

# Chapter 35



## What Contemporary Asian American Artists Teach Us about the Complicated Nature of 21st-Century Americans' Multilayered, Transcultural, and Hybridized Identities and Art Practices: Implications for an Intercultural and Social Justice-Oriented Approach to Teaching Art

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In this chapter, I consider notions of cultural heritage, ethnic diversity, and family life in the United States, and explore the difficult task of teaching art wisely, sensitively, with great regard for the grand multicultural experiment that is America. Adapting ideas inspired by contemporary Asian American artists, I offer suggestions for an intercultural and social justice-oriented approach to teaching art. My experience as an art educator long committed to multicultural education and, more recently, as a Caucasian mother of two adopted Chinese-born daughters, informs my views.

### The Changing Face of American Families

The U.S. population is growing older and more diverse. Soon no one ethnic or racial group will make up more than 50% of the population.<sup>1</sup> U.S. family configurations are changing as well. People now marry older, or don't marry; some have many children, and others have none or few (The Center for Public Education, 2007). More children now live with single parents (26%), unmarried parents (3%), or in a family with at least one foreign-born parent (22%).<sup>2</sup> Parents may be described as biological, stepparents, adoptive, gay, straight, male, and female. Children's primary caregivers may also be foster parents, grandparents, or other family members. U.S. families may consist of foreign-born immigrants and may be multigenerational blends of immigrants, both documented

and undocumented, or include refugees or individuals holding dual citizenships.<sup>3</sup> According to data from The Urban Institute (2006), new immigrants comprise over 12% of the U.S. population, and their children comprise over 20% of children living in the US. Children with immigrant parents are now the fastest growing segment of the nation's child population, and by 2010 the children of new immigrants will represent at least a quarter of all children in the US.

Included in the mix of evolving family structures are adoptive and transracial families. In recent years, approximately 50,000 children have been domestically adopted in the US each year, and about 2.5% of all U.S. children under 18 are adopted (United States Census Bureau, 2000). Transracial families are families in which individuals of different races live together, either through interracial marriage or cohabitation, and include both domestic<sup>4</sup> and international transracial adoptions. The prevalence of transracial families in the US has significantly increased in recent years, with the bulk of this increase attributed to international adoptions.<sup>5</sup>

### Engaging Multi-Cultural Education: Reconceptualizing Race, Ethnicity, Culture, and Cultural History

We live in a nation of immigrants,<sup>6</sup> but growing up as a new immigrant or as a member of any minority group in America is anything but easy. Studies of

immigrant children reveal that these children face culture shock, ethnic identity confusion, and acculturation difficulties (James, 1997). They are lonely and isolated from school peers (Kirova, 2001); they are subjected to prejudice and racism (Le, 2009); and they struggle for acceptance, integration, and a sense of belonging (Kirova, 2001). Internationally adopted children encounter even more difficulties—they undergo a deeply felt grieving process as they attempt to reconcile their loss of connection to biological mothers, home countries, and places of birth (Lee, et al., 2006).

The family configurations and lives of children inhabiting our classrooms have profound implications for education. In the multicultural classroom, what may work well for some has the opposite effect on other children. For example, a common teacher practice found throughout U.S. schools is the “cultural heritage” assignment and its variants in which the child is asked to create a family tree, describe her or his cultural heritage, and share baby pictures and information about her or his (biologically implied) mom, dad, grandmothers, and grandfathers. For the child whose family does not conform to a mythologized nuclear family configuration consisting of a happily married, White, heterosexual biological mother, father, and their children<sup>7</sup>—for children living in blended or foster families or with single parents, for adopted children or recent immigrants or second generation children whose families are not intact, for the minority student whose family lineages and heritages are in flux, or for the immigrant child uncertain about her or his parents’ legal status in this country—these assignments may be confusing, invasive, humiliating, dangerous, or nearly impossible to complete. Whereas the goals of such lessons are to celebrate family connections and showcase children’s multicultural identities, schools instead dramatize some children’s sense of inadequacy and family circumstances over which these children have no control and spotlight their inability to recreate desired cultural narratives.

