Art Education in the USA and in Germany: Concepts, Institutions, and Benefits. A Comparison

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This paper addresses explorative, case study-based comparative findings on art education for adults in the USA and in Germany.\(^7\) It raises basic issues of art education for adults in both countries and relates them to preliminary interpretations and questions, asking for a prospective larger study and better generalization.

\(^7\) A case study is “a study of a case within its context” (Cohen/Manion/Morrison 2011, p. 289, referring to Yin 2009, p. 8). In my paper, I make use of the analytical and piloting strength of the case study design. Moreover, it is framed by a comparative design (sui generis), which “attempts to identify the similarities and differences … [and] to understand why the differences and similarities occur and what their significance is for adult education in the countries under examination …” (Charters/Hilton 1989, p. 3, cited after Reischmann/Bron 2008b, p. 10). Comparative case studies allow for an elaboration of the cultural and societal embeddedness of adult education institutions. As cross-cultural studies, they are dialogical, diverse and open in nature (cf. Reischmann 2008, p. 21; Bray 2008; Ochs/Philips 2002). A comparative in-depth study deepens our understanding of adult education. It helps us to identify good practice and to make it available for program planning (cf. Charters 1999, p. 55). For this purpose, I combined two sources of data: a) semi-structured focused interviews with both education directors/program planners and participants, b) qualitative program analyses.\(^7\) The instruments of data collection and analysis (interview guideline; outline of categories) have been developed in an inductive mode.
Art education encompasses learning endeavors in the subareas ‘fine arts’ including visual arts (‘Bildende Kunst’) and ‘performing arts’ (‘Darstellende Kunst’) (1), as well as ‘applied arts’ (2) and ‘art history’ (3). It reflects on general understandings of the concept of ‘art’ in ‘modern’ societies. The techniques of art production and the assumptions in regard to the impacts of art vary over the time. At present, we envisage a popularization of art in both countries under examination as well as in many other ‘Western’ countries (cf. Schulzt 2009). Accordingly, in both countries, a broad idea of art education is being developed. Vice versa: The wide range of learning opportunities exists thanks to the popularization and democratization of art in the second half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Art education in the year 2012 equally takes place at adult education institutions, museums, galleries, community centers and other learning venues. Different from events like concerts and artistic shows, art education involves some kind of non-formal learning and teaching activity either classroom-based or self-directed (i.e. learning labs in museums). Teaching methodologies may be receptive (presentations on art history, dance etc.) or creative/productive (painting, pottery, dancing, singing etc.). (Cf. Gieseke et al. 2005; Fleige/Robak 2012; Taylor 2010)

In my paper I describe similarities and differences of art education for adults in the US and in Germany as well as the social and cultural context and other driving factors: Can we describe certain tendencies in the pedagogical concepts? How do they relate to the current discourses about art? What are the consequences of art education for individuals, organizations, and communities? I also attempt to identify examples of good practice worth mutual borrowing (cf. Reischmann 2008, p. 21). I will elaborate on these questions on the basis of five comparative case studies on art/adult education institutions in the cities of Chicago (USA), Berlin and Chemnitz (Germany). I begin with (1) theoretical framework in regard to concepts, institutions and benefits of art education. In the second part (2) I introduce the institutions under examination. After presenting and discussing my findings (3) I conclude with reflections on the questions raised above (4).


1.1 The Contemporary Conception of Art and Art Education

In the beginning of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century the transformative and mobilizing impact of art not only on individuals, but also on communities, and even on societies and the ‘world society’ is widely recognized. The production, the reception, the academic discourse and the ‘market’ of art have become a global social phenomenon. Class constraints in the production and especially in the reception of fine arts, traditionally reserved for the upper and upper middle class (cf. Bourdieu 1987) have been loosened since the 1950s and 60s. The invention of abstract expressionism, serial art, pop art, and their interdependencies with advertising and design started a process of popularizing the fine arts among the middle classes: Both in the US and in Germany, as well as in other ‘Western’ countries, museums and galleries have become extremely accessible. Artistic hobbies like photography have turned into mass phenomena. Accordingly, we observe an increase of art-related learning venues and activities.

