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When Pixels Replace Presence: Reframing Aesthetic Experience in the Post-Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

One of the most crucial transformations tracing back to digital technology is that aesthetic experiences are increasingly mediated by screen-based visual representations. The pixels replace presence phenomenon creates epistemological challenges in the sphere of art education, leading educators to ask questions regarding how much depth there is to meaning, if reflective engagement is at all possible, and what the aesthetic experiences are for students. The goal of this article is to theorize the idea of an aesthetic experience in the post-digital age via a synthesis of Jean Baudrillard's (1981) insights on simulacra, Walter Benjamin's (1969) writings on aura and John Dewey's (1934/2005) theories about aesthetic experience. The research method used is literature study with a critical analysis approach. The results of the study indicate that digital mediation has the potential to reduce aesthetic experience to fragmented visual consumption but also opens new pedagogical opportunities in expanding access and sparking curiosity. Therefore, a pedagogical approach is needed that can integrate digital experiences and embodied experiences reflectively. This article provides a theoretical contribution to the development of post-digital art pedagogy that emphasizes the importance of a balance between representation and presence in the learning process.

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation emerges as a major catalyst that changes the nature of interactions that take place between an individual and the visual domain, specifically art education. The notion of artistry is not anymore limited to the gallery or museum setting. Rather, artistry is expressed through databases and virtual museums, as well as on social networking sites and in digital images generated by artificial intelligence techniques. Contemporary museum discourse also emphasizes that today's museums do not just serve the purpose of exhibition; they have come to play the role of infrastructure for interaction, identity, and sustainability (Huan, 2024). Currently, the aesthetic encounter takes place in the digital domain; as a result, there is a tendency where the pixels take the place of the body as the site of aesthetic experience. This trend is consistent with post-digital ideas about the breakdown of barriers between the physical and the digital domains, where technology finds its place in the daily routine of culture and education. As such, the aesthetic experience cannot be analyzed based on a dichotomy between virtual and real environments.

This cultural shift hinges on digital culture, which allows easier access to works of art, and at the same time, reshapes our ways of looking and aesthetic exchanges. The very way interfaces and algorithms and visually rendered imagery, which we use in great numbers today, mediate information and interpret it on behalf of us. Digital learning platforms have made use of AI systems that influence the way users engage and interact within them. Studies done by Abdelmagid *et al.* (2024) showed

that the implementation of AI systems within digital learning platforms had led to improved engagement and interactive learning experiences for students. On the other hand, new developments in artificial intelligence and computer-generated images bring into question traditional ideas about authorship, authenticity, and aesthetics in contemporary art. The implications of this development give rise to heated debates both epistemologically and pedagogically.

Locating aesthetic experience within classic aesthetic theory Aesthetic experience may be considered as a holistic activity, entailing aspects of perception, emotions, contemplation, and understanding of context. However, within the chaotic world of the digital environment, where pictures are viewed instantaneously, there is a danger posed to the experience of aesthetic experience where it may sink into a superficial level of engagement. This may be understood through the framework of Baudrillard's idea of the simulacra of simulation, in which the representation is not only reflective but also performative (Baudrillard, 1994). In a similar way, Benjamin's idea of aura suggests that art works, once technologically reproduced, no longer possess their ephemeral essence (Benjamin, 2008). Nevertheless, quite contrary to this position, according to John Dewey (1934/2005), the experience of aesthetic is contingent upon continuity, action, and interaction. However, more significantly, in the contemporary discourse on educational technology, the notion of access to digital technologies has frequently either been overlooked or criticized (Selwyn, 2021) in order to move the focus

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from the restricted definitions of access in terms of particular technologies and technological infrastructure towards the nature of particular technological spaces that create conditions for engagement and meaning-making processes. The result is a shift from a discussion of technologies to designing meaningful digital experiences in the learning environments.

The act of digitalization is a revolutionary concept that has not only impacted the way art can be accessed but has also impacted the foundations of the aesthetics experience and learning itself. The evolution of arts education into collaborative, participatory, and digitally connected practices has been accelerated by immersive technologies, virtual galleries, and AI-assisted creative platforms that expand opportunities for interaction and creative engagement (Liu & Wang, 2025). However, through the process, the aesthetic experience becomes more fragmented and reflective of increased distractions despite becoming more accessible and interactive. It is in this way that issues such as distraction and the speed of perception arise (Crary, 2014). However, despite the extensive amount of theoretical debate about these changes, current research is still shown to have some conceptual limitations due to the fact that aesthetic experience is often considered to be an implied variable, as opposed to an integral part of the experiential construct. Another important problem that can be found in current research is that it is very fragmented, and does not provide a comprehensive theory that could help us understand the connection between subject, object, and digital mediation.