Studies of transracial and international adoptions concur that transracial children do need to feel connected to their birth culture, race, and ethnicity; and that these are lifetime learnings requiring knowledgeable, committed parents, community members, and educators capable of attending to these needs. At the same time, it is important to consider the paradox of such attempts, in that conceptualizing a child’s “original culture” something inherent in the immigrant, the border-crosser who now lives in the US, presumes a transparent and deterministic relationship between the child’s place of origin and what he or she should now *be* (Jerng, 2006). These are problematic assumptions needing further scrutiny. Framing the transnationally adopted child’s cultural past in a reincarnated narrative of historical sentiment is to impose something on the child that she or he has never experienced and cannot know, except as a reconstructed afterthought, or worse yet, a longing for something forever unattainable (Yngvesson, 2003). In light of the fact that we do want to engage cultural diversity in the classroom, it is

useful to first reexamine more generally some problematic conceptions about *race*, *ethnicity*, and *cultural history*.

Anthropologists and biologists agree that *race* is a social construct, created by European immigrants in America during the colonial era to justify their enslavement of Africans and genocide of Native American populations, exported then to the rest of the world, and maintained to the present to explain differences and social inequities between groups of people (Brace, 2000; Smedley, 1998).<sup>8</sup> Currently, individuals are classified into racial groups by virtue of their discernable physical characteristics, governmental policies, nation of birth, and self-identification. Human variations in appearance and abilities are now attributed to race even though scientists, anthropologists, and psychologists dispute the validity of such beliefs. Rather, the variability in human abilities is attributable to culture (O’Neill, 2006). Although phenotypic differences in humans do have a genetic basis, how those traits are perceived and subjected to preferential treatment depends on the social context of the individual or group (Appiah, 1986).<sup>9</sup>

*Ethnicity* is also a socially constructed means of classifying people into groups (O’Neill, 2006). Individuals and groups of people self-identify as being a part of an ethnic group, engaging the construct of ethnicity in order to affiliate with, distinguish, and maintain their group’s shared ways of life. Cultural practices that become symbols of one’s ethnicity include language, religious practices, manner of dress, food, art forms, and other material cultural productions along with place of residence, physical appearance, and purported race. Ethnic affiliation has long been the source of both communitarian cohesiveness and intense conflict both within and across nation states; and it suffers from similar misunderstandings in popular usage as race (Abizadeh, 2001). For example, in the US, the notion of a generalized Asian ethnic identity is misleading insofar as people of predominantly Asian heritage, backgrounds, or regions of the world are residents of 50 countries, sovereign states, or geopolitical dependencies/colonies;<sup>10</sup> and Asian people are now migrating and living all over the world, intermarrying with non-Asians, and both maintaining selected traditions and creating their own unique cultural practices.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Asian Americans currently comprise 43 distinct ethnic groups who speak 100 different languages and dialects and maintain a diverse array of cultural beliefs and practices (Kramer, Kwong, Lee, & Chung, 2002).

Anthropologists describe *culture* as those shared beliefs, behaviors, practices, and values created by ethnic groups to foster a sense of communal identity and cohesiveness through a variety of social interactions, arrangements, communications, and artifacts. Efforts to identify particular cultural practices, beliefs, language usages, or material culture productions that characterize Asian or Asian American communities, for example, are now complicated by the fact that this is now a search for understandings of the many ethnic variations and glocal<sup>12</sup> cultural hybridizations that are invented and maintained by individuals and groups from Asian backgrounds who live throughout the world.

Like culture, *history* is created to select certain individuals, places, practices, stories, and events to remember and reify, and something that historians, cultural anthropologists, and others study and talk about. One's *cultural history* comprises those particular customs, beliefs, events, people, and values that have been learned within one's primary social group, and which the individual then commemorates. Cultural practices and histories are dynamic, fluid, and complicated facets of identity, and one's multiple cultural, ethnic, and racial identities are set forth within a context of intersubjective, shifting, and competing beliefs, practices, and social arrangements.