These developments are interdepending with the expansion and segmentation of the middle classes in regard to income and status as well as lifestyle and values (social milieus) over the time. The increasingly prosperous upper middle class milieus and the academic, intellectual milieus are equally art-oriented. Simultaneously, we are at a point where the lower class (working and unemployed) in both countries is more than ever alienated from fine arts except for the cultivation of class-specific performing arts. These mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion seem to be reinforced by terminological biases, at least in Germany. For example, the traditional association of the term ‘Kunst’ (‘art’) with the upper and upper middle class sustains the persistent parallelization of ‘fine arts’ and ‘Kultur’ (‘culture’). This perception brings about a difficult parallelization of ‘art education’ and ‘cultural education’ (‘Kulturelle Bildung’).

However, in regard to the artistic criteria of art, contemporary conceptions of art stress the aesthetic attraction and value of human everyday life practices and artifacts. Exemplarily for current discussions on this matter, the dOCUMENTA (13) has settled criteria for the ways in which everyday life can be reflected in visual art. Many of the works of this year’s exhibition deal with the awareness of nature, the relationship of human beings and animals as well as with community and (social) space. Many items were realized in the tradition of the ‘arte povera’ and therefore with a strong emphasis on installations, and on objects that were made of natural materials or materials of daily use. On the basis of these very general categories, the exhibition fashioned a broad and open understanding of art that loosens the boundaries between works of art, practice and artifacts as...
well as the boundaries between fine arts and applied arts. At the same time, a variety of the works in the exhibition addressed political dimensions of existence, especially environmental policy. (Cf. dOCUMENTA (13) Guidebook, p. 6f.)

However, it is clear that the pedagogical concepts in art education were developed accordingly to the popularization of art since the 1950s. Following various authors both from the US and from Germany art education for adults should initiate (cf. Lawrence Lipson 2005b, c; Gieseke u.a. 2005; Robak/Fleige 2013; Stang/Peez 2003):

a) The improvement of self-awareness via: sustaining a person’s artistic and overall cultural knowledge; fostering sensitivity, self-efficacy and emotional stability as well as intuition and directness; access to aesthetics; developing creativity and creative skills; producing art (visual and applied);

b) The Improvement of the awareness of others via: access to matters of cultural diversity and community building; sustaining the capability to understand and release social tension.

Blind spots in the present concepts in both countries include the above-stated delay in the reproduction of the contemporary artistic conception. Another problem is the lack of an adequate discussion on knowledge and skills required for art production, also with respect to the chances and limits of adulthood learning abilities in this area.

1.2 Benefits of Art Education

This section deals with the consequences of art education for individuals, organizations, and communities. The notion of the ‘benefits’ that result from the participation in adult education relates to the idea of an instrumental use of learning. Art education has traditionally been perceived least instrumental since it is associated with those ‘soft skills’ named above. Instead, the benefits of adult education are being discussed with reference to either cost-benefit analysis or the monitoring of participation and learning outcomes (cf. Bardeleben et al. 1996; Seidel/Hartmann 2011; Ginsberg/Wlodkowski 2010, p. 31). It has been argued that members of the lower class are underrepresented in adult education (except for basic education and literacy) partly because of their low expectations of benefits. However important these findings are, a qualitative, andragogical or the monitoring of participation and learning outcomes (cf. Bardeleben et al. 1996; Seidel/Hartmann 2011; Ginsberg/Wlodkowski 2010, p. 31). It has been argued that members of the lower class are underrepresented in adult education (except for basic education and literacy) partly because of their low expectations of benefits. However important these findings are, a qualitative, andragogical or even philosophical understanding of the terminology is still missing (cf. Fleige 2011a). Clearly, ‘benefits’, according to the utilitarian origin of the word, relate to the instrumental and effective/rational use of learning outcomes in regard to the optimization of action, status, job satisfaction or personal happiness. At the same time, the choice to participate is never fully calculated but tied to emotions, learning interests and intrinsic motivation (cf. Gieseke 2009; Knowles 1989, pp. 83f., cited by Merriam/Brockett 2007, p. 136). Moreover, there are always unintended benefits of personal growth as well as chains of benefits (cf. Fleige 2011a; Dietel 2012, p. 209), which develop over the time and which are the greater the more a participant involves emotionally with the content and the learning group.