From the identified shortcomings, this paper will attempt to rebuild the definition of aesthetic experience in the post-digital age using three theories that are simulacra, aura, and aesthetic experience. This paper will have four main contributions, including the following: First, there will be a conceptual framework created for comprehending how the experience has changed through digital mediation. Second, there will be a new concept called the layered aesthetic experience between digital and embodied aspects. Third, there will be a shift in emphasis from access issues to the nature and design of the aesthetics experiences. Fourth, there will be pedagogical implications for instance, slow looking and critical aesthetic literacy. Therefore, this paper not only enriches the present-day discussion of aesthetics and post-digital culture within theoretical literature, but also advances practical and contextually informed methods for art education in the post-digital age.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Post-Digital Visual Culture and Mediation

Abstract The concept of the post-digital condition may be defined as the state of culture when digital technology stops being viewed as an external apparatus and becomes an integral part of people's lives, their perception, and socialization (Petar Jandrić *et al.*, 2025). This brings a dramatic shift in how people relate to and understand

artworks while talking about them in the field of art education. At present, people communicate with images not only directly but also using interfaces, algorithms, and virtual art galleries, where the experience of interacting with art is mediated by digital apparatuses.

In general, the transformation of such an interaction fits into the framework proposed by Manovich (2001) to explain how the characteristic features of database thinking and interface design in digital media contribute not only to the provision of access to information but also to its modification. This means that digital imagery is not a mere representation of art objects, as it transforms the process of our engagement with meanings. Post-digital visual culture, in turn, places digital imagery into the role of a medium that structures our ways of perception and orientation (Pollen, 2023). Hence, mediation becomes a significant category for consideration in this context, considering the increased emphasis on technological aspects of aesthetic experience.

Moreover, greater reliance on digital interfaces changes the ways in which visual attention is structured within modern culture. According to Crary (2014), digital landscapes function under an economy of attention that includes distraction, speed, and perpetual consumption. This often means that visual encounters are subject to scrolling, skimming, and other forms of rapid visual attention, thus restricting time spent in reflection. In this regard, the educational sphere faces problems connected with the decline in aesthetic education.

Simulacra and Hyperreality in Digital Visual Culture

The concept of simulacra, as posited by Jean Baudrillard, provides profound insight into the nature of aesthetic experience in today's visual culture. According to Baudrillard (1994), in the postmodern era, representation was no longer concerned with representing reality but with creating hyperreality – the process of interpreting symbols and images as the truth, as the supreme power above all other experiences. Today, our aesthetic encounters through the digital domain are increasingly mediated through screens, interfaces, algorithmic feeds, and representations, thus creating opportunities for engagement with objects that are simulated representations of themselves.

This concept is important to understand when it comes to practicing the viewing and recognizing of artworks in art education. The artworks get shared via social media feed posts in compressed versions due to convenience. This is likely to result in a loss of aesthetic engagement on the part of the user. The reality of the matter is that the viewer rarely gets an opportunity to see the work as an object but rather sees the visual representation of it.

Fragmentation of aesthetic attention may be considered an essential prerequisite for post-digital visual culture. While being involved in rapid consumption and continuous circulation, experiences occur, which are susceptible to interaction at a surface level, such as distracted viewing and quick visual consumption. Simulacrum is not used

as an abstract theory of representation but as a notion explaining how digital environments influence perception and continuity of attention.

While the simulacrum suggests a state of loss, mediated representation, including digital simulation and networking imagery, is an opening that provokes interest, orientation, and exploration. Digital simulation produces encounters that lead to richer forms of experience. For current art education, the problem is less one of avoiding the mediation than it is creating educational experiences that can restore the connection between representation, embodiment, and critique.

Aura, Digital Reproduction, and Aesthetic Experience

The concept of aura discussed by Walter Benjamin provides another perspective regarding the impact of technology on aesthetic experience. For instance, as Benjamin (2008) suggests, mechanical reproduction changes the presence and history of a work of art because of its separation from time and space. Digital technology enables the repeated, instant reproduction of artworks, thereby affecting the relationship between the observer and the work of art. From a theoretical standpoint, aura is the aspect of presence, authenticity, and context that is diminished by digital technology.

