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Assessment Assemblage: Advancing Portfolio Practice through the Assessment Staging Theory

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Arts education faces challenges from continual pressure for educational accountability. How should art educators assess inventive and divergent learning in ways that communicate to those outside the arts? The answer matters not only for the development of useful art assessment, but also in securing a place for the arts in public education. Prior assessment efforts are deeply rooted in distinct epistemological stances on the nature of learning and are tied to a particular learning theory, resulting in competing goals that undermine the efforts to document learning from other perspectives. In order to assemble together current assessment efforts through an epistemologically pluralistic approach to assessment, this article uses the metaphor of increasingly formal theatrical staging to review existing and emerging research on arts assessment. Just as the process of *assemblage* lets artists create new meaning from disparate objects, this article introduces a comprehensive new approach, called assessment assemblage theory, for improving *existent* assessment and testing practices to satisfy a range of stakeholders.

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Heightened accountability in education (particularly the No Child Left Behind [NCLB] Act of 2001, Public

Law 107-110) has led to agreement among art educators that assessment is crucial in securing a place for art in public education (Brewer, 2008; Dorn, 2002; Eisner, 1996). Over the past decade, the needs for external accountability have taken front stage in assessment reform (Dorn, 2003; Hardy, 2006; Jacobs, 1997; Siegesmund, Diket, & McColloch, 2001). While NCLB acknowledged the place of the arts in education (and initially earmarked funds for arts assessment), the actual enactment of the law focused initially on the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics, and only recently expanded to include science and social studies. These values are reified in the mandatory standardized testing practices which directly and indirectly drive what content gets taught and how that content is represented (Wiggins, 1998). Not surprisingly, NCLB has led to a marked decrease in the focus on arts education in K-12 schools (Chapman, 2004; Spohn, 2008).

Most of the actual or potential responses to accountability demands are problematic for arts education. One obvious response is simply adding arts to the existing regime of content areas in which schools are held accountable. Given the creative and subjective nature of the artistic domains, it seems clear that increasing accountability for proficiency in the arts within the prevailing testing context that practically requires multiple-choice formats will not have positive consequences for arts education. Indeed, the degree of conformity required

for such formats does not work well with the unique and complex nature of learning in the arts, which often targets unknown solutions, the proverbial *thinking outside the box*, and explorations that are individual and unique to the self. While the performance assessment formats that many states experimented with in the 1990s seemed particularly promising for arts education, mounting costs and problems with reliability associated with interpretive scoring (Hardy, 1995) contributed to the demise of the broader endeavor and remain particularly problematic in the arts (Eisner & Day, 2004).

One solution that has long since been championed by art educators is that of the portfolio. Portfolios promise useful formative feedback for classroom instruction, self and peer critique opportunities, and student awareness of personal learning (Boughton, 2007; Heath & Soep, 1998). Portfolios, once the flagship of all arts assessments, have an uncompromised role inside the arts classroom. However, they have not provided a comprehensive solution to assessing student learning in ways that communicate to those outside the arts (Brewer, 2008; Cho & Forde, 2001; Gruber & Hobbs, 2002). Various efforts to reform portfolios to meet the needs for external accountability have included centralizing graders (MacGregor, 1992), training local teachers for uniform grading (Dorn, 2003; Dorn, Madeja, & Sabol, 2004), and embodied assessment (Springgay & Freedman, 2007). While valuable on some fronts, these efforts seem to have failed to provide data that can be aggregated at the state and national level for policy-makers, politicians, and administrators; these efforts also seem to have been unsuccessful in yielding evidence that arts educators and arts organizations can use to evaluate programs and

study changes in practice. As in other domains of public education, needs for the more salient aggregated data eclipse the more immediate needs of both teachers and students. Hence, effective portfolio assessment is mostly limited to classroom assessment.

