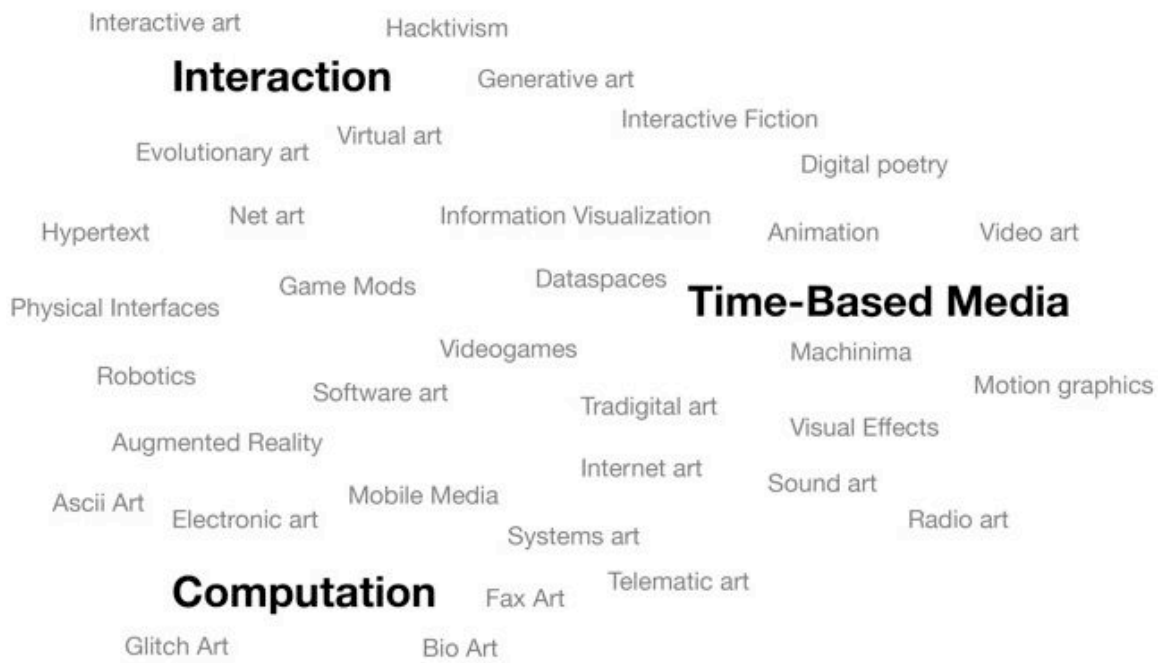


**The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards
Media Arts Investigation Committee
Responds to the question:
Should Media Arts be considered a fifth discipline?**



Media Arts Investigation Committee Response

“If one is not supporting media arts, then one is not supporting the leading edge of transformation of our culture.” - John Hanhardt, curator of film and media arts at the Guggenheim Museum in New York

Defining Media Arts

There is little doubt that the products of Media Arts — film, television, animation, radio, social media and the Internet — are central communication tools of our time. An average American views nearly 60 films a year, listens to the radio nearly 60 hours per month, spends roughly 10 hours a week on the Web, spends 13 hours interacting with videogames, and watches television more than 4 hours a day. Combined, that comes to about four full months a year. Yet, despite the degree to which Media Arts shapes our daily lives, culture, politics and society, most public education does not recognize it as a stand-alone art form.

Media Arts is a (multi disciplinary) art form that satisfies the human need to express thoughts and feelings and respond to life experiences through a combination of some or all of the following components: image, aural, spatial, digital and multimedia production. Media artists learn to use the elements of style and apply them to the conveyance of information in order to create, communicate and express.

Media Arts begins with the advent of film and moves through the creative use of tools and applications from the digital media era and beyond to the digital virtual realm. Media Arts studies today encompass a broad spectrum including time-based (film, television, animation), interactive (videogames, virtual art, robotics) and computational art (physical computing, creative code).