Against this background, participation in art education seems to be a perfect example of intrinsic motivation and a type of utility that is not primarily economic. There is evidence for this assumption from various empirical studies on art education: Through knowledge, experience, aesthetic pleasure, production and reception, art education fosters self-esteem and self-improvement in the most radical way (cf. Gieseke 2005). Moreover, art education institutions such as local museums can impact on collective knowledge and social learning (cf. Taylor et al. 2010, pp. 332ff.). The findings are also backed by studies on performing arts and health education. For example, dance classes bring about benefits of physical and mental health (cf. Dietel 2012). However, the perceptions of the wider benefits of art education seem to differ in both countries. For the present German discourse it is more likely to find statements on the importance of creativity and analytical skills at the workplace. On the other hand, discussions in North American more stress the development of critical skills for social development. Both trends are echoed by more general discussions on adult education. (Cf. Butterwick/Egan 2010, pp. 117-121; similarly for Britain: Schuller et al. 2001; Feinstein et al. 1998)

1.2 Institutions of Art Education

In general, the institutions of adult education in the USA and in Germany vary considerably with regard to their tasks, their organizational structure, their degree of institutionalization and cooperation and their funding. Within this landscape, those institutions that offer art education for adults are marked in italic letters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Germany</th>
</tr>
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</table>

10 Developments like this are reflected and forwarded not only by curators, newspapers and art schools, but also by cultural and social theory. From a cultural-theoretical point of view, we like to think of art as human practice, and in a system-theoretical view as a reflective system alongside other functional systems (cf. exemplarily Reckwitz 2006; Baecker 2000).

11 The Surveys on the ‘wider benefits of learning’ proof the gain of social capital through all kinds of adult education, especially general, non-credited/non-formal education.
cooperate in umbrella organizations and communal advisory boards, adult education institutions in the USA are more fragmented (cf. LÖsche 1998, p. 12; Merriam/Brockett 2007, p. 127), and they would not necessarily define each other as adult education institutions. This fragmentation corresponds with the one of social milieus into local communities. Compared to Germany, the neighborhood, as a geographic or spatial unit, plays a more important role in the formation of the social community. The geographical distribution of social milieus is quite hermetic, and it often has an ethnic dimension.

2. Introduction of the case institutions and their contexts

Against this background, I chose five institutions for my empirical study. The only type that is missing is a community college, due to field access restrictions.

2.1 The Institutions

I The School of The Art Institute (SAIC), Department for Continuing Studies, Chicago, USA, 36 South Wabash, Chicago, IL 60603, USA, www.saic.edu.

The Art Institute Chicago is a world famous art museum for all kinds of epochs and areas of arts. It is located in downtown Chicago, operating as a not-for-profit corporation on a mixed funding basis and cooperating with the district. It was founded as a museum and as a school in 1879. With regard to the history and the mission of the Art Institute we are learn that “the permanent collection has grown … to nearly 300,000 works of art in fields ranging from Chinese bronzes to contemporary design and from textiles to installation art. … Together, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the museum of the Art Institute of Chicago are … internationally recognized as two of the leading fine-arts institutions in the United States.” (http://www.artic.edu/about/mission-and-history) The School, SAIC, offers all kinds of programs for children, adolescents, families, teachers and adults. Adult programs cover higher and continuing education both credit and noncredit, summer schools, lectures, gallery talks and so on. They are both creative and receptive and include fine arts (visual), applied arts, and art history.

II Hyde Park Art Center (HPAC), Chicago, USA, 5020 South Cornell Ave, Chicago, IL 60615, USA, www.hydeparkart.org/education.

The Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, is a community art center located in the neighborhood ‘Hyde Park’. It is a not-for-profit organization operating on the basis of mixed funding. It attracts both citizens from the neighborhood itself as well as from all over Chicago. On the website we are told that “founded in 1939, the Hyde Park Art Center is at once a contemporary art exhibition space, learning lab, community resource, and social hub for artists and art-curious