In summary, efforts to use one assessment practice to provide the information needed by multiple and varied stakeholders have failed. Therefore, the arts need an assessment strategy that advances portfolio practice while speaking to those in and outside of the arts community. In this article, we offer the assessment staging theory as a comprehensive solution to assessing learning in the arts in ways that would satisfy diverse stakeholders without undermining the inherent goals of arts education. Consequently, the assessment staging theory embraces a postmodern epistemological pluralism that resolutely acknowledges the validity of ostensibly antithetical methods for documenting knowledge and proficiency. Our approach reconciles the very different information needs of varied stakeholders in a manner that is akin to the artistic process of assemblage. In our assessment assemblage, disparate assessment practices (i.e., from competing theoretical perspectives such as behaviorism, cognitivism, and socioculturalism) are recast and assembled *together* to create a new multi-dimensional solution to assessing and enhancing learning in the arts. In this way, we reshape and build upon the wealth of past practices through a new narrative of placing side-by-side views of learning and assessment that are traditionally positioned in opposition with one another. Traditionally, assessments are rooted in a single theory of learning and usually take a cognitivist or behaviorist view of learning (historically not a situated or sociocultural view of learning). In these types of assessments, learning is demonstrated by the individual performing or reacting to a particular stimulus (a behavioristic view of learning) or through the internalization and recall of specific

facts, events, or ideas (a cognitivist view of learning) (Driscoll, 2004). More recent assessments consider context as they begin to look at the learner's trajectory into a community of practice (a situated view of learning) (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Our pluralistic approach to assessment simultaneously considers multiple theoretical views of learning for assessment staging theory. This approach to epistemological pluralism provides a framework for the expansive and evolving needs of contemporary arts education.

Assessment assemblage acknowledges the many rivaling views of what it means to know in the arts (cf., the process vs. product debate or Discipline-Based Arts Education vs. studio-centered education). In particular, the assessment staging theory offers a framework that emphasizes varied epistemological views according to the characteristics and needs of the stakeholder. While our approach does not address all issues of equity and power in the classroom, it does prohibit the goals of one stakeholder from overpowering the needs of another. Further, assessment assemblage calls for locally driven curriculum and assessment that starts with the learner, allowing professional educators to translate these needs to those outside the arts, rather than top-down curriculum and assessment development.

By allowing educators to assemble culturally sensitive and age-appropriate assessments, assessment assemblage provides a framework for equity in the classroom. For example, owing to increased self-criticism and desire for realism, a learner in middle childhood (i.e., at Lowenfeld's [1947] dawning realism stage) might benefit from assessments that emphasize the situated discourse involved in learning rather than focusing on the process or product. In this example, the assessment strategy draws from sociocultural learning perspectives (Vygotsky, 1978), specifically focusing on the learner's membership in the arts community as sufficient evidence of learning rather than focusing on skills

that take years of perseverance and practice to develop (Gadsden, 2008). In a different circumstance, a high school student who has had time to develop technique and is familiar with art-specific language (i.e., formalisms) would benefit from the critique of a personal process-oriented portfolio. In this example, arts-based constructs and problem solving are assessed, drawing from a cognitivist learning perspective. On the other hand, an administrator who has not had many arts experiences might find an arts process portfolio difficult to understand, while a class collection of art history podcasts based on local artists would be a meaningful product to ascertain learning. Here the knowledge of core art facts is assessed, drawing from a behaviorist learning perspective, which focuses on specific domain skills as evidence of learning. In this example, assessment is based on the

learner's performance in response to a particular stimulus rather than painting a fuller picture of what the student knows and understands about the art form. While performance in a particular art form is one way of participating in the community, there are certainly a range of values and participation that go beyond performance assessments. The assessment staging theory provides a framework for responding to varied circumstances that span a range of perspectives on learning, not only performance. In this article, we employ a staging metaphor that illustrates the stakeholders (audience), the learners (actors), and the affordances and constraints of each assessment format (staging/performance space) in our pluralistic assessment staging theory.

