



Inside



Virginia Tech's new ASPECT PhD program

Page 3

Apply online with your 2008 AIS conference proposal

Page 6

The AIS Newsletter is published quarterly by the Association for Integrative Studies, Western College Program, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056. Phone: 513-529-2659 or 513-529-2213 Fax: 513-529-5849 E-mail: Phyllis Cox at coxpa@muohio.edu or Bill Newell at newellwh@muohio.edu

Submissions are welcome!

Visit our Web site: www.muohio.edu/ais/ Username: issues Password: INTERDIS (all caps)

Image as Idea:

Globalism, interdisciplinarity, and the creative arts

Review of Image as Idea: The Arts in Global Cultures. James W. Davis. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 2007. 279 pp. Paperback. (ISBN 978-0-7575-4190-2). \$56.21.

Reviewed by Tanya Augsburg, Assistant Professor of Liberal Studies (Creative Arts and Humanities), San Francisco State University, San Francisco, California.

I am both amazed and extremely grateful whenever a certain book gets published at just the right time. Indeed, the timing could not have been more perfect for James W. Davis's Image as Idea: The Arts in Global Culture. Since the late 1980s, there has been growing interest in the intersections between the interdisciplinary arts, interdisciplinarity, and internationalism—or more accurately, transnationalism or globalism since the word “international” implies continuing Western hegemony for many. Several recent important contemporary art exhibitions that addressed globalism, interdisciplinarity, and the visual arts openly challenged Western-centric perspectives. Among the most notable of these are the monumental 2002 Documenta 11 curated by Okwui Enwezor and the 2007 blockbuster Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art, which took place at the Brooklyn Museum in New York City and was curated by Maura Reilly and Linda Nochlin.¹ At least two academic symposiums addressing similar topics have taken place since 2005, one of which I reviewed in this newsletter² (Augsburg, 2005). In terms of survey texts, art critic Lucy Lippard (1990) wrote Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America, which, as its title indicates, focused on “cross-cultural activity” in the visual arts within the American context (p. 4). With its publication in 2007, Image as Idea is the first college textbook that offers an interdisciplinary approach to studying the creative arts from a global perspective.

Reading his bio, one discovers that Davis is an artist, musician, composer, scholar, writer, and

Professor of Art at San Francisco State University (SFSU). His commitment to interdisciplinary education is as impressive as it is longstanding: Davis is the former director of SFSU's Interarts program, which was disbanded in 2002. Until its demise SFSU's Interarts program was among the oldest interdisciplinary arts program in the United States. Davis currently teaches “Thought and Image: The Creative Arts,” one of two interdisciplinary core classes in the Creative Arts and Humanities emphasis area for the undergraduate interdisciplinary studies major in Liberal Studies at SFSU. Davis freely admits in the Acknowledgments that his students provided the impetus for writing Image as Idea. To be more precise, SFSU's commitment to global engagement and its students' genuine interest in diverse cultures necessitated that Davis write an introduction to the study of images in the arts by weaving together global and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Image as Idea may be the direct result of developing and teaching a particular course for a specific major at a single university, but it can easily be adopted for any introductory course that addresses the creative arts with interdisciplinary and/or cross-cultural perspectives. Davis is chiefly a comparativist by method, interested in identifying key themes in the creative arts across or within cultures. His interdisciplinary global approach radically departs from prevailing approaches with their emphasis on categorizing the arts by medium, culture, period, or style. Yet Davis, I would argue, is an interdisciplinary innovator more than a maverick.

(continued on page 2)

Image as Idea ...

(continued from page 1)

His approach has been tested in the classroom over a six-year period with approximately 3,000 students (p. 1).

