



SEAMOS RADICALES /
BEING RADICAL
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Sculpting conversations between and among cultures

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In this workshop three art educators from different global regions (Japan, Hungary, and USA) invite participants to actively engage in the construction of dialogue and the dialogue of construction to examine cross cultural perspectives. Our premise is that culture is not static; there is the continual reworking of values and beliefs as we interact with others, in person and through social media. As anthropologist Clifford (1988) suggested cultural construction can be perceived as a dynamic collage. For Bolin and Blandy (2003) the process to decode cultural artifacts is fluid helped by a multidisciplinary and holistic approach. Our cultural intermingling dialogue and external and internal constructions include visual and kinesthetic art making, storytelling, mindfulness exercises, and reflective introspection. We “make action” by igniting our senses to notice and attend to everyday objects in the context of cultural similarities and differences and harmony and dissonance. Through a process that emphasizes discovery and multiple ways to construct and deconstruct with objects we gain understanding of our own and other cultural norms as well as reflect on how such cross- cultural construction leads to the fluid redefining of our own personal collage.

Our workshop is initiated with exercises designed to awaken our imagination and perception. Gentle movement and quick collaborative assembling exercises help us form community and take early inventory of the many cultural stories we represent. Balancing structure and freedom, physical movement and mindful concentration, and safety and risk-taking we model how to build a trusting environment for far-reaching exploration into the creative process. We then move to a more developed investigation of our transcultural identities working with found natural and human made objects. Building on verbal and kinesthetic responses to questions that relate to identity, empathy, and bias we will create site specific sculptures that both reflect the multidimensionality of we, the artists who created them as well as invite on-going participation from viewers. We welcome the contrast of perceptions to spark the vibrancy of sculptures created. Both the action of creating and collaborating as well as conversation about experiencing the action of creating with colleagues are the basis of cultivating radical dialogue. Through varied forms of documentation that include photos, sketches, and video we explore the sustainability and ephemeral quality of our action. The artistic and oral encounters ideally illuminate both the radical contrast of and surprising commonality and intersections with our cultural stories. The internal and interpersonal dialogue continues through a multimedia reflective process that offers opportunities for participants to share challenges of addressing cultural differences, insights into the creative process, and connections to research and practice. We conclude with a brief perspective on what we discovered collaborating with colleagues from different cultural backgrounds.