Stages	Stakeholders	Theoretical Perspective	Evidence of Learning	Assessment Focus	Evaluation Type	Sample Tools
Theater in the Round	Classroom Teachers and Learners	Socio-historic	Process of becoming part of the arts community	Individual learner	Portfolio	Fitszimon Digital Portfolio, Davis Voice Portfolio
Thrust Stage	School and District Level Agencies	Cognitivist	Solving problems with broad art-based constructs	School and district comparison	Performance-based	Clark's Drawing Task, Washington State Performance Exams, and La Escuela Exhibitions
Proscenium	Government agencies, Researchers interested in trends in the arts	Behaviorist	Knowledge of core art facts and skills	Broad trends in the field of art education	Multiple choice, locally generated from national bank	SCAAP, Brewer Bundled Assessment, NAEP

Table 1. Stage Comparisons of the Assessment Stage Theory.

Background

We first acknowledge the goals and corresponding assessment practices across the spectrum of stakeholders in arts education. We organize that spectrum into three categories: *personal*, *provincial*, and *global*. Stakeholders at the personal level include the teachers and learners in art classrooms. Provincial stakeholders include state and district level individuals such as school administrators and state officials. Global stakeholders include government agencies, arts education associations, and art scholars who are concerned with broad national and international trends in arts education (e.g., the National Art Education Association [NAEA], the National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], or the United States Department of Education).

In lieu of the traditional dichotomy between *formative* classroom assessments and *summative* external tests, assessment staging theory assumes that all assessment practices have both formative and summative *functions*, and that these functions will be summative for some participants and formative for others (Hickey, Zuiker, Taasoobshirazi, Schafer, & Michael, 2006). This recasting of the widely held distinctions in assessment is made possible by the assumptions in situative theories of assessment that all learning is social change (Hickey & Anderson, 2007). In this sense, the external tests that have no meaningful formative potential for learners still have formative potential for administrators and policy makers. Instead, we propose a new view of assessment that we call assessment staging theory.

Assessment Staging Theory

The pragmatism of assessment staging theory is its embrace of a pluralistic stance toward competing assumptions and theories about the nature of knowledge (epistemology) and learning. As shown in Table 1, the assessment staging theory reconciles the strengths

and weakness of different assessment practices. Akin to the artistic process of assemblage (Seitz, 1961), divergent assessment practices are (1) reshaped, as one might reshape a found object for an assemblage piece, and (2) placed side-by-side, rather than in opposition to one another. This forms a new three-dimensional whole that keeps the more salient and formal informational needs of global and provincial stakeholders from undermining the efforts of personal stakeholders. We use the metaphor of very different ways of staging a theatrical production to frame these different perspectives: theater-in-the-round, thrust, and proscenium. For each staging context, we depict the stakeholders as the audience, the learners as actors, and the assessment strategies as designed performance spaces. Although an actual theatrical performance is much more complex than the elements we employ here, we simplify this metaphor to spotlight the interaction between the actor and the audience as well as to emphasize the need for three *distinct* performance spaces.

As shown in Table 1, the needs of the three categories of stakeholders align with the three distinct staging formats. Thereby, theater-in-the-round staging aligns with the needs of personal stakeholders by creating high levels of interaction between the actor/learner and the audience/teacher. Similarly, thrust staging meets needs of provincial stakeholders by allowing a more formal interaction between the actor/learner and the audience/district. Proscenium staging works well for global stakeholders with the most formal atmosphere and the lowest level of actor and audience interaction. In this way, personal stakeholders have the most nuanced and expansive opportunities to build understanding of what the student does or does not know while provincial stakeholders do not need such copious amounts of information. Rather, provincial stakeholders are offered a more formal and less fastidious summary of learning in the classroom. Further, global stakeholders

are provided data that is less comprehensive and even easier to aggregate, which is important when comparing large amounts of data.

Each staging context highlights the assumptions of predominate theoretical perspectives (see Table 1). As such, theater-in-the-round offers a sociocultural perspective of learning in which the process of becoming part of the arts community is evidence of learning. Thrust staging offers opportunities to assess artful problem solving and broad arts-based constructs which reflects a cognitivist perspective of learning. The assumptions of behaviorist learning theories provide the basis for proscenium staging which looks to the knowledge of core art facts and skills as evidence of learning.