However, it is clear that in today's age, aura cannot be defined only as an attribute of the artwork but may be understood as a state of experience that can be reconstructed through mediation, narrative, and context. This point is supported by examples from the area of digital museums and heritage studies. Indeed, as Winesmith and Anderson (2020) argue, modern theories of digital museums stress the importance of interactivity and participation as opposed to passivity. Likewise, Lewi *et al.* (2020) argue that digital heritage transforms experiences of cultural objects through multimodality and immersion.

This indicates that the technological mediation is not limited to narrowing down the scope of aesthetics, but it can even produce new ways of experience that allow multiple interpretations and facilitate access. In this case, digital mediation is no longer a medium for the destruction of experiential value, but rather a space for reconstructing the experience of aesthetics through curatorial practices and storytelling.

However, the issue with the potential for the world enhanced through technology to provide experiences that have deep meaning remains. This is evident in the criticism offered by Crary (2014), where he argues that the way aesthetic experience is conducted has become more fragmented and condensed due to the fragmentation of attention.

Deweyan Aesthetic Experience and Reflective Engagement

Unlike theories of loss and disruption, John Dewey's theory of aesthetic experience takes the form of a

reconstructionist theory characterized by continuity, interaction, and involvement. As Dewey (1934/2005) says, aesthetic experience is not an intrinsic property of the object in consideration, but rather a phenomenon arising from the interactions between people and their environments. Thus, aesthetic experience entails a concept that demands the incorporation of various factors into a process of experience.

It is even more relevant in regard to current processes of aesthetic education. In discussing the process of learning in the context of contemporary educational settings, Hellman and Lind (2021) highlight that learning aesthetics occurs in a recursive manner through interaction between perceptions, interpretations, and experience. The meaning created in this process is formed slowly and through reflection and continuity of experience. This sharply contrasts with fast-paced digital interactions resulting in disjointed experiences.

Another important thing about the recent research in arts education is the role of reflection and inquiry activities that help ensure the depth of aesthetic experience while working in digital settings. Digitization is a revolutionary process not only because it has affected the ways we access art but also because it has changed the very nature of the aesthetic experience and the process of learning. Digital tools have enabled collaborative approaches to art learning and teaching. The development of immersive technology, AI-based art creation, and collaborative digital tools can serve as evidence of this statement (Hui, 2026; Liu & Wang, 2025). As can be seen, the depth of experience in question does not depend on the medium but the way of involvement.

It seems that the idea of a layered experience could be considered an intriguing concept within the context of post-digital arts education in terms of its applicability for aesthetics pedagogy. As opposed to the comparison between the digital and physical experiences considered previously, a layered experience is thought to be a continuous one.

Pedagogical Reconstruction of Aesthetic Experience

In order for the theory of aesthetic experience to grow within the post-digital era, it is imperative to not only reconsider the theory but also the pedagogy of it. Due to the nature of digital mediation where speed, distraction, and divided attention are prevalent characteristics, studying aesthetics tends to become rather superficial and disjointed. It is critical for art education to develop a learning design that promotes reflection, participation, and coherence.

In this regard, the concept of continuity of experience developed by Dewey (1934/2005) can be considered an effective pedagogic tool. According to Dewey's perspective, the aesthetic experience that is meaningful for a person is based on the process of active reflection and perception of feelings as an integral part of the continuous experience. To put it differently, the goal of art education is not to oppose digital technology but to

create experiences where students would reflect on the visual culture.

Undoubtedly, recent research in the field of arts education is consistent with this view. As argued by Liu and Wang (2025), through the application of digital technology and AI to arts education, learning processes characterized by collaboration, interactivity, and reflection can be realized to broaden aesthetic experiences. Similarly, Hui (2026) emphasizes that reflective inquiry and enhanced interpretative skills are possible through the use of AI-supported digital art environments and collaborations. Consequently, based on the aforementioned findings, it can be concluded that aesthetic learning depends more on teaching methods than on technology access.

Another way of helping to create genuine aesthetic participation is by designing multi-leveled experiences, in which technology is employed as the first phase of the process whereby context and curiosity are created. This means that technology is not used to replace experiences, but becomes only one part of the many linked experiences, including representation, embodiment, and reflection.

The call for pedagogic transformation suggests that there are ways of countering the quickness of the digital visual world. One of them is the practice of “slow looking” which enables students to focus on an object of inquiry and think about its significance.