## Teaching Multicultural Art to Multicultural Children: Looking for Insights

There is a vibrant and growing body of discourse about the issues of family life, race, ethnicity, and cultural identity broached in this chapter in scholarly journals, books, films, art exhibitions, and websites; and much of this information is readily available to anyone with a networked computer. Of particular interest to this chapter are the insights shared by Asian American adoptees who are now adults, studies of parents who are attempting to cultivate cultural and ethnic connections for their internationally transracially adopted Asian children, and the artworks and statements of Asian American immigrants who are artists. Insights derived from these individuals suggest contemporary approaches to multicultural art lesson planning that take into account the complicated nature of 21st-century Americans' multilayered, transcultural, and hybridized cultural identities and art practices.

### Transnational Asian Children Now Speak Out

In recent years, internationally adopted Asian children who were raised in transracial, (mostly Caucasian) families are now sharing their perspectives.<sup>13</sup> Themes that pervade their stories, creative expressions, memoirs, and studies include their own cultural identity quests. Some observe that they have never felt fully accepted here by their ethnic group of origin, by the Asian American community, or by White mainstream Americans. Some attempt to reconcile their sense of personal isolation and loss, and others analyze the impact and inequities of racism, white privilege, and the economic, political, and gender issues that undergird the transfer of babies from underdeveloped nations to overdeveloped nations. These contemporary stories reframe old controversies as a debate that encompasses questions of individual and cultural identity, neocolonial power imbalances, human rights, reproductive justice, and globalization (Trenka, Oparah, & Shin, 2006).

### "Culture Keeping" in America

Parents of internationally adopted children have developed varying ways of negotiating these complicated considerations. Three practices thought to be important in the social, emotional, and cultural development of internationally adopted children living in transracial families include cultural socialization, enculturation, and racialization. Cultural socialization refers to the ways parents transmit cultural values and customs to the child, and the extent to which the child internalizes these messages and acquires the skills to become a competent member of an ethnic group (Lee, et al., 2006). In transnational and transracial adoptive families, cultural socialization it is not as natural a process as it is for same-ethnicity families, and transracial adoptive parents must make explicit efforts at cultural socialization (Lee, et al., 2006). Enculturation refers to the practice of promoting ethnicity-specific experiences that encourage the development of a positive ethnic identity. Racialization refers to the practice of teaching about race-specific issues that help children develop coping skills to protect them from racism and discrimination (Lee, et al., 2006).

Although transracial adoptive parental enculturation and racialization endeavors vary from family to family, adoptive parents currently are more concerned about the cultural identities of their transnationally adopted children than previously. Jacobson (2008) has found *culture keeping* a common practice in the contemporary international adoption community. The task of culture keeping, Jacobson observes, is largely taken up by White, middle-class female adoptive parents, and a burgeoning market of formal and cottage industries has emerged to support this effort. Ethnic books, toys, manuals, fairs, culture camps, workshops, clothing, videos, support groups, language lessons, travel tours to home countries, and a plethora of related offerings are now widely available. Huus (2004) has similarly found the latest wave of U.S. adoptive parents of Chinese children to be less "color blind"<sup>14</sup> than their predecessors, more engaged in making stronger connections to Chinese culture and people, more prone to seeking out ethnically diverse communities and friendships, and less tolerant of school practices textbooks that omit or misrepresent Chinese and Chinese American culture and history.

Immigrant and adopted children face complex problems that are compounded in schools. Implications for teaching are clear. What these and all children need are thoughtfully and compassionately developed assignments that acknowledge the varied family and cultural experiences of children—that is, for teachers to teach about cultural diversity with current knowledge about the many U.S. family, cultural, ethnic, and racial configurations that ground the lives of the children that now populate our classrooms. Contemporary Asian American artists have much to offer in terms of understanding culture and race and *being Asian* in America, and their artworks demonstrate how we might accomplish such a task.