In the Introduction Davis points out that *Image as Idea* is interdisciplinary “in at least two major ways” (p. 3). The first is his attempt to integrate the study of all the creative arts, which corresponds to prevailing notions regarding the nature of interdisciplinary arts. The second is Davis’s interdisciplinary perspective, in which images are considered through the integration of multiple disciplinary lenses: Davis claims that he draws from “philosophy, psychology, beliefs [religion studies], anthropology, history, politics, and many other fields” (p. 3). Interdisciplinary perspectives on myth in particular play a foundational role in Davis’s perspicacious understanding of the creative arts. Throughout *Image as Idea* Davis pays close attention to both ancient and contemporary myths along with their various versions. Davis even offers a few salient reinterpretations of his own, occasionally indulging in some lighthearted poetic license that will amuse most readers. Overall, however, Davis’s erudite interest in myth complements his socio-cultural view of the creative arts as “products of community concern” within an ever-“shrinking world” (pp. 2-3).

Image as Idea is thus concerned primarily with art as a means of cultural transmission. A central argument is “that the arts are among the most potent forces used to convey ideas due to their unique use of images employed for expression as well as the special impact these expressions have on us” (p. 4). To prove his point, Davis lists a number of types of images—for example, image as invention, citing Leonardo da Vinci’s notebooks, as well as the Egyptian pyramids as images as symbols of power. A compelling analysis of the relationship between mythology and the arts then bridges into a compact discussion of the origins of ideas in the arts. The Introduction ends with two

overtly socio-political sections: one on the patronage of the arts precedes some final introductory remarks on the author’s choices regarding terminology and dating systems.

Each of the subsequent chapters focuses on an image or theme and how it is expressed within an art form across cultures within a single culture. Chapter One probes the significance of Sacred Mountains. While some sacred mountains exist in nature (think of the Himalayas or Mount Sinai), Davis offers a compendium of those constructed by humans. He sees strong links between images of sacred mountains and man-made “mounds,” such as igloos and haystacks. In so doing, Davis provides a cross-cultural study of ancient (religious) architecture: artificial mountains in Japan (*shimeyama yorishiros*), Mississippi Valley mounds, Irish dolmens, Sumerian ziggurats, Egyptian pyramids, Mesoamerican pyramids, the Greek Acropolis, Buddhist stupas in South Asia, and Indian and Cambodian Hindu temples. For each example Davis describes its form, explains its particular cultural function, and supplies at least one accompanying photograph or diagram.

Chapter Two demonstrates both a dazzling breadth and profound depth of knowledge in its treatment of the image of the labyrinth (along with its close relations, the maze and the spiral) in the arts. While not explicitly citing the professional literature on interdisciplinarity, Davis frames the labyrinth as a cultural complex “problem”:

Few symbols are more deceptive in their complexity or more varied in their meanings than the labyrinth. That this image so aptly reflects the ambiguities, contradictions, challenges, complexities, and uncertainties of life, death, and transcendent experience may account for its far-ranging appearance in a variety of cultures worldwide.” (p. 72)

Davis proves his point with a breathtaking array of examples, which include the Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur; Virgil’s *Aeneid*; myth from the Malekula island in the New Hebrides; Indian and Maori cultural practices; the Indian epic the *Mahabharata*; Tantric art; O’odham basket design; the medieval *Chemin de Jerusalem*; the *Koran*; Egyptian burial chambers; the Palace of Minos at Knossos; the fiction of Franz Kafka, Victor Hugo, Amos Tutuola, Jorge Luis Borges, James Joyce, and Lewis Carroll; and finally, filmmaker Stanley Kubrick’s rendition of Stephen King’s *The Shining*. Whew! Davis certainly manages to find mazes and labyrinths in some unexpected places in art and literature, such as in Victor Hugo’s descriptions of Parisian sewers in *Les Misérables*. By stressing the common differences between cultures and epochs Davis illustrates the rich potential for a theme or problem-based approaches to the creative arts.

