teacher Summit.

Анотація:

Ю Сесілія В. 余詠詩, Пол Аткінсон. “НА ПЛЕЧАХ ВЕЛЕТНІВ”: СТАЛИЙ МИСТЕЦЬКИЙ ДІАЛОГ.

У контексті Саміту освітян Нобелівської премії Стокгольм, 2023

Ця стаття, представлена колегам на Саміті освітян Нобелівської премії в Стокгольмі 2023 року, присвячена перетину мистецької практики та теорії мистецтва та має далекосяжні результати для освіти з питань сталості. Досліджуючи теми екологічної свідомості підводного біорізноманіття, поширені в роботах Сесілії, й аналізуючи їх через теоретичну призму Пола Аткінсона, стаття висвітлює потужний педагогічний підхід. Ця інноваційна синергія між творчим самовираженням й академічним аналізом не тільки поглиблює розуміння студентами проблем навколишнього середовища, але й дає їм змогу передавати складні концепції сталого розвитку за допомогою художніх засобів. У статті показано, як включення таких міждисциплінарних методів в освіту сталого розвитку (SDG4) може надихнути нове покоління екологічно обізнаних митців, творчих вчених і мислителів. Ця трансформаційна педагогічна стратегія, інтертекстуально пов'язана з кризовим управлінням нематеріальною культурною спадщиною (ІСН) в Україні під час війни, не лише надає дослідникам навичок вирішення нагальних глобальних викликів, але й виховує глибоке почуття творчої власності та соціальної відповідальності з метою посилити здатність сприяти позитивним змінам у деяких уповільнених режимах навчання та стійких практиках у світі. Результати цього дослідження та його оригінальність схвалено комісією нобелівських лауреатів у 2021 році під час пандемії Covid19, що підкреслює, як мистецтво в освіті може слугувати каталізатором для розвитку більш сталого та культурно свідомого суспільства.

Ключові слова:

навчання сталості, творче вираження, складні поняття сталості через засоби мистецтва, соціальна відповідальність, Саміт освітян Нобелівської премії.

Introduction. In the heart of Stockholm, Sweden, amidst the crisp October air of 2023, I found myself immersed in the enlightening embrace of the Nobel Prize Teacher Summit. This extraordinary event unfolded across the illustrious halls of the Nobel Prize Museum, the venerable Town Hall, and the Conference Centre, where luminaries of peace and knowledge convened. Here, I had the distinct privilege of conversing with Nobel Peace laureates, culminating in witnessing, in situ, the global press announcement of the Nobel Science Laureates 2023-2024.

While convention might expect me to present this narrative in a detached and impartial tone, I choose instead to speak from the depths of my own experience and provide the context and indeed, the intertextuality leading to the birth of this paper. The seeds of this commitment were sown during my postgraduate years, guided by the sagacious Professor John Fyfe (CBE). He, among the global minds that advised Al Gore, and in collective brilliance, shaped the very bedrock of the IPCC, a legacy crowned with the Nobel Peace Prize of 2007.

In those early days, little did I fathom that my quantitative foray into the budding field of sustainability, would lead me to the vibrant halls of

Tsinghua University in Beijing. It was there, in an intercontinental exchange of ideas, that I conversed with a young scholar fresh from Princeton by the name of Gong Gang. A day-long symphony of thoughts, delving into the limitations of stochastic regression, and the inherent challenge of quantifying the global tapestry of Sustainability. In this dance of intellect, our lingua franca was English, bridging the dialectical chasm between us as Gang's native Mandarin and my fluent Hong Kong Cantonese.

Unbeknownst to us then, these conversations would be etched into the annals of academic history. My mentor's guidance and my modest contributions would interlace, forming threads woven into the grand tapestry that bore the Nobel laurels for sustainability in 2007. Only in recent years did I learn that the same young scholar, with whom I shared that memorable day, would contribute to another illustrious calculations, that formed the 2020 Nobel Prize in Economics. In retrospect I feel a little guilty that I did not meticulously review the 800 pages he shared, wishing for my trans-cultural feedback, in our early research days...