Table 1 contrasts the focus of each assessment format. To briefly summarize, in theater-in-the-round, the individual learner is the focus,

while thrust staging focuses on school- and district-level comparisons. Broad trends in the field of arts education are the assessment focus for proscenium staging. In this way, we reify that one staging format does not fit all political stakeholders. Similarly, the evaluation format is distinctly different for each stage. As shown in the following sections devoted to each staging format, portfolios provide the tool to assess the individual learner in the theater-in-the-round; performance-based assessments provide data that can be compared at the classroom and district level in thrust staging contexts; and multiple choice formats track trends of learning across time for proscenium staging contexts (see Table 1). In the following section, we further anchor the methods for documenting knowledge and proficiency on key learning theories and make suggestions for specific assessment tools.

Staging One: Theater-in-the-Round

Theatre-in-the-round is generally a less formal presentation, allowing the audience to view the performance from a range of perspectives and encouraging interaction between the audience and the actors (see Figure 1). Likewise, in learning contexts, portfolio assessment practices take multiple views of the student/actor in the daily classroom environment. Because portfolios offer multiple opportunities for feedback and critique, they are useful for informing the local curriculum. Portfolios also apply art-specific language as teachers have discussions with students about their work and help reinforce the sociocultural practices of the arts community. As such, portfolios serve to reinforce both historic and emergent community values, such as learning about new media, material culture, art history, or critical analysis. We propose that the portfolio of today be focused entirely on the formative potential for the student's identity with and participation in artistic communities of practice. As previously noted, we further warn that efforts to use portfolios to

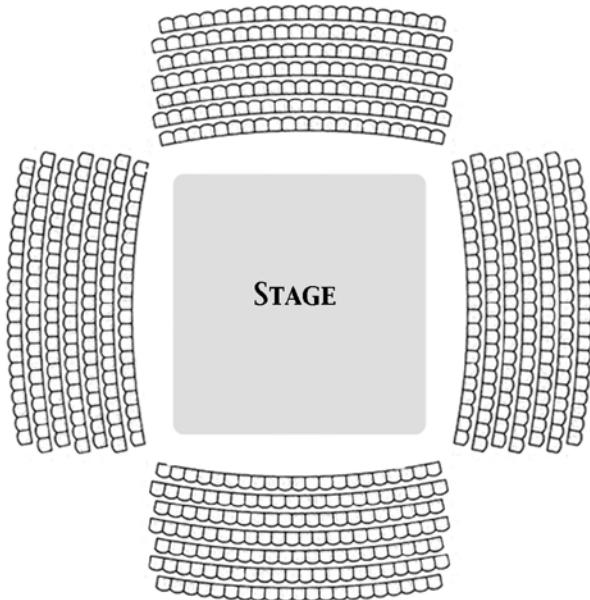


Figure 1: Theater-in-the-Round Staging.

provide aggregated data for provincial or global stakeholders will continue to be unsuccessful, undermining their formative potential for stakeholders at the personal level.

With classroom use of portfolios, we point to the risk of fostering too narrow a focus on student artifacts. When portfolios are coupled with consequences for the quality of those artifacts (e.g., grades, class standing), learners demand highly specific guidelines and extensive feedback on interim artifacts which, in turn, undermines creativity. Portfolios should instead assess their representation of the learner's increasingly successful participation in a particular community of practice (Habib & Witek, 2007; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Well-recognized concepts such as *authentic tasks* (Wiggins, 1998) and recent innovations like *reflective rubrics* (Hickey, Honeyford, Clinton, & McWilliams, in press) provide formative and summative evidence of the use of art-specific language and concepts in conversations among students and teachers about their artifacts (Ross & Mitchell, 1993). This prompts all learners to revisit the relevant artistic formalisms and invites struggling or recalcitrant learners to initially enlist those formalisms in a supportive environment. This [QUERY: What does "this" specifically refer to here?] maintains agency, supports creativity, and allows learners to represent understanding not embodied in the artifacts. In turn, this simplifies the evaluation of the creativity and proficiency embodied in the artifact. In sum, while portfolios are a powerful assessment tool, there are also inherent limitations in their use to satisfy a broad range of stakeholders. Limiting the use of portfolios to inform the personal stakeholders ensures that portfolio assessment practice continues to serve that group of stakeholders well and provides an optimal learning space for the student.