Chapter Three examines myths regarding journeys of the soul in Balinese shadow puppet theater as well as in history, literature, theater, and film. What is striking about this chapter is Davis’s masterful ability to describe synoptically while still explaining comprehensively a complex cultural art form such as the Balinese shadow theater—and the culture that produces it. For example, the reader learns why the puppeteer or *dalang* can be considered “the ultimate interdisciplinary artist” as the *dalang* is artist, storyteller, spiritual leader, and community advisor (p. 112). Davis introduces students to Balinese theater by including C.L. Reed’s performance text of *Bima Swarga: The Play*. Its “low-brow” humor might surprise some high-minded students, but the text offers a wonderful opportunity to explore what is meant by popular theater in South Asia. The second half of the chapter addresses the myth of Orpheus. Since Davis additionally summarizes Jean Cocteau’s 1950 film

(continued on page 5)

Virginia Tech's new ASPECT PhD:

Program in Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought

By Dr. Wolfgang Natter, Director of ASPECT (Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought); Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, wnatter@vt.edu.

In January 2008, the Virginia State Council of Higher Education approved a new PhD at Virginia Tech in Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought. This theory based, interdisciplinary, and project-centered research and teaching program (ASPECT) is now accepting graduate students beginning for the 2008/09 academic year.

Planning Process

State Council approval concluded a multi-year planning process at Virginia Tech, during which support levels for the program, as well as general design, infrastructure, and curriculum were established in deliberations between the director, department chairs and participating faculty from 15 campus units, the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences (where the program is administratively placed), the University's central administration, as well as College, University, and Trustee level councils responsible for program approval. An on-site visit with external evaluators, coordinated with the State Council, concluded a final round of program input.

Important initial decisions were the strategic decision of Virginia Tech's administration—a University whose motto is "Invent the Future"—to commit resources to enhance the University's extant disciplinary based departmental degree offerings by creating an innovative, interdisciplinary and theory-based PhD program spanning the social and human sciences. Four core departments in the College of Human Sciences and Liberal Studies committed to lend support to the initiative: History, Interdisciplinary Studies (a unit comprising programs such as Women's Studies, Humanities, Religious

Studies, and Appalachian Studies), Philosophy, and Political Science. A further key decision was to widen potential faculty affiliation to members of the broader University community, wherever their tenure homes are, so long as they, like those affiliated members from the core departments, wished to contribute to the program's mission. Deliberations between the director and key administrators concluded with commitments made to attach 24 graduate TAs to the program, each of four year's duration, phased in sequentially beginning in 2008. Additionally, new faculty lines were committed to contributing departments in support of the program, and a number of new hires await.

Overseeing the development of the program, its curriculum, the program's infrastructure, and most importantly, a scholarly community which now numbers 50 affiliated faculty, were all elements of the exciting process leading to the formulation and approval of the PhD program. Participating faculty and course offerings now come from three Colleges at Virginia Tech: among them, the core contributing departments of History, Interdisciplinary Studies, Philosophy, and Political Science, as well as from Africana Studies, Area Studies, Business and Economics, the Center for Public Administration and Policy, English, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Government and International Affairs, an emerging program in Public Humanities, Science and Technology Studies, Sociology, Urban Affairs and Planning. Building upon these elements, ASPECT faculty expect in the coming years to solidify a national and international reputation for social, political, ethical, and cultural thought.

Program Rationale

By design, the ASPECT PhD prepares graduate students to undertake theoretically based, problem-centered, multi- and interdisciplinary analysis on important and challenging issues whose understanding requires simultaneous attention to their social, political, ethical, and cultural dimensions. ASPECT enables doctoral students to pursue work with teams of faculty whose work focuses on such problems.

Students enter the program having previously earned an MA or equivalent (e.g. MFA, MArch, MBA, JD). ASPECT is designed to be of particular interest to graduate students seeking a program of study with a framework wider than that of a specialized department. Its curriculum follows an emerging national trend in interdisciplinary studies in offering education that combines four multidisciplinary subject areas of concentration—in this case, social, political, ethical, and cultural—which purposefully integrate both departmentally-based and program specific courses. In addition, core program seminars, several of which are team taught, permit focused integration of interdisciplinary theory and interdisciplinary methodology. As part of their pedagogical training, students are prepared to teach introductory and required courses in particular disciplines and departments, and they may further avail themselves of a conceptually complementary certificate course of study in teaching theory and practice offered to all graduate students through the University's graduate school. A student's research emphasis, however, is on questions that span concerns articulated in a number of disciplines

(continued on page 4)

ASPECT ...