## Asian American Artists

Asian American artists have spent considerable time and effort thinking about their racial and ethnic identities, cultural histories, and their condition of being transnational. Particularly relevant are the works of artists such as Kathy Change, Tseng Kwong Chi, Lu Chusheng, Mel Chin, David Diao, Bovey Lee, Hung Liu, Yong Soon Min, Avani Patel, Hanh Phi Pham, Natalie Pham, Ann Phong, Ben Sakoguchi, Roger Shimomura, Linda Nishio, Cynthia Tom, Anna X. L. Wong, Flo Oy Wong, Martin Wong, and Xu Zhen, to name a few. These artists' biographies, artistic statements, and artworks are accessible to teachers and students on the Internet. I highlight the work of five artists below, and sketch briefly how the study of these artists informs a contemporary inter-cultural and social justice-oriented art curriculum.

**Tseng Kwong Chi** was born in Hong Kong in 1950, emigrated with his family to Vancouver, Canada, in 1966 at age 16, revealed his homosexuality to his parents at that time, and attended the University of British Columbia. He lived briefly in Montreal, pursued art training in Paris, moved to New York City in 1978, traveled extensively throughout the world, and settled in New York City, where he was active in the art scene until his death in 1990 of complications from AIDS. Tseng Kwong Chi is known for his "East Meets West" photographs, "The Expeditionary Series," and his documentary photographs of Keith Haring's work (Schlegel, n. d.). Chi's playful and ironic self-portraits posed in a Mao suit in front of American iconic landmarks are humorous parodies of American culture, critical commentaries about China's repressive regime, and contemplative but ambiguous examinations of his own cultural identity.<sup>15</sup>

Inspired by expansive interpretations of Chi's photographs, student self-portraits could similarly investigate or question through satire, parody, or humor their own cultural experiences, border-crossings, and identities. Students might use any medium for these explorations. Students could also create documentary photographs posing new interpretations of popular cultural icons, family vacations, trips to theme parks, local sites of cultural significance, or even ordinary experiences with school mates,<sup>16</sup> working individually or collaboratively. Interpreting each others' art could invite discussions about how one's identity is constructed and situated within multi-layered contexts, how cultural sites and practices are valued, how these constructs and values change under varying circumstances, or how we treat one another in societies, communities, schools, and classrooms based on assumptions about race, ethnicity, social status, or family backgrounds.

**Avani Patel** was born in Bombay, India in 1976, earned a BA from the University of Pennsylvania and an MFA from Temple University, and now lives in Brooklyn. Although Indian culture is the starting point for Patel's art, she now explores the boundaries between Eastern and Western influences. Her drawings and paintings are colorful, rhythmic, biomorphic abstractions.<sup>17</sup> Patel (2003) "fell in love with pattern of dress, exotic colors, the sound of music, the spectacle of

both theater and cinema," which she now understands as "all fluidly interconnected, effectively symbolizing the rhythm of daily life" (¶ 1). Her recent work, in collaboration with Vietnamese American artist Nathalie Pham, titled *America's Chinatown Voices*, consists of an installation on the fences encircling Columbus Park, in the heart of New York City's Chinatown. Running May 9, 2009, until August 8, 2009, this installation provided a site where community people, children, artists, and other New Yorkers could express themselves. It included dozens of painted panels consisting of artworks, stories, and poems about the Asian American experience.<sup>18</sup>

Patel's vibrant abstract imagery invites comparison between the tapestries of India with contemporary international avant-garde abstract style, and provides beautiful examples for student studio explorations of the visually rich rhythmic patterns and symbols in their own lives. Patel's and Pham's community installation project showcases direct engagement with their larger community, and introduces site-specific installation as an art form. Students could similarly engage themes of telling one's own stories, placed in local sites—temporary *living installations* in the school or the community—and invite other children and adults from the community to participate. Documentation of these living installations could culminate in multimedia oral histories and productions about the community, shared locally and online.