Staging Two: Thrust Staging

Thrust staging is typically used for more formal theatre. It offers views from two or three

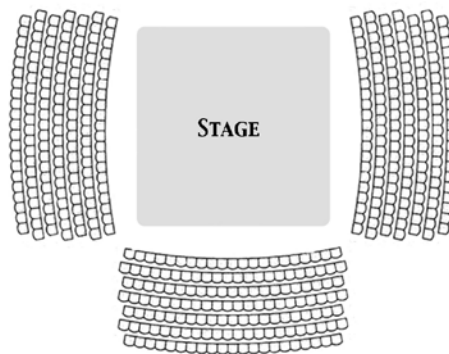


Figure 2. Thrust Staging.

sides (i.e., not the back) and affords less interaction between the performers and the audience (see Figure 2). In the assessment staging theory, assessment practices akin to the thrust staging include formal artists' exhibitions and performance-based exams (Joseph, 2005). These exams can include locally developed criteria for formal exhibitions or locally created performance assessments that are selected for use by broader communities. These can also include formal exhibitions that adopt externally developed standards for judging or externally developed performance assessments that are selected for use by those communities. For example, Clark's Drawing Abilities Test (CDAT) (Clark, 1989) is one well-known performance-based exam that could be aligned with the goals and aims of a local curriculum. When *appropriately* aligned to classroom practices, such assessments can help educators assess the effectiveness of their curriculum and improvement over time as well as meet the need of provincial stakeholders such as school and district administrators. Without appropriate alignment to the local curriculum that originates at the classroom level, performance assessments become top-down constraints that undermine the local curriculum. For example, if a particular Picasso

piece is included on a standardized, externally developed performance exam, the local curriculum flexes to this test. This natural response, also known as teaching to the test, threatens paramount issues of learning in the arts such as individual expression, the development of solutions unique to the self, and cultural interpretations to name a few. Therefore, thrust staging must closely align with the classroom curriculum but be administered in a more formal atmosphere as a bridge between the informal portfolio practices and the very formal standardized testing formats. Moreover, performance exams should be clearly identified to the learner as *separate* from the daily instruction. For example, performance exams can be short timed tests given at monthly intervals to provide letter grades for courses, thereby freeing the portfolio from this function. Thus, thrust staging provides a valuable service for maintaining a supportive classroom portfolio culture. This alignment, that originates in the classroom, is essential for con-

temporary arts education which is constantly evolving as new art mediums are explored and new art forms are created.

While performance assessments and exhibitions are suited for more formal assessment (i.e., letter grades) than portfolios, attaching high stakes to them still tends to undermine their value for supporting the development of agency and creativity, compromising their value as evidence of learning (Mason & Steers, 2006). Rather than directly teaching learners the proficiencies needed to excel in these more formal contexts, arts educators should use the portfolio practices introduced above to align their classroom practices with these more objective performance assessments. Assessment assemblage calls for performance exams or artists' exhibits that are *aligned with portfolios* (as opposed to taking pieces directly out of the portfolio) to communicate with the provincial stakeholders while not undermining the supportive classroom environment.