(continued from page 3)

and whose complexity requires the entire tool kit of knowledge offered by integrated social, political, ethical, and cultural thought.

Some program graduates may prefer positions in government, non-profit, media, or industry organizations, where a broad understanding of the multiple contexts of significant social problems addressed by the program, along with the skills necessary to answer emerging ones, is required. ASPECT, however, will primarily prepare future faculty to conduct theoretically and methodologically attentive interdisciplinary research and to contribute as teachers and scholars to the expected 21st century “knowledge economy.”

ASPECT as a Research and Teaching Program

It bears special emphasis that ASPECT is an integrated research and teaching program. Good teaching, as the maxim goes, is informed by good research. Course offerings are complemented by a variety of research settings in which faculty and students participate. Program workshops, conferences, and a lively working paper series enable participants to receive interdisciplinary feedback and an avenue to share their research; while an e-journal and book series allow scholars to publish their findings along with scholars from other institutions. Graduate students are expressly encouraged to participate along with faculty in these venues. They contribute to the research clusters that ASPECT has thus far developed around themes such as Democratic Planning and Participatory Research; The Politics of Memory; Religion and Politics; Social and Individual Transformation; Epistemology in the Social Sciences and Humanities; Democracy and Democratic Theory; and Alternative Economic Development (see www.aspect.vt.edu). Program design foresees extending these topics to emerging others, commensurate

with faculty and student interest. Such venues are augmented by an ASPECT-sponsored topical lecture series integrated with a team-taught seminar that brings renowned scholars to campus to discuss their work on a particular research field. These research activities, in turn, contribute in further integrating the interdisciplinary PhD curriculum, leading to new course development and modification of existing ones in departmental and program settings.

Employment Rationale

Abundant evidence supports the view that the 21st century workforce, both at the university and elsewhere, expects a professoriate, and the students they prepare, to be sufficiently interdisciplinary in education and orientation to address multiple sources and kinds of problems, data, and information. The AAU Task Force on the Role and Status of the Humanities makes a passionate case that AAU universities should not allow the humanities and social sciences to wither; it also suggests the great value of enabling programs of the type ASPECT models. Its fourth overall recommendation is that AAU universities “should provide flexible structures for faculty and student interaction and collaboration on humanities scholarship and teaching, including interaction and collaboration with the social and natural sciences and the professional schools, and with community agencies and organizations.” The report goes on to describe the strategies and goals of “interdisciplinary initiatives” in terms that closely match those of ASPECT: “Interdisciplinary initiatives sponsor or help to sponsor a wide range of activities including conferences, workshops, internships, curriculum and faculty development. The goals of such initiatives are: to bring together faculty across a college and university who share complementary research and other strengths into interdisciplinary clusters; to bring national visibility to these programs as well as to the departments and other

programs which are affiliated with them; to enhance the intellectual climate of the college and university; to increase research funding, scholarly and creative activity and curriculum development among faculty; and to improve recruitment of faculty and graduate students. Reports by other agencies as disparate as the U.S. Bureau of Labor, the Rand Corporation, and the Social Science Research Council all offer a prognosis which supports the timeliness of the ASPECT program.

Theoretically informed scholarship in social, political, ethical, and cultural thought has indeed been at the forefront in rethinking how the university can respond to the new knowledge economy. Given the shift toward interdisciplinarity across the humanities and social sciences, including expectations emanating from disciplines and departments themselves, we believe graduate education in ASPECT is ideally suited to prepare new PhDs who will be competitively positioned for success as teachers and researchers in the expected post-secondary landscape of the 21st century.

Curricular Rationale

The PhD curriculum concentrates on methodological and theoretical issues, as well as on domains where social, political, ethical, and cultural thought are “put to work” in understanding social and individual transformations in contemporary and historical contexts.