**Ben Sakoguchi** was born in California in 1938. Because of their Japanese ancestry, his family, including Ben, was incarcerated in a Japanese internment camp in Arizona during World War II. After the war, they returned to San Bernardino and reopened their small grocery business. Sakoguchi earned his BA degree, teaching credentials, and MFA degree from UCLA and then taught in the Art Department at Pasadena City College until his retirement in 1997. Sakoguchi's orange crate label paintings are fashioned after the colorful labels pasted on the ends of wooden citrus crates he used to see in his family grocery store. Completed over many years, these small, colorful, and satiric acrylic-on-canvas paintings explore varied themes including quirky cultural practices, histories, hypocrisies, and social injustices. His most well-known works include "Postcards from Camp," a multi-painting series that included family photos, childhood recollections, images recorded by military and internee photographers, documents, firsthand accounts that exemplified social and political attitudes during the time of his interment. His "The Disasters of War" series is a modern portrayal of war, inspired in part by Goya's series with the same name.<sup>19</sup>

Sakoguchi's poignant, humorous images, painted in the vivid, densely packed style of old advertisements, words and all, invite sustained interpretation, historical inquiry, and appreciation. After Sakoguchi, students could investigate and depict similar historical events that raise issues of social justice, racial prejudice, war, or human rights violations, and they may incorporate found materials as a way to symbolically connect personal artifacts and histories with larger cultural and

global issues. Alternatively, students could commemorate quirky or beloved cultural practices of interest, adapting styles from popular culture, media, and advertisements (after Sakoguchi's "The Unauthorized History of Baseball" series).

**Yong Soon Min** was born in 1953 in Korea, immigrated with her family to the US in 1960, and earned her BFA and MFA from Berkeley during the tumultuous Vietnam War era in this country. Min is Professor of Studio Art at the University of California in Irvine and lives in Los Angeles. Internationally respected as a multimedia, performance, installation, and activist artist, scholar, curator, and lecturer, Min creates art which "engages issues of representation and cultural identity, the intersection of history and memory, and the role of the artist and the arts as agents of social change."<sup>20</sup> Her 1991 installation piece, *deCOLONIZATION*, interrogates the colonial history of Korean female subjectivity (Min, n.d.),<sup>21</sup> using Asian clothing and textiles—particularly Korean traditional dress—as a signifier of ethnicity to raise questions about how immigration has affected Asian American women and their families (Jensen, 1997), juxtaposing a tree branch of knowledge among letters, poems, diaries, and oppositional pairs of words that Min considers to be colonizing, and an enlarged black-and-white photograph of her mother and other Korean women on a U.S. Army base standing in front of an American-made car, referencing the "bad women" of Korea who serviced the servicemen who were killing their husbands (Kim, 1996). Min's multimedia works are replete with difficult meanings, histories, and confrontational questions, and Min's artworks may be carefully selected as inspiration for contemporary, thematic, issues-oriented artmaking in the classroom, subject of course to teachers' comfort levels and students' willingness to engage these difficult histories and questions.

**Flo Oy (Florence) Wong** is second generation Chinese-American, born in Oakland, California, in 1938, and who grew up in Oakland's Chinatown. She graduated from UCLA Berkeley, earned her teaching credentials, and taught elementary school after marrying. Wong's family was a traditional one where Chinese was their first language and English their second. Her father's family members were poverty-stricken peasants who farmed. In 1911, her grandmother, recognizing the limitations of village life in China, sent her father to America into the care of two male relatives. In 1933, her mother emigrated as an adult and became the second wife of Wong's father. Because of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Law, reinforced by 1924 National Origins Act and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, her mother entered and remained the US as an illegal immigrant. To circumvent the law, her mother entered the US as her father's sister. Wong writes, "Thus our life of deception in America started in 1933" (n. d., ¶ 3). Wong's Oakland Chinatown series of pencil drawings captures her family life, using her family's photographically captured moments-in-time as restaurateurs in Chinatown to portray her immigrant family and her community as neither exotic

nor mysterious but as "ordinary working class people who struggled internally and externally during the timeframe of Chinese resettlement in America" (Wong, 1991). Wong considers herself a late blooming artist who now serves as a role model to newer generations of Chinese immigrants, utilizing what she calls a hybridized East-West art form.