Critical Aesthetic Literacy in Digital Space

The role of computational technologies and their mediation via platforms brings into focus the need for critical aesthetic literacy in art education in the post-digital era. Current digital platforms mediate visual perception through computational technologies such as algorithms, interfaces, and data-processing systems, impacting participation, visibility, and interpretation. Hence, critical literacy must include an awareness of how computational technologies mediate visual perception and interpretation (Engel & Burchard, 2024).

Critical aesthetic literacy in art education is seen as a theoretical concept that is connected with the notions of inquiry, reflection, and mediation literacy. Critical aesthetic literacy allows students to perceive not only the work of art but also the technological conditions under which their perception takes place. Thus, reflective approaches are essential for helping students move from mere observation to critical inquiry.

It is important to consider this approach to aesthetic education in post-digital environments, where visual perception is accelerated and fragmented. Reflective inquiry will allow students to think critically about the way in which aesthetic experiences are created, mediated, and distributed within technological systems.

While there is a rising body of literature on digital mediation and aesthetic learning, the research literature continues to be fragmented among media theory, museum mediation, and pedagogy. Few researchers have attempted to build a conceptual framework based on simulacra, aura, aesthetic experience, mediation, layered experience,

and critical aesthetic literacy. Consequently, this study attempts to employ these concepts as an interconnected framework in exploring aesthetic experience through digitally mediated environments.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology used in this research was qualitative conceptual research with a focus on the critical review of literature and theoretical synthesis to redefine aesthetic experience in the post-digital world in terms of art education. Instead of collecting empirical data via direct field observation or experimentation, the research relied on the evaluation and synthesis of various theories about digital mediation, simulacra, aura, aesthetic experience, and post-digital pedagogy. The use of conceptual research methodology is best suited for analyzing theoretical and philosophical questions and developing new frameworks as opposed to conducting quantitative studies.

Primary research materials comprised scholarly books, journal articles, and publications dealing with topics related to post-digital culture, theories of aesthetics, media studies, and arts education. For selecting the literature, it was emphasized that the study would involve foundational theoretical works along with recent scholarly discourses written between the years 2020 and 2025. These included the writings of authors such as Baudrillard (1994), Benjamin (2008), Dewey (1934/2005), Manovich (2001), and Crary (2014). Recent literature used in the study covered issues of post-digital culture, digital pedagogies, aesthetic learning, mediation of museums, and critical literacy and comprised works of Petar Jandrić *et al.* (2025), Pollen (2023), Engel and Burchard (2024), Lui and Wang (2025), Hui (2026), Huan (2024), Abdelmagid *et al.* (2024), Winesmith and Anderson (2020), and Lewi *et al.* (2020).

The process of literature review entailed scanning through scholarly articles on the Internet via Google Scholar, Scopus databases, Springer Link, Taylor & Francis Online, and journals published by E-Palli Publishers, including the American Journal of Arts and Human Science, as well as other reputable academic databases. Some of the keywords used during the search process include “post-digital aesthetics,” “aesthetic experience,” “digital mediation,” “simulacra,” “aura,” “art education,” “digital museums,” “critical aesthetic literacy,” and “post-digital pedagogy.” The following are some of the inclusion criteria for the review process:

- (1) theoretical relevance pertaining to aesthetic experience and digital mediation;
- (2) contribution to post-digital scholarship; and
- (3) relevance for pedagogical considerations within the context of art education.

Analysis of the data was done through the use of thematic and interpretative analysis. This analysis process was carried out through the following three phases: literature identification, thematic classification, and concept synthesis. Literature was first identified depending on its theoretical relevance to the study of post-digital aesthetics and arts pedagogy. Second, the

literature that was identified was classified under several thematic concepts including post-digital visual culture and mediation, simulacra and hyper-reality, aura and digital reproducibility, aesthetic experience from a Deweyan perspective, pedagogic reconstruction, and critical aesthetic literacy. Conceptual synthesis was thirdly carried out to determine thematic similarities and relationships among the identified theoretical concepts.

Synthetic interpretation was then employed in the research as an approach in bringing together these theoretical perspectives. In the process, the interrelated analytical constructs of simulacra, aura, mediation, layering, and critical aesthetic literacy were synthesized for use in making sense of the post-digital aesthetics experience. The result was the creation of a conceptual framework that highlights the relationship between digital participation, corporeal interaction, and reflective interpretation in art education.