Staging Three: Proscenium

The proscenium is the most formal staging arena of all, giving audiences a single formal view of the presentation and allowing only very evaluative interaction with the performance (see Figure 3). In assessment staging theory, large-scale assessment is kept at a greater distance from daily curriculum and instruction than the two prior staging contexts. Proscenium staging accommodates large-scale standards-oriented tests that use multiple-choice or short-answer items and sophisticated psychometric techniques to provide reliable scores against specific criteria or population norms. For example, the Bundled Visual Arts Assessment Model (Brewer, 2008) is a bank of multiple choice, matching, and short writing tasks that have been standardized against criteria that would presumably be recognized by provincial stakeholders and could be consistent with local curriculum. Similar to Jacobs' (1997) curriculum mapping, assessments at this staging level should be

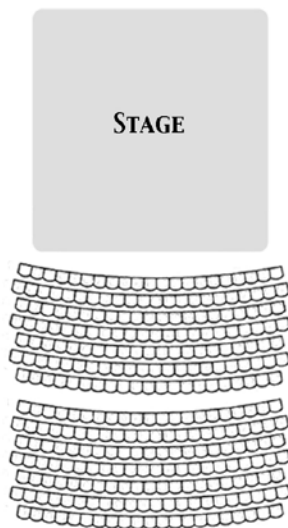


Figure 3. Proscenium Staging.

developed locally by selecting sets of items that are aligned to standards (e.g., the South Carolina Arts Assessment Program, n.d.). Thereby, curriculum that targets those standards can be compared, and aggregated student learning over time can be measured.

Even more than with thrust staging, it is crucial that the proscenium staging assessments not be used to directly drive curriculum. To be efficient and standardized, external tests must re-mediate domain knowledge in ways that, particularly in the arts, make its results meaningless and potentially problematic when brought forward into learning contexts. Rather, proscenium staging assessments must be aligned at a distance with curriculum and classroom portfolios, covering the same broad areas but not driving the local curriculum. In order to have alignment that does not become teaching to the test, we envision thrust staging assessments as a bridge between the informal portfolio and the formal large-scale assessments. As previously underlined, the formal large-scale assessments are limited to tracking broad trends rather than reflecting individual ability.

The Process of Assemblage

Just as the process of assemblage in art involves recursive positioning and repositioning of disparate objects, assemblage in arts assessment involves recursive positioning and repositioning of the disparate “knowledge objects” rooted in different assessment practice (see Table 1). The three different staging contexts of assessment place three differing epistemologies together that function in different and increasingly longer times scales (Lemke, 2000). We propose a strategy for arts assessment that reshapes and repositions past assessment practices. This section of the paper outlines the practical approach of using assemblage assessment practices for the teacher as well as other stakeholders.

For the teacher, portfolios offer multiple feedback and critique opportunities, which inform the local curriculum. We propose that the portfolio be reshaped into a solely formative tool that focuses on the student’s identity and participation in the arts. Rather than assessing the artifact, or the *public object* (Kemp, 2003), learning is best assessed from the process of the student’s growing role in the arts community (Gadsden, 2008). In this way, student progress is marked by an increasing command of the social and historic practices in the arts. Alongside this vision of the portfolio, we propose adding meaningful conversations about art between the teacher and student or within peer groups (Ross & Mitchell, 1993).

Educators can look to Fitzsimmons’ (2008) *digital portfolio* as an exemplar of portfolio practice in which student work is documented in digital form. Davis (2008) adds to this concept with the *voice portfolio*, in which the learner’s conversation about the artwork or discussion during the process of creating it is recorded in a *voice stamp* and then compiled with the digital images. The voice portfolio becomes a digital record of the discourse surrounding the public form of the artwork. From this assessment of classroom learning and instruction, teachers can adapt the curriculum to the immediate needs in the classroom.

Educators must closely align staging two with the classroom portfolio practice in order to strengthen its effectiveness. Performance-based assessments offer educators a way to communicate classroom performance to school administrators and state officials. Specifically, they offer a space for assigning letter grades. An example of such alignment might involve a timed performance test given at the end of a unit, which is built upon concepts from the classroom portfolio. For example, a multi-week project focused on art and social justice might end with a more formal timed test in which students are prompted to organize and critique a

set of postcards using a social justice lens. It is important for the educator to explicitly distinguish between the portfolio, which is informing art-specific instruction in the classroom, and the performance test, which involves a grade for communicating learning to those outside the classroom. Without this distinction, the external pressure may undermine the daily instruction. As such, unlike past practices, letter grades are not advised for the classroom portfolio.