Wong's 28 drawings provide not only a model for student portrayals of their own family life; her work poses provocative questions about a great many issues of interest to art education. In her chapter for the book, *Pluralistic Approaches to Art Criticism*, Wong, an art teacher herself, shares several questions worthy of asking of students in contemporary classrooms: Why did she invest such a great amount of time to develop this particular narrative story? How did her choice of pencil impact the aesthetic quality and potential meanings of the work? What does fact that so many females are depicted mean? How does this work convey cross-cultural influences?

## Multi-Culture as Curriculum Content

Taken together, the vibrant and varied artworks of contemporary Asian American artists creatively engage the cultural heritage and aesthetic traditions of their homelands, offer heartfelt explorations of place, immigration, and belonging, and raise difficult questions about issues of identity, citizenship, power, race, gender, war, and social justice in America and in the world. All are topics worthy of consideration in any classroom. Engagement in art classrooms could include examinations and visual expressions that consider what it means to be both American *and* multi-cultural in the 21st century; speculations about the exoticizing of culture; investigations into sexism and racism in America and abroad; consideration of the appalling conditions and treatment of women and children worldwide; research into the devastating impact of war, colonialism, cultural hegemony, and globalization; and, simply or not so simply, what it means for all of us to have multiple and hybridized cultural identities.

Students' visual investigations may also be fun, playful, subtle, and ironic visualizations and explorations utilizing iconic and everyday imagery from both high and low culture; colorful depictions of selected aspects of their vivid visual experience of contemporary life; and they may engage others in collaborative communal dialogues about living in America. Looking to Asian American activist artists provides entry points and models for such inquiries in the classroom.