Since this research is conceptual in its approach, validity was achieved based on theoretical consistency, critical evaluation among different academic schools of thought, and reliance on credible academic references. Rather than generalizing empirical results, the methodology sought to generate a theoretically coherent framework that can make a meaningful contribution to ongoing discussions about post-digital aesthetics and arts education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reframing Simulacra in Post-Digital Art Education

For this study, the hypothesis advanced is that, during the post-digital period, aesthetic experience tends to be constructed through mediated representation rather than through actual engagement with the object. In digital settings, artworks will usually be engaged through computer screens, interfaces, feed algorithms, virtual exhibitions, and compressed representations of visual objects. The scenario described is a reflection of simulacra in the context defined by Baudrillard, where representations are no longer mirror-like but are systems of signs that create new forms of perception (Baudrillard, 1994).

The research also posits that the use of digital mediation does not merely convey visual information but restructures aesthetic perception via interface thinking, database thinking, and visible algorithms. According to Manovich (2001), computation is intrinsic to digital media because digital media function based on computation. Thus, contemporary aesthetic experience takes place not only within contemplation but also within an environment of circulation, immediacy, and visible appearance. This reality is further exacerbated by the logic of digital culture, which emphasizes speed, scrolling, fragmented attention, and visual transitions (Crary, 2014).

In the field of art education, these changes have profound consequences for the process of aesthetically learning. Art is usually apprehended as floating signs in a visual form without any material, spatial, or historical grounding. This means that the aesthetic encounter runs the risk of

becoming a surface-level experience, which becomes more and more platform-mediated. Nevertheless, the research presented here redefines the concept of simulacra not only as an indicator of the degradation of the experience but also as a possible starting point for education.

The re-conceptualisation of simulacra in turn means that in the context of art education, it is necessary to go beyond using digital imagery in the learning process as a value-neutral educational tool and stimulate the analysis of the mediated production of perception, attention, and meaning. Hence, the present research seeks to explore the notion of simulacra as a theoretical concept that helps understand the mediation of aesthetic experience in post-digital art education.

Reconstructing Aura Through Layered Experience

In addition, the current research will also argue that digital reproduction radically alters the experience factors that Benjamin attributes to aura in his conceptual understanding. According to Benjamin (2008), technological reproduction separates the work from its natural space-time setting, thus reducing the uniqueness inherent in encountering an artwork first hand. In a post-digital age, works are infinitely reproducible, instantly available, and perpetually circulating on various digital mediums.

Nevertheless, in this case, the notion of aura is being redefined as a construct defined through relations and experiences instead of being intrinsic to the work of art itself. Modern means of digital mediation show that the sense of artistic depth could be partially recreated using such practices as contextualization, storytelling, interactivity, and even curation. Studies of digital museums and heritage media suggest that immersive media technologies, as well as multimodal interactivity, are able to create authentic aesthetic experiences (Winesmith & Anderson, 2020).

This paradigm shift indicates that mediation through technology serves to both reduce and reconstitute depth aesthetics. While accelerated environments facilitated by digital technology promote fragmentary behavior and rapid viewing that detracts from contemplation (Crary, 2014), the process of mediation through technology increases access and allows for interpretive exploration and participation. For these reasons, this research will define aura in such a way that it is no longer an intrinsic characteristic associated only with physical presence but rather becomes an experience generated by continuity, attention, interpretation, and engagement.

As a result, the re-creation of the aura as an experience also suggests that art education after the digital age must focus more on interpretive, narrative, interactive, and reflective experiences other than mere digital availability. Consequently, the difficulty of art education does not lie in the restoration of a non-existent pre-digital authenticity but in the design of educational contexts for sustaining engagement.

Deweyan Continuity in Digitally Mediated Learning

In this study, it will be contended that Dewey's conception of aesthetic experience constitutes a reconstructive model which can tackle the problem of fragmentation inherent to post-digital visual culture. As Dewey (1934/2005) puts it, aesthetic experience occurs as a constant experiential process generated by the dynamic interaction between people and their surroundings. It follows that meaning does not reside solely within the work of art, but rather arises from the synthesis of perception, feeling, thought, and context.

Under such circumstances of distraction and speeded-up visual consumption, experiential disruption is identified here as one of the key problems of learning aesthetics in a post-digital age. Indeed, digital environments tend to disrupt prolonged observation, creating fragmented experiences in which perception is detached from contemplation and interpretation.