Students working within this discipline cultivate the ability to produce works in the arts that are time based, interactive and social, indicating evidence of new modes of process thinking.

Media Arts is an art form which

1. exists as a medium of creative expression
2. involves a composition or creation of a product or idea
3. is characterized by a history or culture
4. can be read, written and talked about
5. can be applied as an integrated learning process or technique in experiences outside its main purpose

The following elements and principles exist in Media Arts:

Elements:

- space, time, duration, intensity, color, form/shape, line, texture, value, scenario, text, sound, image, metaphor, interface, systems, collaboration, access

Principles:

- interactivity, improvisation, technique, style, composition, form, genre, voice, movement, rhythm, texture, balance, contrast, collaboration, emphasis, focus, intention, proportion, scale, repetition, unity, harmony

Media Arts provides a set of skills embedded across all disciplines.

Media Arts is a unique medium of artistic expression that can amplify and integrate the four traditional art forms by incorporating the technological advances of the contemporary world with emerging skill sets available to students and teachers. Media Arts students cultivate both artistic abilities and a technological aptitude. The media artist utilizes a fundamental understanding of the mediums of analog and digital media to integrate digital technologies with traditional forms of artistic expression.

Media Arts:

- interprets the past to us show us what has gone into making us the way we are.
 - defines for us our own place in the world.
 - helps us to understand the workings of our immediate world, and our individual places in it.
 - is a major source of modern culture and entertainment.
 - requires us to learn and use critical thinking skills.
 - is a major industry and are inextricably involved in commerce – thus important to the American workforce.
 - helps define how we communicate with each other.
 - helps us to learn technology by adopting the leading edge of modern technological innovation.
 - determines much of our cultural diet and weave part of the fabric of our lives.
 - is as big a part of our everyday environment as are trees, mountains, rivers, cities and oceans.
- interpret our world, its values and ideas to us.
- helps us understand ourselves and others.
 - explains to us how things work.
 - is carefully planned, designed and has constructed products.
 - Through media arts, we experience all the arts as no other age has ever done.
- brings us political and ideological messages all the time.
- uses special codes and conventions of their own languages that we need to understand.
 - helps us understand life by presenting it as larger-than-life, and compel us to think in terms of the audience.

4. The need for ownership and leadership

The arts are best positioned to take a leadership role in Media Arts for the benefit of the field. We must acknowledge that students are already leading this effort through their current interests, and support their innovations with a comprehensive sequential standards based education. There is no question that a study of Media Arts is gaining greater importance and relevance for students. It will be essential to their preparation for academic and career success, let alone their social development in relation to a media-centered global society. This new organizational delineation and expanded definition will not only allow it to flourish as a fine art within classrooms, but as a highly integrative, “nexus” academic discipline and 21st Century core literacy. Its unique pedagogy and full creative capacity can potentially enhance student learning in all subject areas, and should be purposefully determined towards promoting core academic and arts objectives. In order to powerfully serve our students in their learning as we engage in the re-conceptualization of the 1994 standards we need to take advantage of this window of opportunity to include media arts now.

5. Recommendations

The Media Arts Investigation Committee recommends that Media Arts become a part of the reconceptualization of the National Arts standards; both as an integrated model and as a stand alone art form. The committee suggests that a writing team be formed to prepare model Media Arts standards. At the conclusion of the work, NCCAS leadership will review the results to determine viability for inclusion in the national voluntary arts standards.

“The challenge is, then, to find ways of adapting and modifying the curriculum and teaching practice to meet learners’ emerging needs in the emerging digital media context, rather than just to integrate new technology and media into the existing curriculum in order to ensure relevance or boost standards. If we view the school curriculum as a set of skills, knowledge and understanding organized to prepare young people for “a flourishing personal and civic life” then it follows logically that the curriculum must respond to the challenges and opportunities that digital media provide”

- Cassie Hague and Ben Williamson, Futurelab
From *“Digital participation, digital literacy, and school subjects, A review of the policies, literature and evidence”*

**The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards
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