Table 1: Landscape/typology of adult education institutions in the USA and in Germany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Colleges</strong></td>
<td><strong>Public, communal Adult Education Centers (Volkshochschule)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open to everyone, offer civil/environmental education, art education, intercultural dialogue, health education, basic/literacy education, GED, prep, professional continuing education (both credit and noncredit), English and foreign languages.</td>
<td>Open to everyone, offer civil/environmental education, art education, intercultural dialogue, health education, basic/literacy education, school leaving certificates, prep, professional continuing education (both credit and noncredit), German and foreign languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrating on postsecondary education</td>
<td>Institutions provided by large non-profit organizations that receive public funding: Academies by Churches, Unions, Foundations etc.; Open to everyone, offer programs in at least two of the content areas that are offered by the Volkshochschule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quasi- and noneducational institutions not for profit with public/tax and mixed funding: Museums, art centers, galleries, environmental organizations, sports and recreation organizations, institutes, foundations, societies</td>
<td>Institutions and agencies for continuing professional education on the federal or state level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions and agencies for continuing professional education in private, for profit organizations Professional organizations, chambers (Germany) and networks; also as blended learning</td>
<td>Continuing professional education in enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing professional education in private, not for profit organizations Professional organizations, chambers (Germany) and networks; also as blended learning</td>
<td>Continuing professional education in enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing professional education in private, not for profit organizations Professional organizations, chambers (Germany) and networks; also as blended learning</td>
<td>Continuing education at universities (Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers' education in unions and labor organizations Religious, art and volunteer education in congregations and religious bodies</td>
<td>Religious, art and volunteer education in congregations and religious bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Schools for music, theater etc. For profit or not for profit; open to everyone</td>
<td>Special Schools for music, theater etc. For profit or public; open to everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Schools and independent education organization for basic education and literacy</td>
<td>Special Schools and independent education organization for basic education and literacy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Volkshochschulen and the Community Colleges are comparable types of institutions. Apart from that, the dominating sector in Germany is the one of institutions provided by large non-profit organizations that receive public funding. In the USA, it is the quasi- and non-educational institutions with mixed funding. In comparison to the US-American “expansive array of agencies” (Charters 1999, p. 55) there is a German landscape of subsidized, public/communal educational institutions, legally and socially recognized (‘institutionalized’, cf. Fleige 2011, pp. 29 ff.). While these institutions...
like. [It] presents innovative exhibitions of new work by primarily Chicago-based artists; education programs for children and adults, novice through professional; and, free public programming for a diverse and creative audience. (“http://www.hydeparkart.org/about”) Adult classes cover both visual arts (painting, drawing, photography) and applied arts (ceramics and other areas). Classes run for ten weeks and are mostly creative. The open program is completed by exhibitions and gallery talks. In addition, HPAC started a new program for professional artists that want to take the next step in their careers (‘Center Program’) in 2012. Courses and programs are noncredit.

III Volkshochschule (VHS) [Communal Adult Education Center], Fachbereich Kulturelle Bildung [Department for Art Education], Chemnitz, Germany. „Das TIETZ“, Moritzstraße 20, 09106 Chemnitz, Germany, http://www.vhs-chemnitz.de.

The Volkshochschule is the local organization for adult education in Germany. There exists one VHS in every larger German city, also reaching out to the countryside. The VHS is a very well established, developed and researched adult education institution that flourished in the 1920s and survived the division of Germany. It is recognized as the generic and state-funded ‘communal’ institution (cf. Süßmuth/Sprink 2009). The VHS Chemnitz was founded in 1919. Since 2004, the VHS Chemnitz, the city library and the museum of natural history form a municipal public utility undertaking by the name ‘Das Tietz’. The VHS Chemnitz offers noncredit and credit courses in a variety of content areas. Its mission is to “provides a chance for everyone to develop and deepen knowledge, capability and skills regards to social, professional and societal participation.” (http://www.vhs-chemnitz.de/Leitbild.122.0.html) Fine arts classes include literature, performing arts (music, dance) and visual arts (painting, pottery, photography). They are both receptive and creative. Moreover, we find classes in applied arts and art history. They are completed by excursions and exhibitions. Although the courses are noncredit they may be used for professional development, depending on the participants’ learning desires.

Note: While finishing this paper I discovered the comprehensive empirical study by Görner-Schipp (2012) on art history classes at the VHS, operating with similar but more differentiated categories.


A successor of the Royal Museum, founded by Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia, the world famous National Museums in Berlin “constitute a Universal Museum for the preservation, research and mediation of … art and culture of the entire history of humanity. Their collections embrace the areas of European and extra-European art, archaeology and ethnology. … Supported collectively by the German government and the federal states, the National Museums in Berlin regard themselves as a national institution of cultural federalism in Germany. “ (“http://www.smb.museum/smb/ueberuns/index.php?p=2&objID=3294&lang=en) The Akademie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin opened in 2002. It is an institutionalized learning venue of the ‘Besucherdienst’ which itself exists since the early 1980s. Classes at the Akademie focus on art history and are mostly receptive. They address adult learners at every age, including university art students (undergraduate and graduate). But the courses are noncredit. However, the academic seeks cooperation with universities. The program consists of four-week-lecture series alongside exhibitions and special exhibitions. At the same time, the Akademie serves as an instrument for making the exhibits more accessible. (Cf. Gieseke 2005, pp. 225f.)


The Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz is a museum for pre-modern as well as modern and contemporary fine arts located in Chemnitz, the third biggest city in the federal state of Saxony as well as in the overall Eastern Part of Germany. Founded in 1909, the museum is praised for its modernist approach. It is operated as an independent institution of the City of Chemnitz. Museum pedagogy at the Kunstsammlungen includes tours and classes for children, adolescents and adults. Classes for adults are, as we learn from interviews, loosely coupled with exhibitions in terms of topics and techniques. They are based on a combination of guided and unguided tours and creative activity. They foremost refer to visual art but also address art prints and design as subareas in applied arts. Classes are announced in the local media (no program brochure available).

2.2 The Contexts

Table 2 summarizes the depicted organizational contexts of the case institutions:

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12 The Akademie was inspired by the École de Louvre in Paris but it is not a higher education institution and it is not comparable in size either.
Additionally, we take into account the social and cultural context on the local level (cf. Pacyga 2009; Hübenermann 2010; Gräser o.J., Reißmüller et al 2011):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAIC Chicago (I)</th>
<th>HPAC Chicago (II)</th>
<th>VHS Chemnitz (III)</th>
<th>Akademie der Staatlichen Museen Berlin (IV)</th>
<th>Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz (V)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Art Institute itself (museum and school)</strong></td>
<td><strong>HPAC itself (exhibition space and community center with informal and non-formal learning venues)</strong></td>
<td><strong>The National Museum in Berlin with 16 different locations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Independent institution of the City of Chemnitz</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chemnitz: see above.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: Organizational context of the case institutions**

3. **Research Findings and Reflections**

3.1 **Institutions of art education**

The institutions vary significantly between as well as within the two countries:

**Table 3: Local context of the case institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAIC Chicago (I)</th>
<th>HPAC Chicago (II)</th>
<th>VHS Chemnitz (III)</th>
<th>Akademie der Staatlichen Museen Berlin (IV)</th>
<th>Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz (V)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Context:</strong> the Art Institute itself (museum and school)</td>
<td><strong>Organizational Context:</strong> HPAC itself (exhibition space and community center with informal and non-formal learning venues)</td>
<td><strong>Organizational Context:</strong> the National Museum in Berlin with 16 different locations</td>
<td><strong>Organizational Context:</strong> Independent institution of the City of Chemnitz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding and legal form:</strong> not-for-profit corporation on a mixed funding basis and cooperating with the district</td>
<td><strong>Funding and legal form:</strong> independent institution of the City of Chemnitz; not-for-profit organization operating on the basis of mixed funding</td>
<td><strong>Funding and legal form:</strong> state-funded, public, ’communal’ adult education institution</td>
<td><strong>Funding and legal form:</strong> independent institution of the City of Chemnitz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specializes in art education:</strong> higher and continuing education; summer schools, lectures, gallery talks. Creative and receptive. Fine arts (visual), applied arts, and art history. Credit and noncredit.</td>
<td><strong>Specializes in art education:</strong> fine arts classes include: literature, performing arts, visual arts (receptive and creative); applied arts, art history.</td>
<td><strong>Specializes in art education:</strong> semester-Program for semiprofessional artists and</td>
<td><strong>Specializes in art education:</strong> courses are loosely coupled with exhibitions; based on a combination of guided and unguided tours and creative activity; mostly visual arts but also applied arts. Noncredit. No program brochure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Profile:**mostly receptive; for adult learners at every age, including university art students. Noncredit. Instrument to make exhibits</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Berlin concentrates on programs that resemble higher education in art history. At sample of German institutions only the of programs at the school. Yet, they currently develop into a less successful branch education programs were initiated thanks to the existence of higher education development. In the case of (adult) education system towards higher education and professional (HPAC) institutionalization varies and their funding is mixed. Only increase of learning activities in museums, but their degree of the programs range in this field (cf. http://www.aacc.nche). On the other hand, 2010, p. 29) than the US-American significant profile in art education (16,3 % in 2010, cf. Huntemann/Reichart most differentiated programs for art education. The Among the cases, the VHS and the Art Institute (SAIC) have the broadest and the most differentiated programs for art education. The VHS even has a more significant profile in art education (16,3 % in 2010, cf. Huntemann/Reichart 2010, p. 29) than the US-American Community College where less than 5% of the programs range in this field (cf. http://www.aacc.nche). On the other hand, the early 20th century tradition of art centers (here: HPAC) seems to be more continuous in the USA than in Germany. In both countries, we can see an increase of learning activities in museums, but their degree of institutionalization varies and their funding is mixed. Only SAIC in Chicago and the Akademie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin are examples of museums with genuine education institutions. Furthermore, only the established US-American institutions like SAIC and HPAC offer career development programs for visual (SAIC) and applied artists (HPAC, only recently). Both reflect on the general tendency of the US-American (adult) education system towards higher education and professional development. In the case of SAIC, established over 100 years ago, continuing education programs were initiated thanks to the existence of higher education programs at the school. Yet, they currently develop into a less successful branch of SAIC since community art centers like HPAC attract the clientele. Within the sample of German institutions only the Akademie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin concentrates on programs that resemble higher education in art history. At the same time it so far lacks funding for an actual degree or certificate program since there are sufficient publicly funded higher education institutions in Germany who do the job. In this respect, also the one-year program (no degree) for (semi)professionals and university art students at the VHS Chemnitz functions as a supplementation to its adult education courses. With its range, the VHS Chemnitz reaches a certain share of upper middle class citizens, while otherwise attracting ‘middle’ middle class milieus mainly (cf. Tippelt et al. 2008).

