

Fu Hao From the East: Between Chinese Traditions and Western Pop Cultures

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Abstract : Having been studied and worked in North America and Europe, we, two Chinese art educators, have been enormously influenced by eastern and western cultures. Thus, we aim to enhance students' learning experiences by exploring and amalgamating both cultures for art creating. This text draws on our action research study of students' visual literacy practices in a foundation sketching course in a major Chinese university, exploring art forms by cross-utilizing various cultural aspects. Instead of relying on the predominant western observational drawing skills in our classroom, we taught students about ancient Chinese art in the provincial museum, using Fu Hao owl-shaped vessel, a Shang Dynasty national treasure, as the final sketch project of this course. We took up multimodal literacy, which emphasized students' critical use of creativity to exploit the semiotic potentials of communicative modes to address diverse cultural issues through their multimodal design. We used the Hong Kong-based artist Tik Ka's artworks to demonstrate the cultural amalgamation of Chinese traditions and western pop cultures. Collectively, these approaches create a dialogical space for students to experience, analyze, and negotiate with complex modes and potentially transform their understanding of both cultures by redesigning Fu Hao.

Keywords : Chinese traditions, western pop cultures, Fu Hao, arts education, design sketch

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