However, what this study suggests is that there is a possibility for the development of genuine aesthetic engagement through carefully planned education, in order to create an environment for continuity, reflection, and inquiry. Through reflective interaction and interpretation, individuals are able to transcend mere viewing to actual engagement (Hellman & Lind, 2021). From this viewpoint, aesthetic learning is a cyclic process where meaning gradually emerges through reflection and interpretation.

Continuity in Dewey's theory is thus a reason why post-digital art education requires prolonged sequencing of experiences over fragmented encounters with visuals. Aesthetic experience needs to be regarded as a multi-layered process, comprising mediation, engagement, and meaning construction. In this context, digital technologies should no longer be perceived as barriers to aesthetic experience but rather as part of an ecosystem that requires thoughtful pedagogical coordination. These findings agree with research results showing that educational platforms that incorporate AI technology are capable of facilitating cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement within interactive digital environments (Abdelmagid *et al.*, 2024).

Layered Aesthetic Experience Model

Aesthetic Experience Layers Model is seen as the main conceptual development made in this research. In line with the theoretical synthesis that has been formed during the course of the analysis, the current study suggests using the model as an integrative pedagogical approach that could be employed in order to construct the aesthetic experience in the context of post-digital art education.

Digital orientation becomes the first stage, which acts as the introductory experience layer where mediated images trigger curiosity and set in motion the process of exploration. Digital media then act not as substitutes to experience, but as tools that prepare you for future experiences.

In the second stage, that is, embodied intensification, the importance of direct sensory experience of art objects

is highlighted by observing them and interacting with them physically. A sustainable museum environment must not focus solely on technical efficiency but rather create a meaningful space experience. In the creation of spatial simplicity, sensitivity to environmental concerns, and sensory experience, sustainability becomes effective both environmentally and aesthetically (Huan, 2024). The embodied intensification stage ensures that the aspects of materiality, emotional involvement, and spatial perception, which are often neglected in virtual settings, are included again.

The third stage is reflection, which involves interpretation, inquiry, dialogue, and reflective meaning construction based on context. The students construct meaning out of their perceptions and feelings through dialogue, written expression, art making, and critical reflection. Reflection turns personal experiences into aesthetic experiences by placing them in the larger context.

In the present research, it will be contended that a layered approach reorients the discussion in post-digital art education about technological affordances toward experiential design. Rather than relying on the better quality of aesthetic experience brought about by digital and analog media, this paper proposes that it depends on how many kinds of interactions are pedagogically woven together to create a coherent and ongoing process of learning. While past studies considered digital mediation, museum experience, and aesthetic pedagogy independently, the current study creates a conceptual framework of simulacra, aura, Deweyan continuity, layered experience, and critical aesthetic literacy in post-digital art education.

Critical Aesthetic Literacy as Pedagogical Response

Furthermore, the paper acknowledges that critical aesthetic literacy constitutes an essential pedagogical response to the phenomenon of visual culture outside the digital sphere. Contemporary digital environments tend to shape how perception is produced through computational mechanisms of visibility and meaning-making (Engel & Burchard, 2024). Therefore, an aesthetic education program should not solely focus on the appreciation and interpretation of artworks but also consider the sociotechnical aspects of visibility.

Critical aesthetic literacy is seen as the ability to critically analyze the way digital platforms control attention, mediate representations, and affect aesthetic perceptions. In such an understanding, inquiry-based learning takes center stage as a method for fostering a questioning attitude toward the means through which digital visual culture works. The result is that students will no longer be seen only as passive recipients of visual content but as active agents who can critically understand the ways in which their aesthetic experiences are constructed through technology.

It can also be viewed as an answer to the rapid and distraction-filled logic of today's digital environment. Dialogue, contextualization, interactivity, and observation

emerge as techniques that help resist the surface level experience of looking and reclaim depth through experience. Thus, critical aesthetic literacy extends the scope of aesthetic education from visual enjoyment to critical understanding of mediation itself.

There are a number of implications that have emerged from the conceptual framework constructed in this research study. In an age where aesthetics in the post-digital world becomes ever more mediated, fragmented, and organized by algorithms, it means that education has to consciously construct meaning, reflection, and context. The layered aesthetics experience, in other words, will require approaches to education that can sustain attention, analysis, and physical interaction.