Fate, it seems, had a hand in uniting kindred spirits. Through the upheaval of a global pandemic,

amidst the ceaseless pursuit of United Nations objectives, my role as a professional artist and a CSO Ambassador at UN Geneva took a backseat. A resurgence of purpose led me home to sustainability and culture research. Here, I continued my sustainable inquiry around the cultural and intangible facets that a decade later, continued to elude the grasp of classical economists. Thus, a transdisciplinary vista opened, demanding a more encompassing holistic pedagogical approach.

At the Nobel Prize Summit of 2021, familiar Laureates' faces greeted me – Peter Doherty from Australia, and Joseph Stiglitz from the USA, after a decade immersed in the world of Sustainable strategic crisis management of climate change, their unanimous chorus resounded: artists and creators held the power to counteract the deluge of misinformation, to lend qualitative truth to the empirical. Yet, they confessed perplexity and bemused ignorance as to how was this to be achieved? As I returned to the Nobel Prize Teacher Summit in 2023, I witnessed a hopeful and enlightened shift in Swedish education curriculum. Art and creative expression found their way into the heart of school curriculum, breathing life into the profound manifestation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) as ICHs into daily teaching habits of future generations.

A serendipitous twist led me back to my esteemed academic kin at Monash University, a gifted philosopher of art aesthetics, Lecturer and Author of seminal academic textbooks on the social philosophy of the visual arts: Paul Atkinson Ph.D. Sixteen years of silence dissolved as our paths converged at the juncture of art, Nobel winning literature theory, and its profound impact on human progress.

In this reunion, a synchronicity unfurled, merging our insights into the very fabric of Nobel theories-based contemplation. Together, we embarked on a shared quest, poised before the question posed by the Nobel panel: how do art and theory stir the human spirit, igniting the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom? How do these embodiments of cultural evolution endure across generations, traversing time and space, transcending into ephemeral beyond being mere physical artefacts?

It is in the spontaneous dance of creativity, both intangible and ethereal, that we glimpsed our purpose. Through meticulous discourse analysis and ethnography, we seek to trace the interplay between art, the artist, and academic knowledge, in an intricate dance of reflexive feedback loops. In this dance, we hope to find answers that have eluded even the most erudite Nobel winning minds of our time.

In this grand tableau, the essence of pedagogy meets the crucible of crisis management, for when adversity strikes, it is not only the physical that

crumbles, but the intangible fabric of culture, faith, and expression. Here, the rights to speech, belief, and academic freedom become keystones, anchoring the human experience beyond mere survival. These are all intangible values, at risk, in the current war and war crimes committed against the highest echelon of Ukrainian academia; not least of which are marked by the death of esteemed scholars from the National Academy of Science in the brutal hand of a foreign dictator.

And so, we find ourselves at the precipice of inquiry, poised before the boundless expanse of human creativity, its intimate dance with nature, and its transcendent impact on our shared world. These are the queries that echo through the halls of Nobel laureates, resonating with the pursuit of knowledge that knows no bounds.

Theories as the undercurrent of our pedagogical dialogue. Because our paper utilised a small vignette of our creative dialogues, we will briefly cover the macro definitions of ICH and SDGs, with strategic emphasis for those who will have the important task of safeguarding Ukraine's Intangible Pedagogical Cultural Heritage. We do so, knowing that this is one of the most urgent areas of managing the crisis in education and take this opportunity to contribute to the macro work of my colleagues who are the civil society co-winners of Nobel Peace Prize 2022.

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

ICH is "living culture" that is viable and sustainable (UNESCO Text..., 2003) because they are continually practiced by community stakeholders. ICH includes both inherited traditions and contemporary collaborative cultural practices in creative response to their environments (Bak et al., 2018). UNESCO' (UNESCO Text..., 2003) Convention governs the safeguarding of ICH. Where World Heritage Convention (Carducci, 2008) deals with physical, tangible world heritage (e.g., Pyramids of Egypt), ICH is focussed on the Intangible process of cultural continuance. Hence ICH is a system of tracking traditions, living expressions transmitted trans-generationally (Skounti, 2020). UNESCO catalogued many cultural practices into "domains of ICH" with bigdata. The list of domains is representative, not comprehensive, to encourage diversity and inclusivity. The boundaries between domains are fluid and variable between communities.