On the other hand, the VHS with the ‘TIETZ’ has an overwhelming physical and social presence in the rather depopulated city center of Chemnitz, a deindustrialized city that looks for a new image as a place for art, new technologies and trade (see also the contribution of the Kunstsammlungen). However, the most impressive example of socially sustainable community outreach is HPAC Chicago. It serves as an educational institution, a gallery, an atelier and a community center where citizens and high school students spend their afternoons. In general, this underlying idea of community outreach is more common in the USA than it is in Germany, due to the fragmentation of the social milieus and the deregulation of welfare policies as depicted in section 2. Regardless the fact that Hyde Park is less fragmented than other neighborhoods in Chicago (but more fragmented than most German neighborhoods), HPAC is special in terms of accessibility. It is a famous hallmark in the landscape of cultural and educational institutions in the neighborhood as well as in Chicago. On the other hand, fees for programs are up to $285 for ten weeks whereas they are around $50 at the VHS.

3.2 Concepts of art education

Accordingly, the concepts vary between the countries as well as between the institutions. For instance, while the teaching and learning methodology is equally active and receptive in the German institutions it seems to be a little more active in the US-American institutions. Furthermore, except for the Kunstsammlungen, as a museum for modern and contemporary art, the institutions in the USA seem to relate more constitutively to present contemporary art. This may be the result of the explicit contribution of the USA to 20th and 21st century art as well as of the case institutions’ commitment to career development programs. In the case of HPAC, this commitment also relates to black art and other community topics.13 Such a focus seems to be attractive for participants in Germany, too – at least for the upper middle class participants in the sample.

Apart from these cross-cultural differences the three German institutions and HPAC, which do not (predominantly) offer career development programs but

13 Moreover, I did not observe any kind of prejudice against applied art in the USA.
open classes focus on knowledge, creative/hermeneutic skills and techniques as well as art production. Within this framework, the Akademie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin has the most systematic receptive approach to art and art history, combining knowledge and reflection of esthetic experience and relating to a world famous collection (cf. Gieseke 2005). On the other hand, the Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz resembles HPAC regards to the directness of aesthetic experience since classes partly take place in the museum itself (HPAC: near the gallery).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAIC Chicago (I)</th>
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<th>VHS Chemnitz (III)</th>
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<th>Kunstsammungen Chemnitz (V)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to reception and production of art – aims of art education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly professional development; open classes with</td>
<td>Adoption of knowledge, creative/hermeneutic skills and techniques; art production; partly but not predominantly committed to professional development</td>
<td>Creative classes on various techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning methodology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominantly active</td>
<td>Predominantly active</td>
<td>Equally active and receptive</td>
<td>Predominantly receptive</td>
<td>Predominantly active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to (current developments in) contemporary art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest – examples for programs in the fall of 2012: computer design, drawing, painting and drawing with “traditional and non-traditional […] materials”</td>
<td>High – examples for programs in the fall of 2012: center program, advanced digital photo, large scale painting, but also classical portrait painting</td>
<td>Medium – examples for programs in the fall of 2012: challenging your own ways of artistic expression, diversity in art, ceramics for Christmas</td>
<td>Low/medium – examples for programs in the fall of 2012: baroque and rococo; Bega and Vermeer, German art from 1945–1970</td>
<td>Medium/high – examples for programs in the fall of 2012: graphic design, art prints, different techniques of painting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Concepts of art education and their characteristics