All requirements of the doctoral program in Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought are consistent with those of the Virginia Tech Graduate School for doctoral-level studies.

Students pursuing the ASPECT doctoral degree select a major and a minor concentration chosen from among four areas: 1) social thought, 2) political thought, 3) ethical thought, and 4) cultural thought. Key ASPECT course requirements additionally offer instruction in interdisciplinary

theory, methodology, and professional development. Following fulfillment of other curricular requirements, students must pass a preliminary exam, prepare and defend a dissertation proposal, and then complete original research for their dissertation, all under the supervision of a multidisciplinary advisory committee.

As indicated above, ASPECT offers a curriculum that fosters research and teaching and that communicates on the basis of theory across the “enabling limits” that frequently result in disciplinary divides between units in the social sciences, humanities, and professional schools. By design, the curriculum stresses student flexibility and originality. It permits a focus on overarching problems by offering education in multidisciplinary areas of concentration as well as solid grounding in both interdisciplinary and disciplinary ways of knowing. Each area of concentration is composed of an impressive range of departmental, college, and cross-college offerings.

It is the modest ambition of this program to foster a research and teaching program that enables PhD students with ASPECT faculty to pursue appropriate course work and research commensurate with the complexities of the particular problem they aim to investigate. The program institutionalizes the recognition that no single discipline has purchase on their full scope, but that each has made significant contributions to understanding the issue. The program thoughtfully places in tandem bodies of thought and their research applications that otherwise, and not least for curricular reasons, too frequently have cast divisions along fault lines of political theory vs. cultural studies, social theory vs. ethical thought, etc. A positive resolution to the situation is

embedded in the ASPECT curriculum. A regular feature of the program is team taught, theory based, topical seminars. Significantly, these team taught venues embed in the curriculum settings in which authentic interdisciplinary work can be planned, practiced, and extended on a recurring basis.

Summary

In conclusion, the program offers PhD candidates the opportunity to choose course offerings appropriate to their self-selected areas of concentration and the problems they wish to address in their research. ASPECT-specific coursework provides integrated exposure to interdisciplinary theory, interdisciplinary methodology, and to interdisciplinary professional development. The program offers students comparative and integrated insights into work centered on a problem as it has been pursued, for example, by historians, architects, philosophers, political, cultural, or social theorists. The research outcome this curriculum promises is original and significant work, which will reflect a range of relevant disciplines, departments and fields. At the same time, students will receive both hands on experience and education as instructors while teaching introductory undergraduate courses in departments and interdisciplinary programs participating in ASPECT.

Should this program be of potential interest to you, your colleagues, or students, I encourage you to visit the ASPECT Web site (www.aspect.vt.edu) or to contact me directly. It has been said that the program is a bellwether for higher education in the United States. I hope you will find reasons when you visit the Web site to contribute to the ringing of that bell. ■■■

Image as Idea ...

(continued from page 2)

Orfee, one can safely assume that this chapter was intended to be supplemented with class viewings of Balinese theater and Cocteau’s film.

Chapter Four acquaints readers to interdisciplinary dance forms with the theme of renewal. Traditional religious Indian dance and post-World War II Japanese butoh dance are considered along with contemporary African American choreographer Bill T. Jones’s controversial 1994 performance *Still/Here*. Once again, Davis provides the reader with all necessary social, political, and cultural contexts to understand a profiled artwork by embedding a comparison between modernism and postmodernism in the arts. I personally found Davis’s discussion on Jones illuminating, having written on the Arlene Croce controversy surrounding *Still/Here* (see Augsburg, 1995). Croce (1994-95), a reviewer for *The New Yorker*, “reviewed” *Still/Here* by refusing to see it, proclaiming it “victim art.” The controversy created by Croce overshadowed the integrity of the piece and what it was all about. Davis ameliorates previous insults and injustices by describing the work in detail within the context of Jones’s autobiography. In so doing he makes a persuasive case that Jones’s piece is a collaborative piece on “survival” in the face of death, comparable to butoh dance in post-war Japan.