The 5 domains in the Framework of the UNESCO ICH conventions (UNESCO Text..., 2003) are:

Domain 1: Oral Traditions and Expressions: oral language-based vehicle of ICH transmission like chants, oral storytelling, proverbs, riddles, songs, theatrical performances, and poetry etc.

Domain 2: Performing Arts: The arts range from vocal and instrumental music, dance, and theatre, to

pantomime etc. This includes the transmission of creating the physical support for the arts.

Domain 3: Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events: e.g., World Expos (76) that showcase many social practices, rituals, and festive events as habitual activities from all over the world that reaffirm cultural identities, worldviews, and memory of history.

Domain 4: Knowledge and Practices concerning Nature and the Universe: This includes knowledge, knowhow, skills, practices, and representations developed by communities through their understanding and interactions with Nature.

Domain 5: Traditional Craftsmanship: the 2003 ICH Convention focus on practices, methods, skills, and knowledge that enable craftsmanship, and its continued transmission through the ages, rather than preserving the artefacts.

The domains are inter-related and impacts across the full range of practices. It is the disparity in power through community diversification and participatory manifestation that determines which ICHs are in need of “safeguarding” by UNESCO.

These are pre-existing sets of real time implot-maps, generated by UNESCO scholars with big data offering a dynamic visualisation map. *See below:

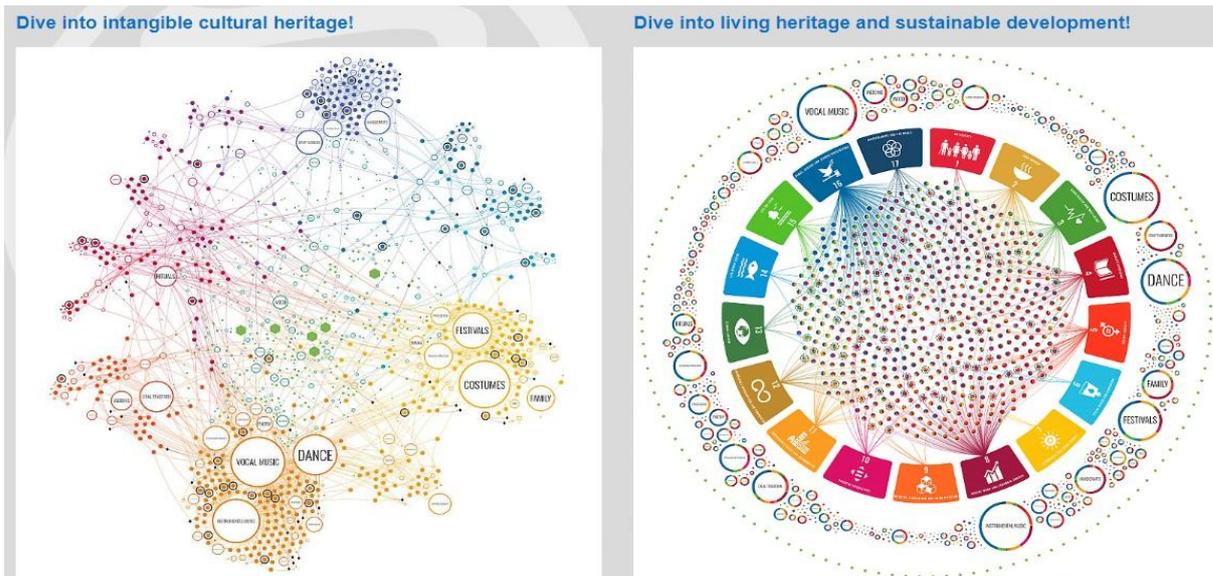


Figure 1: Screengrab Implot big data of current ICH list interacting with UN 17 SDGs + UNSDR bigdata plots. Source: ich.unesco.org

UN Sustainable Education Development Goal (UN SDG4 Education).

The 2030 Agenda about 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Yu, 2020), ratified by all Member States of the United Nations in 2015, aimed “to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to provide quality education so as to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the inclusive empowerment; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources.” (Keitumetse, 2006)

Our discourse purposely treats SDG4 as Interdependent with all other SDGs because that is the holistic way UN SDGs were conceived in the first instance.