Some of the strategies I suggest seem straightforward and simple to implement. Regarding controversial topics, art teachers and others will have to decide how and when these kinds of issues are best addressed in the curriculum. Regardless of the approach chosen, teachers should also know that parents, artists, scholars, cultural workers, and citizens of many diverse backgrounds are available in communities throughout the US to support their effort. We're all in this together.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> According to The Center for Public Education (2007) the ethnic/racial composition of United States Public Schools & Districts in 2007 was: 55.0% White, 16.6% Black, 21.1% Hispanic, 4.6% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1.2% American Indian/Alaska Native.
- <sup>2</sup> See the Forum on Children and the Family at [www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/famsoc.asp](http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/famsoc.asp)
- <sup>3</sup> Also of interest is the finding that “in 2002, 4.7 million children lived apart from their mother, up from 3.7 million in 1997. Despite their growing numbers, nonresident mothers and their children have remained largely under the radar” (Sousa & Sorensen, ¶ 1, 2006).
- <sup>4</sup> National data on domestic transracial adoptions are currently difficult to accurately tabulate, in part to the high percentage of private adoptions, and in part due to inadequate Census Bureau data collecting procedures. Studies indicate that domestic public transracial adoptions range widely by year, state, and the races of children and adults. For example, the proportion of Black children who were adopted transracially from foster care rose from 17.2% in 1996 to 20.1% in 2003; children of Hispanic ethnicity experienced the highest rate of transracial/transethnic adoption, 38% in 2001 (Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, 2008).
- <sup>5</sup> Over the past three decades, over 330,000 children have been adopted in the US from foreign countries (Lee, Grotevant, Hellerstedt, & Gunnar, 2006), and over the past 16 years there has been a 180% increase in the number of international adoptions in the US (Child Welfare League of America, 2007). Currently, children are adopted annually from over 100 countries, with approximately 90% of children adopted from 20 countries, and the majority adopted from China, Russia, South Korea, and Guatemala (Lee, et al., 2006; National Data Analysis System, 2007). About 20% of international adoptions are from Asian countries, and for children under the age of two, that it doubles to 40% (Shiao & Tuan, 2008). Little is known about the children prior to their arrival in the US (Lee, et al., 2006). International adoptions in the US have fallen to 17,438 in 2008 with the decline attributed in part to the adoption of the 1993 Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption in 2007 by the US, along with new regulations and international reactions to baby trafficking (Smolin, 2010).
- <sup>6</sup> John F. Kennedy’s “A Nation of Immigrants,” written in 1958 at the request of the Anti-Defamation League, was republished in 2008 with a foreword by Edward Kennedy.
- <sup>7</sup> According the U.S. Census Bureau in 2004 only about 58% of children under the age of 18 live with their married biological mother and father. See [www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/children/011507.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/children/011507.html)
- <sup>8</sup> For a very useful and concise historical analysis of the emergence of the ideology of race in Western thought and social practices, see Smedley (1998), cited in the references.
- <sup>9</sup> Critical theorists further argue that the classification of people into racial types continues today in order to perpetuate White privilege and Western hegemony in the world.
- <sup>10</sup> This is a United Nations statistic and includes countries and recognized sovereign states of Central Asia, Eastern Asia, Southern Asia, South Eastern Asia, and Southern Asia. See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm#asia>
- <sup>11</sup> Anthropologist Audrey Smedley (1998) also observes that until modern times, one’s ethnicity was actually quite fluid and malleable. As individuals migrated, traded, interacted, and intermarried with people in other parts of the ancient world, they changed their customs, beliefs and identities by adapting, adopting, and acquiring membership in a different group. As Smedley observes, “People of the ancient world seemed to have understood that cultural characteristics were external and acquired forms of behavior” (p. 691).
- <sup>12</sup> The term *glocal*, a blend of the two words *global* and *local*, is commonly understood as both a contemporary cultural condition and a process (glocalization) whereby particular local or regional people, organizations, businesses, communities, and political entities are impacted by and act upon transnational and global forces. Although the direction of global forces on local people is seen by global studies scholars as heavily (but not entirely) one-way, considerable weight is also given to the manner in which locals adapt and transform global forces and practices to suit local interests and conditions, through a fusion, as the word *glocal* suggests, of global and local. For relevant discussions of glocalization in relation to art education, see Bae (2009), Lee (2009), Shin, (2009), Thompson (2009), and Vigneron (2009).
- <sup>13</sup> The greatest number of individuals writing as adults about their experiences are currently Korean adoptees, who total nearly 140,000 since the post-Korean War period (Huu, 2004).
- <sup>14</sup> The term “color blind” in this context refers to the belief that all people are equally valuable, deserving of equal treatment, and that one’s race doesn’t matter. This belief and its accompanying social and familial practices have been harshly criticized by some Korean adoptees who are now adults.
- <sup>15</sup> See information about Tseng Kwong Chi at [www.munatseng.org/tsengkwongchi.htm](http://www.munatseng.org/tsengkwongchi.htm) and at [www.paulkasmimgallery.com/exhibitions/2008-04-03\\_tseng-kwong-chi/press-release/](http://www.paulkasmimgallery.com/exhibitions/2008-04-03_tseng-kwong-chi/press-release/) and at [www.creativephotography.org/education/educatorsGuides/tkc](http://www.creativephotography.org/education/educatorsGuides/tkc)
- <sup>16</sup> See Kirova’s and Emme’s (2008) research project with adolescent immigrant children in Canada who created their own photo documentaries with added narratives (fotonovellas) of playground encounters with peers in order to facilitate a dialogue about intercultural communication among children in culturally diverse school.
- <sup>17</sup> See Patel’s work at <http://picasaweb.google.com/avani1art/Gallery#5052951088908619122>
- <sup>18</sup> The installation *America’s Chinatown Voices* images and writings may be viewed at [www.nycmetropolises.com](http://www.nycmetropolises.com)
- <sup>19</sup> See Sakoguchi’s work at [www.bensakoguchi.com](http://www.bensakoguchi.com)
- <sup>20</sup> This quote is taken from Min’s university website at <http://studioart.arts.uci.edu/faculty/residentfaculty/youngsoonmin.html>
- <sup>21</sup> Artist’s Statement about “decolonization.” Retrieved from [www.cla.purdue.edu/WAAW/Jensen/Yong.html](http://www.cla.purdue.edu/WAAW/Jensen/Yong.html)