The next two chapters are similar insofar as they focus on how a dominant theme in a particular culture can be expressed in various art forms. Chapter Five addresses linear dynamics and the reconciliation of opposites in Chinese art. Initially I was surprised that the chapter was devoted solely to early Chinese art, especially since the I-Ching heavily influenced American twentieth-century music, art, and literature. Upon further reflection I realized that what Davis offers with this “omission” is a powerful lesson in transnationalism by deciding purposely not to consider American-centric reworkings of Chinese
(continued on back page)

New interdisciplinary research fellowship at UNT

The Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies at the University of North Texas has announced the creation of a new research fellowship in the theory of interdisciplinarity for incoming graduate students for the fall of 2008. Details of the application procedure can be found at <http://www.phil.unt.edu/programs/graduate/>. ■■■



30th Annual AIS Conference

October 23rd - 26th 2008 - Springfield, Illinois

Dear Colleagues,

The University of Illinois at Springfield invites you to participate in the 30th Annual Conference of the Association for Integrative Studies, scheduled for October 23-26, 2008. The conference will serve as a celebration of 30 years of work by the Association for Integrative Studies to promote interdisciplinary and integrative teaching and scholarship.

The 2008 conference theme is Interdisciplinarity and the Engaged Citizen: Integrating Higher Education, Public Policy, and Global Action.

As higher education promotes citizenship, ethics, and social responsibility, the benefits of interdisciplinary and integrative discussion and problem-solving become clearer. UIS therefore welcomes papers, panels, workshops, roundtables, and creative presentations in the categories of:

- Engagement and Knowledge Making
- Engagement and Public Policy
- Engagement in Teaching and Learning
- Engagement and Action

While attending the conference, you'll have an opportunity to explore Springfield. In the heart of Central Illinois, the "Land that Lincoln Loved," Springfield is the state capital and the site of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, where we'll host a reception and dinner during the conference. The conference hotel, The President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, sits in the heart of downtown Springfield and offers access to historical sites associated with Lincoln and the spectacularly preserved Dana-Thomas House, a Frank Lloyd Wright design. Restaurants, theaters, shopping, nightlife, and other attractions are within walking distance.

Please join us in Springfield for the 30th Annual Conference of the Association for Integrative Studies!

Karen R. Moranski and the AIS Conference Planning Team
University of Illinois at Springfield

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Association for Integrative Studies 30th Annual Conference
 Hosted by the University of Illinois at Springfield
 October 23-26, 2008, Springfield, Illinois

Interdisciplinarity and the Engaged Citizen: Integrating Higher Education, Public Policy, and Global Action

Higher education today aims to create an intellectually rich and culturally diverse campus environments that promote engaged and active learning and offer safe places to explore multiple perspectives. Moreover, higher education places itself at the forefront of public policy debates, efforts to define citizenship, and calls for societal change. Interdisciplinary and integrative problem-solving strategies can be actively employed to promote the kind of reflection, dialogue, and action on public policy and civic culture that result in informed engagement with the world.

To integrate interdisciplinarity and citizenship, we welcome proposals for papers, panels, workshops, roundtables, and creative presentations that address issues such as the following:

Engagement and Knowledge Making: theories of interdisciplinarity; epistemological conflicts and intersections in the academy and beyond; engaging the boundaries of disciplines; transdisciplinarity as engagement beyond the disciplines; new research and trends.

Engagement and Public Policy: intersections between liberal arts and public affairs; connections between higher education and public policy; interdisciplinary public policy issues surrounding issues such as health, the environment, and government at the local, regional, national or international levels; debates surrounding the Spellings Commission; discussions regarding the future of higher education.