From the perspective of UN global risk/crisis management, peace and security are crucial to attain planetary sustainability. Some scholars argued that “living heritage” is the pedagogical building blocks for peace and social cohesion when it promotes a humanitarian value (Keitumetse, 2006). In Chapter VI of the UNESCO Operational Directives for the Implementation of the 2003 ICH Convention (10),

three dimensions of linkage between ICH and SDGs were stated as “roadmaps”. The main

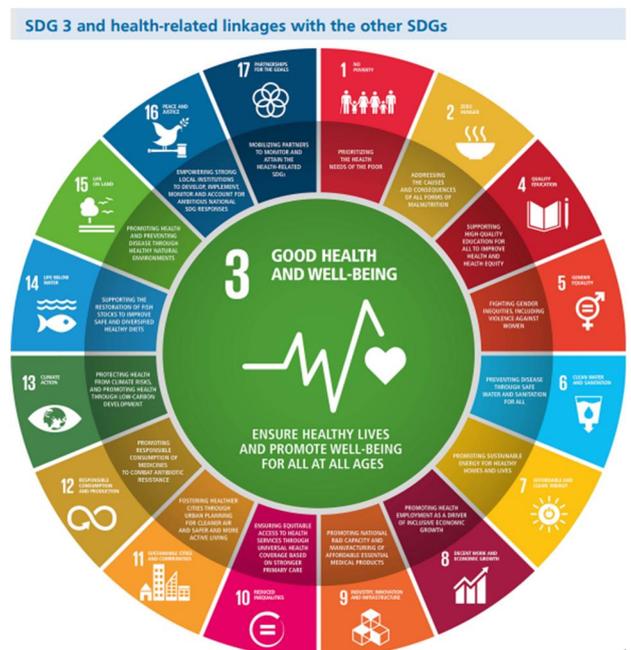


Figure 2: World Health Organisation SDG3, Background paper for the regional technical consultation, 2017 India

problem of managing the current pedagogical crisis is tracing “living culture” and the grave consequences of ICH-destruction on SDGs (9, 1) when we fail to do so.

Multi-disciplinary non-thematic Pedagogical Approach.

We intentionally refrained from assigning thematic labels to our work while leaving pedagogical labels open to the reader to encourage a more inclusive and flexible interpretation of the content. By avoiding narrow thematic classifications, we enable readers to engage with the material on their terms, allowing them to draw connections and insights that resonate with their unique perspectives and educational objectives. This approach promotes a dynamic and adaptive learning experience, where educators and learners alike can extract value from the material in ways that are most relevant to their specific contexts. It also encourages a broader dialogue within the pedagogical community, fostering creativity and innovation in how these ideas can be applied and integrated into diverse educational settings. In essence, our decision to maintain open pedagogical labels reflects a commitment to inclusivity, adaptability, and the empowerment of

educators and learners to shape the educational discourse according to their needs and aspirations.

Art in Pedagogical Dialogue.

As a professional art practitioner and an art aesthetic intellectual, we niched into a specific phenomenon of “spontaneous extemporary transmission” of Art; especially the power of art to ignite what the chair of UNESCO Tiago, a music anthropologist, described as “The Burbuwax Effect” (Pinto, 2018). He noted that “any community member involved immediately knows her or his role in a cultural ad hoc action” so that collectively the community is empowered to infuse meaning, transmit and transform an extemporary ICH performance, manifesting spontaneously. To clarify, the starting point of our pedagogical dialogue posits that while there are no exact units to measure ICH-transmission, and that there are complex dynamics signifying the “flux” of Intangible/Tangible ICH-manifestations. The following excerpt of our dialogue using an Artwork as a focuser, painted by the first author Yu, which was presented at the UN before Board members of UNESCO and UNGNEC for an internal observance of UN World Oceans Day 2022. (See Art 1 and Art 2 fig.)



Art 1:

Title: Under water motion. 1 of 11

by Cecilia W Yu 余詠詩

Santorini, Cyclades islands, Greece, 2021-2022

Dimension: 60cm x 90cm each

Medium: Pouring liquid paint that dries to Translucent opalescent, Aerosol paint (graffiti wild style NYC blend technique to create Ombre), Acrylics and Chinese ink: White and Black (splash and arm/hand/brush motions, classic southern calligraphy school free style technique) with 22K gold accent (the malleability is important as opposed to 14 or 18K) Or Silver sterling accent.