While theater-in-the-round staging and thrust staging are closely aligned and developed by the local teacher, proscenium staging is more formal and removed from the everyday context of the classroom. Multiple choice, matching, and short response items best meet needs of global stakeholders. This type of testing works well on a large scale because it is easy to implement, cost effective to grade, and communicates in non-art specific terms (i.e., percentiles). However, unlike large-scale assessments of the past, we propose the global assessment tool be created to reflect the provincial and personal curriculum. There should be flexibility in the selection of artworks and concepts included on the assessment in order to reflect the provincial and personal curriculum. The results for this type of assessment tool hold value in tracking broad trends in the field of arts education, but would not be recommended to score individual students. As we begin to see learning assessed in a multiplicity of ways, we can then begin reimagining the goals of assessment in order to satisfy more stakeholders more completely.

Brewer's (2008) Bundled Visual Arts Assessment Model (BVAAM) offers an exemplar for proscenium staging. The BVAAM is based on the concept that assessment in the arts should follow the provincial and personal curriculum. For example, by taking items from a bank of externally approved questions, this global assessment is standardized, but is also flexible for educators to generate specific combinations of items that match their curriculum.

Using the previous example of a unit devoted to art and social justice, the local teacher would select examples from the item pool to generate an assessment aligned with the social justice theme (e.g., mirroring NAEA's 2010 Convention Program cover art themes of dialogue, privacy, peace, social security, censorship, and the income gap). In this way, the benefits of tests with easily aggregated scores can be utilized, while not overreaching its scope of effectiveness at the global level. We stress that this is not drastically different from current assessments, but rather, the assessment staging theory emphasizes the affordances and constraints for each stage and offers a framework for aligning, organizing, and communicating learning in the arts to the varied stakeholders. Indeed, assessment staging theory goes beyond simply clarifying that one size does not fit all. More accurately, it is a way of illustrating a comprehensive assessment strategy that maintains three distinct and carefully aligned assessment practices.

Implications and Significance

The assessment staging theory provides a theoretical solution to the stakeholder's needs without undermining learning in the arts. We contend that this epistemologically pluralistic process could help establish the arts as an important source of vision and leadership in educational assessment more broadly. While this article puts forth the theoretical basis, further research devoted to the process of assemblage in an applied setting is needed to serve these ends. Collaborating with an arts educator, future research could investigate the implementation of assessment assemblage. For example, in a 12-week unit focused on cultural purposes of production (highlighted in Freedman's (2003) framework for teaching visual culture), the educator might use three 4-week projects designed to teach the concepts of art as power, propaganda, and revolution. Each week, students would participate in portfolio reviews, where the teacher would assess learners' critical analy-

sis of cultural purposes of production in their design, work, and discourse. From these portfolio reviews, the curriculum could be adjusted as necessary. At the end of the unit, the educator would design performance exams to assess the student's deconstruction of art as power, propaganda, or revolution. These might be similar to the tasks done in the three unit projects but at a smaller scale and with a limited time. To keep the performance exam closely aligned to the portfolio practice, the educator would use problem statements similar to the 4-week unit while changing the focus. For example, production might have been the focus in the unit while critique could be the focus of the performance exam. At the end of the semester, the third staging assessment would comprise art that relates to power, propaganda, or revolution taken from BVAAM or examples released

by NAEP. To further the ideas put forth in this article, we suggest a mixed methods approach to provide insight based on classroom observation and testing data.

Because of the low stakes currently attached to arts achievement, assemblage of different stagings of assessment can be modeled within the arts, and then translated across disciplines for a broader impact in the field of education. Process portfolios can serve their ideal formative functions for students and teachers, who can rely on the performance assessment for formal classroom accountability, while administrators can rely on scores from the external tests for system accountability. The assessment staging theory not only exemplifies a pluralistic approach to assessment, but also expands the ways we theorize learning and assessment.

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