3.3 Benefits of art education

Benefits vary in terms of cross-cultural as well as cross-institutional comparison. Obviously, students at SAIC and HPAC benefit from the programs for career development. Participants of the HPAC center program state that the range of learning opportunities both non-formal and informal (atelier) and the guidance they get helps them to develop technical and artistic abilities, stable motivations, professional self-esteem, and visions for their careers. Furthermore, the program helps them to relate their personal development to processes of community building. Some, but very few of these benefits were also reported for participating semiprofessionals and university students (the sample itself did not encompass these groups) at the Akademie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin and at the VHS Chemnitz.

Very differently, benefits in regard to the optimization of personal happiness and intrinsic motivation through knowledge, hermeneutical or creative skills, art production and contemplation were subject of the interviews at the three German institutions and HPAC. Participants explained how learning effects in these areas brought about an improvement of self-awareness (taste, self-esteem, emotional stability) and awareness of others. Participants at the Akademie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin reported self-directed learning activities alongside the lectures since they are eager to deepen their knowledge. Moreover, all participants from open classes in the sample were very clear about their motivations: their desire for aesthetic experience or a different facet of their identity or expertise or biographical patterns of artistic activity (see also Görner-Schipp 2012). Education directors/program planners stressed the benefits of both experiencing creative capacity and taking an aesthetic or useful product home (the latter notably stressed at the VHS). Moreover, they emphasized the opportunity to learn a broad range of techniques over the life span. Particularly at the VHS and at HPAC there are different levels of mastery, according to different learning aims. In the Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz, this idea corresponds with experiential and experimental self-directed but supervised art production. This is also a facet of the HPAC learning environments, thanks to the atelier. Participants also stressed the fact that they can make use of materials and tools provided by the institutions. Hardly touched were the limits of adulthood learning abilities in regard to techniques (though weaker in visual art than i.e. in music). However, the joy of producing art and mastering techniques on whatever level was reported in every interview of the sample – but it is so far hardly addressed in the literature.

Benefits related to critical thinking and community building were emphasized in the Chicago sample, notably at HPAC, thanks to its accessibility and topics. Among the German institutions the VHS Chemnitz serves as a community center. Benefits of creativity and analytical skills useful in the workplace have been reported at the VHS, resulting from the combination of receptive and systematic classes. However, besides the aspect of creativity, which is hard to measure, participants in the open classes of all case institutions stressed the effects of deep relaxation in both creative and receptive classes. Finally, in both countries and all five institutions interview partners reported on chains of benefits developing over the time (i.e. from short-term satisfaction to long-term emotional stability).

14 There are other stories from Chicago learning venues such as theatre that bring about community development (cf. Donoho 2005).
15 In this respect we have to take into account the challenge of the validity of the sample since most of the interview partners were long-term participants.
Thus, scholars have pointed to the more emphatic approach to adult education back in the
Bildung”) of less institutionalized learning venues in both countries. As brands,
(cf. Merriam/Brockett 2007 p. 108; see also Gieseke u.a. 2005 on “beigeordnete
the respective institutional effects of deregulation as well as the “pervasiveness”
same time, they have developed as brands according to the zeitgeist and facing
established, accepted and wide-ranging in terms of mission and specialty. At the
community contexts in Germany and in the USA. Both institutions are very well
examples of particularly good practice that could match the needs of urban
VolkshochschuleChemnitz