**Art 2:****Title: Under water motion. 2 of 11**

by Cecilia W Yu 余詠詩

Santorini, Cyclades islands, Greece, 2021-2022

Dimension: 60cm x 90cm each

Medium: Pouring liquid paint that dries to Translucent opalescent

Aerosol paint (graffiti wild style NYC blend technique to create Ombre)

Acrylics and Chinese ink: White and Black (splash and arm/hand/brush motions, classic southern calligraphy school free style technique) with 22K gold accent (the malleability is important as opposed to 14 or 18K) Or Silver sterling accent

Excerpts of Art Dialogue:

(CC) Cecilia's art practice, characterized by her innovative use of multimedia techniques and deep exploration of personal and societal themes, serves as a vibrant canvas upon which (PA) Paul's art theory finds its foundation. While Cecilia embodies the practical aspect of artistic expression, Paul delves into the theoretical underpinnings, dissecting the historical, cultural, and psychological dimensions of art. Their symbiotic relationship bridges the gap between creative production and critical analysis, offering invaluable insights for pedagogical studies.

**(start of Art dialogue excerpts)*

CC: About 2yrs ago, I found myself telling a group of garrulous Nobel scientists, annoyed by fake news killing all trust in scientific data during the pandemic, in a side group at a Nobel Prize Summit 2021 that they are romanticising what Art

can do to “unbox” minds, and predicted that if they allowed Academia to keep going on the current instrumentalist course, all they will give the world is

... Lots of Scientists producing art just as painful and horrible as any other random group of amateurs in the world would...

The first world's refusal to see “Art and Artists” as specialists, no less than Scientists or Lawyers or Pro Athletes etc... was why I said that “It cannot be done, as your National Academies imagine!”. By using their current methods and a linear and dichotomous approach as a mode of enquiry (see Stanford experiment ending in unsafe space for diversity at Nobel Prize Summit 2023). It will not give them the results they want with Art! The disrespect and grafting of artist as marketing gimmicks must stop, before anything useful will evolve!

PA: It is true that art is a form of specialisation that involves significant periods of study and a kind

of sensitivity to materials not found in other professions. However, in acting as a specialisation it also deals with particular modes of appearing that operate at a number of levels. You are always dealing in your own work with how materials respond to human activity and gesture and in doing so reveal different phenomenal forms. Although it is quite different to science, you are still tracking material changes and, in this sense, the artist's action has a contribution to make to sustainability. This is something that has been addressed in anthropology by Tim Ingold (Ingold, 2011), who talks about the importance of how various human movements and practices intersect with natural movements and environments.

I guess it is your role through art to communicate change as an aesthetic event not necessarily as a repeatable event.

CC: Yes. Spot on. But unfortunately for the world so far, they have inversed your articulation with the emphasis on sustainability's scientific impact-based monitoring. Some in research wanted Art as aesthetic window-dressing for their delimited narratives. It is trying to control by force majeure; pulling off the wings of the butterfly to force it to fly! That is how I experienced the horrors of an industrialist business school like Wbs. So, *explaining why* that is so unworkable, as a practicing Artist and Sustainability Economist (IASE) is my unique contribution.

PA: I would be interested to hear more about how you think your work intersects with a sustainability narrative. Is it the materials, forms or the interpellation of the viewer that invokes sustainability?

CC: My project is well endorsed because the majority of the Nobel Panels in 2021 agreed that artists need to lead the vision for Sustainability implementations. The reason has an underlying western idealism about artists championing Truth, Trust and Hope.

However, I am more aligned with the idea that, creatively and art acumen-wise, *all the art I do, is a time-capsule of a particular sets of experiences, intangibles, emotions, aesthetics. It is energy of the moment/age, like taking down dictation. So, my art and my collaborations are "packages" of the spirit of the current Age of Climate Crisis and its potential transcendence.*

PA: Taking snapshots of the age is a form of temporal tracking, although it does not give way to prediction. Science has to address what will be through repeatable experiments; something that never burdens art. To register the particularity of change, including changes in the human relationship with the environment has a very important role in coming to terms with the magnitude of large-scale

change, such as climate change. We need to be able to place ourselves in its movement, and not just as an anthropological agent.