Engagement in Teaching and Learning: interdisciplinary approaches to general education, active learning, service-learning, or learning in majors or graduate programs; liberal arts and professional programs assessment of engaged curricula; interdisciplinary approaches to engaging the "other"; integrating undergraduate and graduate education; integrating P-12 and higher education; intersections between student affairs and academic affairs to promote engagement.

Engagement and Action: discussions about the role of higher education in promoting social or environmental justice and activism; interdisciplinarity and citizenship; interdisciplinarity and social or political problem-solving at different level—local, regional, national or global; engagement and online learning; integrating the academy and the community.

Proposal Deadline: April 11, 2008

**Apply online at <http://www.signup4.net/Public/ap.aspx?EID=AISC13E&OID=130>
 or link to the conference Web site from the AIS Web site, www.muohio.edu/ais**

Image as Idea ...

(continued from page 5)

art and ideas. Chapter Six focuses on Akira Kurosawa's intertextual influences for his seminal 1951 film *Rashomon*, two stories by Ryunosuke Akutagawa. The inclusion of the English translation of Akutagawa's "In a Grove" encourages students to contemplate the complex relationship between literature and film while also teaching students the importance of multiple perspectives and how they can be integrated. The readers of Akutagawa and the viewers of *Rashomon* have no choice but to reconcile for themselves the multiple differing perspectives of witnesses and victims of the rape of a woman and the murder of her husband. While Davis's selections are unmistakable nods toward interdisciplinarity and integration, some more explicit discussion would have been helpful. Nevertheless, instructors can easily deploy this chapter as an opportunity to introduce students to theories of integration.

Finally, *Image as Idea* concludes in Chapter Seven with a discussion of Frida Kahlo and her extraordinary paintings. Davis makes an excellent choice with Kahlo—her legacy has become global in scope and undergraduates are keen on her

work. Davis first contextualizes Kahlo's paintings within Mexican cultural practices: Mexican festivals or *fiestas*; and Mexican art, particularly *retablos* and *ex-votos*. He describes vividly nine of Kahlo's self-portraits within the context of her biography before finally considering her art in relation to the murals of her husband Diego Rivera.

In lieu of a conclusion *Image as Idea* includes an extensive glossary and a helpful bibliography, both of which will be indispensable resources for students and instructors alike. I finished *Image as Idea* with a much greater appreciation of how a topic or theme-based approach to the study of the creative arts can increase our understanding of world cultures and interdisciplinarity. Overall, *Image as Idea* makes a compelling case that innovative and new interdisciplinary approaches to the creative arts are not only possible—they are absolutely essential in a world that is undeniably becoming increasingly more global.

Notes

¹ See Enwezor et al (2002); Reilly and Nochlin (2007).

² Two academic symposiums immediately

come to mind. The first is *Collision: Interarts-Interdisciplinarity-International Symposium*, which took place September 8-11, 2005, at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada. As for the second, in July 2007 the Art Institute of Chicago hosted a weeklong summer institute on the theme of *Globalization of Art*. For more information on *Collision*, see Augsborg (2005). For more information on *The Globalization of Art*, see the Stone Summer Theory Institute Web site at <http://www.stonesummertheoryinstitute.org>.

References

- Augsburg, T. (1995). Collaboration within the field. *The Drama Review*, T14, 166-172.
- Augsburg, T. (2005). Interarts-interdisciplinarity: *Collision* symposium fosters exploration of commonalities. *Association for Integrative Studies Newsletter* 27 (4), 3; 6-7.
- Croce, A. (1994-95, 26 Dec. – 2 Jan.). Discussing the undiscussable. *The New Yorker*, 54-60.
- Enwezor, O. et al. (2002). *Documenta 11, platform 5: Exhibition, catalogue*. Ostfildern-Fuit: Hatje Cantz.
- Lippard, L.R. (1990). *Mixed blessings: New art in a multicultural America*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Reilly, M. & Nochlin, L. (2007). *Global feminisms: New directions in contemporary art*. London & New York: Merrell. ■■■



Association for Integrative Studies

Western College Program

Miami University

Oxford, OH 45056

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage Paid
Miami University