Pedagogical Implications of the Layered Aesthetic Experience Model

Layered Experience Design

In this paper, it is stated that art education in the post-digital environment needs to be constructed as an unbroken chain of experiences rather than disjointed teaching exercises. Based on the layered model of the aesthetic experience, it becomes evident that a person's involvement comes from the blending of digital orientation, embodied intensification, and interpretation. Hence, it is important to note that digital interaction serves as a means of introducing context and arousing curiosity.

In this way, continuity of experience is attained through the connection between discovery via mediation and engagement and reflection. Under these conditions, the success of aesthetic learning does not depend upon the degree of technological advancement applied but rather on how the experience is constructed. Experience construction therefore becomes crucial in maintaining the experiential integrity.

Slow Looking as a Pedagogical Strategy

The present research also asserts that the hurried nature of digital visual culture necessitates pedagogies that are able to reclaim sustained attention and engagement with what is being looked at. Slow looking can be seen as a vital pedagogy for fragmented visual consumption, as through slow looking, one will have the opportunity to engage deeply and perceptually with what is being looked at.

In this model of aesthetic experience, slow looking puts into practice the concept of continuity as per Dewey's theory, in which reflective moments, time, and integration become possible. Unlike the approach that stresses rapid visual experiences, this method allows for prolonged engagement that will enhance aesthetic appreciation, affective response, and interpretation. Thus, slow looking not only serves as a tool of observation but also as a pedagogic tool against distraction.

Integration of Inquiry and Critical Aesthetic Literacy

According to this research, inquiry-based learning needs

to be incorporated into post-digital art education in order to cultivate aesthetic literacy. Inquiry will help students analyze how digital technologies structure representation and affect both visibility and aesthetics. Through inquiry, students will no longer simply be spectators but reflective participants, who are able to critically think about visual media culture.

In this approach, critical aesthetic literacy is understood to be a metacognitive skill that allows the learner to realize that aesthetic experience takes place through a technology-, culture-, and representation-based system. Hence, methods of inquiry such as reflection, comparison, and interpretation will allow the learners to understand the social and technical factors involved in aesthetic experiences.

Re-contextualization of Artworks

According to this analysis, the re-construction of contextual factors that tend to be marginalized in digital engagements is essential for post-digital art pedagogy. The act of re-contextualizing artworks is one way to incorporate historical, spatial, cultural, and material contexts that will allow for a deeper appreciation of the work itself.

In the model of aesthetic experience with multiple layers, recontextualization acts as a link between mediation and interpretation. Digital curation, framing narratives, pedagogy at museums, and context-based dialogue are thus indispensable for reassembling the experiential dimension. Pedagogically, this means that, rather than being removed by digital mediation, context needs to be actively reassembled through education.

e. Developing Metacognitive Awareness of Mediation

Lastly, this study recommends that art education in a post-digital world should develop metacognition towards the process of mediation. Aesthetic experiences should not be considered neutral; instead, they are always mediated by technology, representations, and culture. Hence, metacognition of mediation facilitates critical reflection on how the viewer perceives, interprets, and evaluates their visual experience.

In this case, digital media should not be viewed as didactic instruments only but as media agents influencing the level of attention, perception, and engagement. In this way, metacognition plays a role in helping students develop critical analytical competencies within the algorithmic environment while not neglecting reflection. Therefore, this educational practice helps cultivate reflective learners capable of analyzing artistic objects and the processes behind aesthetic creation.

CONCLUSIONS

The research reconsiders aesthetic experience within post-digital art education using simulacra, aura, Deweyan continuity, layered experience, and critical aesthetic literacy theories. Based on the result, contemporary aesthetic experience within digital culture is mediated

by representation, algorithms, and computational visualization. This leads to the possibility that aesthetic experiences will become fragmented, surface-level, and disconnected from reflective and contextual components. Nonetheless, digital mediation cannot be perceived as only an obstacle to aesthetic experience; instead, it is regarded as a learning tool capable of expanding the process of aesthetic participation.

Layered aesthetic experience theory is the key contribution made by this study. Within this framework, the researcher defines aesthetic experience as a continuous phenomenon that encompasses digital orientation, embodiment intensification, and reflective interpretation. Aesthetic experience is thus regarded as a relational experience mediated by technologies and facilitated through the processes of mediation, embodiment, attention, and reflection. Critical aesthetic literacy plays a significant role in encouraging students to critically evaluate the impact of technological mechanisms on their interpretation. Even though this research is conceptual, it contributes significantly to the field of art education and provides a theoretical background for future studies and reflective pedagogies.

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