I can see that you are interested in the relationship between time and inscription and the general movement of bodies through time. The clip from Wong Kar-wai's *2046* that you refer to focuses on the sensuous aspects of time passing. Time is not just a collection of dates, objects and events, but a process of continual change that evinces its own beauty. If you are writing on sustainability, how a landscape changes can be plotted quantitatively, but the change itself has a form and beauty that is not reducible to a quantitative description.

In reference to my own work on time-lapse photography and plants (Atkinson, 2022), we have to address speed differentials in our engagement with nature. For the climate change debate, this concerns the rapid movements of the Anthropocene and how they intersect with the slower movements of biological and evolutionary time. As already discussed, speed also has an aesthetic, formal value that can also be brought into the communication of change. Speed is also a means of rethinking what it is to our humanity in relation to other species. We often neglect other forms of life because they do not align with our way of moving in the world.

CC: Great interdisciplinary theoretical observation! For me it's more than form and beauty. Time, art and speed are about arising and dissolving, their movement and intertextually.

PA: Although art deals with the ephemeral, as you note, the arising and dissolution of appearances, I still think it can affect change to some degree insofar as it changes human dispositions towards nature, or what it means to see nature. However, it does not work so well if it is just an empty form of messaging that reproduces what is already been announced by scientists, politicians, and the like. It cannot be purely illustrative. If the message is foregrounded, art can lose its aesthetic function and just becomes another communication channel; in which case it will never truly compete with social media.

(Pausing to reflect)

PA: Yesterday I was thinking about the time of colour in an Yves Klein exhibition at the Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain in Nice, and how this relates to how we engage with our environment. We tend to see the world instrumentally in terms of objects and their uses, and sometimes simple phenomenal and material features demand a new form of attention, one that recognises nature's fragility or interconnection.

His granular and deep blues create art objects without an easily perceptible surface, and because the eye wanders, they must operate in a different time to how we see the world in terms of objects,

where colours are contained by an outline. This has led to a rethinking of Cezanne's late work, where the distinctiveness of many of the outlines does not allow a proper engagement with the phenomenal time of the surface. In many respects, the watercolours work better serve his aims because they reveal the movement and interconnection between materials.

(Pausing to reflect)

CC: I had a look at Yves Klein. The early vanguard of Chinoiserie in Europe always feels very ethnocentrically appropriative for me. Even his patent “blue” is actually a familiar *blue* pigment commonly used by artisans in Far Eastern porcelain productions of his time! But I give him credit for being an early cultural “bridge” between East-West.

The nature of the pigment is very *fast*, quick drying. It is the preferred medium of Far Eastern art. It was only when some of the techniques moved continent via the old silk roads that what you see as the European “opaque density” of medium (for me) became obstructive and burdensome to the perception of time/space/movements!

(Short pause)

When I did my Masterclass at Michael Angelo's old school, it was a sponsored art development trip; I met one of the conservators of the Sistine Ceiling. We hung out for a bit, and it was clear to me that the use of egg white mixed into the vegetable pigments were the main shift in medium that were designed to retain that “light, glowing, translucent” quality, in practice. I spent a lot of time with one of their Master Conservator/Artists exchanging practice ideas on this one point.

PA: My comments on Yves Klein were just passing thoughts after seeing the exhibition. The comments could have just as easily been directed at the work of Anish Kapoor. What is important is the degree to which dense colour undermines the capacity to see outlines, and therefore undermines the relationship between an outline and an object, and in turn the marking of time by objects. Using different materials asks viewers to rethink their relationship with materiality and to recognise the limits of some realist approaches to nature.

On this topic, I am really interested to hear about what you are doing with the new high-tech paints, and how they introduce new forms of translucency. The change in materials has led to some quite significant changes in artistic form, something that you have mentioned before in relation to pictograms.

CC: I can speak of this through my time engaging with Graffiti NYC Bronx side. My art partner Kellist is one of the original seminal Subway Art Style Master. We spent 8 years in intense close dialogue trying to come to terms with a calligraphy

and art fusion that enabled that translucent quality in the Far Eastern medium. He really struggled until he told his commercial paint industry sponsors to come up with some translucent spray paint. In response, he did a giant piece in Barcelona for a permanent collection, going for broke with the translucent spray tailored for his wild style, so finally after 5 decades of painting, he got closest to the “ethereal” feel to his giant Graffiti Lettering....