Table 6: Benefits of art education and their characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits for participants</th>
<th>Instrumental use regards to career development (work-related optimization)</th>
<th>Optimization of personal happiness and intrinsic motivation as well as self-esteem and self-improvement through knowledge, skills, creativity and contemplation</th>
<th>Chains of benefits</th>
<th>Possible benefits for enterprises (participants’ workplace) as we might defer them from the interviews with participants</th>
<th>Possible benefits for the society as we might defer them from the interviews with program planners (social justice, community outreach)</th>
<th>Benefits with regard to critical thinking and community building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not directly/only for semiprofessionals</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Only for semiprofessionals</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible benefits for participants</td>
<td>Benefits with regard to creativity and analytical skills in the workplace</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible benefits for the society</td>
<td>Benefits with regard to critical thinking and community building</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
<td>(Yes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Conclusion

My findings in five institutions of art education for adults reveal its great and
differentiated benefits. Art-related learning activities are an important factor of
delifong learning and social cohesion. Nonetheless, policy-makers and administrators tend to underestimate them. This is true for Germany where public funding is decreasing. And it is true for the US-American situation with its deregulation of welfare policies and its focus on basic skills, post-secondary and vocational education, the simultaneous emphasis on liberal arts college education decoupled from adult education.66

Against this background, I would like to highlight the importance of institutionalized provision of adult (art) education. I would like to single out the Volkshochschule Chemnitz and the Hyde Park Art Center Chicago as two examples of particularly good practice that could match the needs of urban community contexts in Germany and in the USA. Both institutions are very well established, accepted and wide-ranging in terms of mission and specialty. At the same time, they have developed as brands according to the zeitgeist and facing the respective institutional effects of deregulation as well as the “pervasiveness” (cf. Merriam/Brockett 2007 p. 108; see also Gieseke u.a. 2005 on „beigeordnete Bildung“) of less institutionalized learning venues in both countries. As brands,

they are distinct and thus more ‘borrowable’ than ever. Furthermore, the VHS with its public funding and relatively low fees is the most institutionalized educational institution not only in the sample but also in the field. It is backed by a system of subsidized public funding. Of course, this approach is more typical of European welfare states, especially the German post-1945 welfare state. However, given the struggles local communities and cultural/educational institutions in the USA are facing (even more so with the economic crises) the benefits of public funding are undoubtful. Against this background, most institutions in the overall sample might also benefit from a greater commitment to credit and certificate programs that actually document the benefits of art education.

Germany, on the other hand, may learn lessons regarding the positive effects of community building in the USA (cf. Merriam p. 114, 149, 189; Wiessner et al. 2010; Zeuner 2006). But it will have to take into account the specific conditions of social segmentation and fragmentation, which are very different in both countries. Present approaches to community building and social space („Sozialraum“) in the German adult education discourse should be evaluated against this background. Furthermore, we need solutions for the middle-class and upper-middle-class bias in art education. Interestingly, where German institutions imitate the US-American tendency towards higher education they even reinforce this bias, whereas US-American institutions ideally do not. On the other hand, the commitment of the middle class milieu sustains the existence of open adult education institutions, even more so since they identify with “their” institution over the time. This very general idea is clearly supported by my findings on VHS and HPAC. Finally, the increase and differentiation of learning activities in museums in both countries is a positive sign but needs reliable funding and the will for institutionalization as we can defer from the examples of SAIC, Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz and Akademie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin.

As far as the concepts of art adult education go, it would be interesting to adopt, access and interpret discussions and categories in present contemporary art – especially community mobilization, environmental protection, and the cultivation of space. Another aspect would be the systematic approach to inter-, trans- and multiculturalism since art is so global and since creative art education does not require elaborate oral language skills. Finally, such concepts may relate to more general theoretical developments in the field of adult education, such as lifelong learning and emotions, biographies and time (cf. Gieseke 2009; Schmidt-Lauff 2008), transformative learning (cf. Lipson Lawrence 2005a) and social media, community education as civic education (cf. Zeuner 2006) or learning in transcultural, diverse and hybrid (world) societal settings (cf. Robak 2012; Egetenmeyer 2008; Boucouvalas 1999, p. 69 ff.; Brookfield 2010).

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66 Thus, scholars have pointed to the more emphatic approach to adult education back in the 1950s–70s (cf. Merriam/Brockett 2007, pp. 110f.; 125 ff.; 178; Edelson 2000, p. 8f.).
Marion Fleige: Art Education in the USA and in Germany


References


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