Recently, I toyed with ways of using 3D paint mixed with gel medium to give acrylics that egg white tempura liminality, but I went with smaller pieces (artwork) to see how it goes.

PA: What you also say about the translucency is so pertinent, especially the use of tempera, as translucency must depend on the medium. I have been reading articles on absorption speeds in watercolour that is associated with a field called chromatography. I believe that this absorption and translucency plays a key role in how we respond to some artworks. The medium is not just a vehicle for form for it displays its own conditions of physicality.

Your works, such as *Under water motion series*, explore movement through translucency. With the translucent paint you reveal the movement associated with form, particularly in 3D. The paint appears to vary its translucency depending on the depth of the stroke, and this changes the nature of the movement in a way that opaque paints do not. They veil as much as reveal movement. The translucent paint gives a sense of the depth by intercalating different layers, each with its own movement dimensions as well as other material dimensions, such as the time of drying.

To return to the issue of time, nature and art, translucency challenges the idea that the world comprises just solid bodies, what the philosopher of science Milič Čapek calls, following the work of Noble Lit. Laureate Henri Bergson, the logic of solid bodies (Čapek, 1971). In looking at translucent works such as yours, as well as images of water, we come to recognise that we are always embedded in a medium and the forms of movement that accompany them. In some respects, this is a material condition for thinking about the ethics of interconnection in an ecosystem.

CC: These ideas of translucency, time and interconnection also relate to Eastern philosophies. As part of my art practice, I spent 3yrs studying Tibetan Tantric Buddhist philosophical texts in Nepal, India and Tibet in relation to Far Eastern Mandela and Tantric Art around 2001. My 2008 Edinburgh International Art festival collection was based on those 3yrs with Tantric Philosophy. Monash did an interview of me and distributed the Art in its Humanities Curriculum handbook in late 2007 for 2008).

17th C mainstream scientific methods leaning into materialism, is just so obviously, inherently the wrong tool to use to explore abstract manifestations of cultural communications. In the theatre of performative elite academia, I see ruthless greed for “AI driven box ticking”, pompous institutional puppeteers and not enough seekers of wisdom.

This is why I am dismissive of current dualistic, mainstream, management literalists, who align all models with Plato or Aristotelian paradigms. These philosophies actually watered-down Madhyamika from the original Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese (ancient) notions of Immateriality, where formlessness is carried in clusters of lights. We cannot clearly measure or even identify a locus of energetic substance, nevertheless the “communication” has clear, observable, universal phenomena...

Every time any art communicates successfully in endless and maximal manifestations on a planetary level, it engages with Intangible Cultural Heritage!

PA: Thanks for the ideas about non-Western philosophies and references to the Buddhist works, which somewhat segue with my own interest in fluid immateriality. *Contra many early arguments in scientific realism, process philosophy and many aesthetic theories cultivate a sensibility for notions of immateriality. We learn to accept that things are relative stabilities rather than comprising discrete parts.* This is a guiding principle in Henri Bergson’s *Matter and Memory* (Bergson, 1991), in which he argues that we should always begin any discussion of nature, and the same would apply to art, with the variability of concrete lived time. Likewise, A. N. Whitehead argues in his *The Concept of Nature* (Whitehead, 2009) that a true realism does not ignore the many phenomenal differences in nature, ephemeral or not, as they are just as much a part of the world as measurable entities.

Many recent texts in philosophy, art and science also refer to Eastern traditions. Just in reference to what I have been reading recently, the book *Flow* by Philip Ball (Ball, 2009) mentions Chinese artists and the fluid representation of the Tao even though it is strongly science focused, and the book, *What Painting Is*, by James Elkins discusses “flying white” in calligraphy (Elkins, 1999).

To return to our earlier discussion, *the difficulty in understanding art’s contribution to knowledge somewhat stems from the discipline itself. Science largely has to deal with generalities so that it can make claims that extend over a number of iterations of a phenomenon, hence the principle of induction.* Most art, by contrast, deals with particularities that might in some cases gesture toward universality but can never be expressed in a series of maxims or clear propositions. I assume that most of the scientists you deal have to come to terms with this divide.

CC: That is so precise articulated that on a practice level; it is all alchemy, abstraction and fantastical inner journey! Of the criticisms I have experienced in academia, most are blind to any notion of practice pedagogy. In the “Absence” of detectability, they cling so desperately to “Materiality and the fixation of literal solidity/tangibility” to bully and harass away creativity and authenticity. It’s a bid to CONTROL. I deviate from UNESCO about the “material and immateriality of physical manifestations.” I am always searching for immateriality. That “edge” in flux is the essence of immaterial “travel”, which is why I’ve been playing with Mirror paints in my next collection. They drive home that “edge” ...

PA: Immaterialities abound in art, and much art appreciation involves developing a sensibility for minor phenomenal changes. Appearance is not just a secondary phenomenon; it is central finding our way through nature and challenging instrumental accounts that focus on resources and usability. Isn’t the variability of light something that should be treasured as much as living or material system?

I know that light, not just the objects it illuminates and outlines, is something you seek in your work. The light that filters into your studio would inform your own interest in immateriality; brightness is not something that can be easily suppressed, for it can draw the eye away from the object to its surface in the same way that colour can dissolve boundaries.

CC: In my practice, you know it has the opposite effect. With the brightness being so glaring and overwhelming, I find myself drawn more and more to the shades in the cave house and the underwater view. I’ve spent so many years snorkelling that the shades and shapes beneath the water can be instantly recalled., Don’t forget the sands of Santorini are Black from the lava rocks and volcano, so there is an ombré that guides the lines and shapes I follow in the sand beneath the water. I have an entire collection on Chinese translucent rice paper of the rocks, sand and textures beneath the waters of Santorini. I presented some of the paintings for World Oceans Day 2022 at an in-house UN observance, attended by the Board of UNESCO, Ambassador of Costa Rica, etc... This was during Covid19 lockdown when there were no tourists allowed, only residents could fly into Santorini, so I spent a whole lot of my lock down trying to “define” the surreal moment of seeing the dot of the octopus’ eyes beneath the water.

(Short pause)

PA: What I meant is that the brightness can shift attention away from the simple recognition of an object to the visual effects, including chiaroscuro and shadow, something that are definitely features in your work.

It is a great idea to paint the sands beneath the surface of the water, and I imagine it would be quite difficult to deal with the tonal constraints of black against green, although in your paintings, we often see the soft-blue greens and pinks, with the dark tones just an echo in the background giving the work a wonderful sense of depth.

Painting presents new ways of examining the fluidity of oceans. Not only do you have to deal with the variability and skewing of shapes and colours, but you have also to imagine how one fluid paint can recreate another less viscous fluid. We have to embrace immateriality as well as fluidity and recognise that nature is always in movement, and it is question of preserving many of these fluid movements from the encroachment of technology and materialist approaches to the environment.

*(end of Art Dialogue excerpt)

Conclusions. Art does not easily fit within the logic of a sustainability program or within the demands of scientific discourse because it does not seek knowledge that exists outside of the particularity of the medium (Atkinson, 2022). But in the fractal-like Mandela of Art's internal and intangible cultural cosmos (Yu, 2007), it resists classification in another language. There is no mathematics as the foundation for all the arts or even a single art form. Like our

discussion above, it has the tendency to digress, sometimes through ideas, but often through movements in different mediums and modes of perceiving. Nevertheless, it plays an important role in imagining the environment and its changes over both short and long durations. Art tracks variability in nature and the also the variability in the ways that we see nature. It provides a rear-view image of material change by closely attending to the material present in all its qualitative variety, and in doing so beseeches its viewers and audiences to also attend to these often-minor changes operating within the grand narrative of the Anthropocene and sustainability.

By intertwining Cecilia's hands-on artistic methods with Paul's theoretical frameworks, educators gain a comprehensive understanding of art's multifaceted nature. This integration fosters a holistic approach to teaching, nurturing students' creativity while encouraging them to engage critically with the broader context of their artistic endeavours. Our combined efforts enrich pedagogical studies by emphasizing the importance of intertwining practice and theory, enabling aspiring artists and educators to cultivate a deep, well-rounded appreciation for the transformative power of art in society.

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