Critical art histories have strategically contributed to the constitution of visual culture studies as an interdisciplinary field that interprets the mediations of mass-produced imagery in contemporary culture. This article advocates for an anti-historicist perspective of art historical knowledge connected to cultural analysis and centered on the present time. It presents an approach to art as a contingent visual event that responds to theoretical and political emergencies and urgencies in specific times and contexts. The article conceptualizes a pedagogy of art historical appropriation that situates the learner as a critical examiner of cultural legacies, inherited genealogies, and repressed memories. Three instances of art historical appropriation (autobiography, archival work, and global narratives), inspired in the work of contemporary artists, art historians, and curators, are analyzed as possible contributions to a visual culture-based art education.

The motivation for writing this article emerged some years ago when I ended my dissertation. My doctoral research was a philosophical study on the critical understanding of modern art practices from the perspective of critical art histories. Its theoretical framework included a large number of references to critical art historians, who had started their academic careers in the early 1980s. At that moment, their work concentrated on a critique of a model of art history dominated by the ideology of high modernism. Twenty years later, these same historians were contributing to the foundation of the interdisciplinary field of visual culture studies (Trafí-Prats, 2003). The writing of the final draft of my dissertation coincided with the publishing of articles in a range of art education journals proclaiming the turn from a paradigm-centered in a Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) to a visual culture-based art education (Freedman, 2000; Tavin, 2003; Wilson, 2003). Those contributions presented visual culture as the opposite of high culture, the institutional frames of the artworld, linear modes of learning, and the knowledge of traditional disciplines, like art history (Duncum, 1999, 2001, 2002a, 2002b). Proponents of a visual culture-based art education suggested a change in the role of historical knowledge in our field, moving from a stress on factual knowledge, chronologies, and marketable canons, to a cultural and social history of visual practices (Duncum, 2000a, 2002b; Freedman, 2003). However, more in-focus studies on how art historical knowledge contributes to the critical understanding of visuality have been scarce in our field. This article is intended to be a contribution in this direction by introducing:

1. key concepts operating in the intersection of visual culture studies and art history,
2. a model of art history education based on historical appropriation that sees learners as constructors of art historical narratives,
and (3) three specific practices of art history appropriation inspired by the work of contemporary artists, art historians, and curators.

**Art Historical Concepts in the Critical Understanding of Visuality**

While some understand art history as a fixed tradition or static knowledge, it is instead a very diversified field of theories, methodologies, technologies, and objects of study (Preziosi, 1991). The field contains its own practices of internal critique and transgression, as the debates on the New Art Histories have demonstrated (Rees & Borzello, 1986; Mitchell, 1989; Harris, 2001). During the last 12 years, different voices have discussed possible relations and digressions between art history and visual culture studies (Cherry, 2005). In a contribution to the art historical journal *The Art Bulletin*, Mitchell (1995) argued that visual culture had to be understood as an “indiscipline” for art history and other traditional disciplines:

> Visual culture looks like an “outside” to art history, opening out the larger field of vernacular images, media and everyday visual practices in which a “visual art” tradition is situated, and raising the question of the difference between high and low culture, visual art versus visual culture. On the other hand, visual culture may look like a deep “inside” to art history’s traditional focus on the sensuous and semiotic peculiarity of the visual. Art history has always been necessarily to more or less well theorized models of spectatorship, visual pleasure, and social, intersubjective relations in the scopic field. (p. 542)

Differing from this position, there were several contributions situated within the field of visual culture studies that defended the complete departure of visual culture from the discipline of art history. Visual culture studies concentrated on the larger range of visual artifacts connected to post-modern technologically produced and reproduced phenomena and their extensive global reach (Jencks, 1995; Mirzoeff, 1998, 1999). This departure has created a defensive position within the discipline. Some art historians consider visual culture studies as a de-skillling of the refined practices of visual interpretation that art history training provides. One of the most influential reactions was the “Visual Culture Questionnaire” published in the journal *October* (1996). The editors suggested that visual culture was “no longer organized on the model of history (as were the disciplines of art history, architectural history, film history, etc.) but on the model of anthropology” (p. 25). Many responses to this questionnaire included a critique of a conservative top-to-bottom model of art historical knowledge centered on: policing a canonical structure in which Western males dominated cultural value, constructing a fetishistic cult to the individual artist, and being submissive to the forces of the market.

Many responses that emerged in and after the questionnaire, however, did not confirm the move from an historical to an anthropological model in the interpretation of the visual. Many acknowledged that visual culture...
involved a critical reconsideration of modernist perspectives by delineating a change from a history concentrated on the study of artifacts to an historical interpretation of situated practices of vision and visual problems (Rogoff, 1998; Bloom, 1999; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Mitchell, 2002; Wolff, 2002; Bal, 2003).

Four key concepts operate at the core of this intersection between visual culture studies and art history. Described below, they are: temporality, memory, mass mediations, and art as visual event.

**Temporality**

After the collapse of communist regimes, the contestation of different borders, the affirmation of new nationalities, various civil conflicts in the post-migratory society, the emergence of new wars, the repetition of old ones, and the unexpected impact of natural catastrophes, it is barely possible to keep up with a view of art history as constituted by one single timeline. This endless series of hostilities as well as natural and political disasters remind us of the existence of multiple modernities and coexisting multiple temporalities operating at different scales (Pollock, 2001; Rogoff, 2000). While “a new paradigm that can account for multiple notions of history is yet to be formulated” (Chong, 2007, p. 98), neocon ideologies aim to reduce the complexity of these new unsettling times with categories like “New World Order,” “Era of Globalization,” “The End of History,” and “Clash of Civilizations” (Fukuyama, 1992, 2003), whose aim is to preserve U.S. hegemony. On the contrary, art historians, curators, and artists are experimenting with historical models where time is not defined as linear progress but in terms of ruins, losses, victims (Benjamin, 1999a), cycles, and repetitions (Chong, 2007). Their work involves a critique of any sort of historicism or idealist histories, and connects theories of history with practices of memory.

**Memory**

LaCapra (1998) argues that memory and history have a supplementary relationship to one another. Memory provides primary sources to history, and history offers tools to critically interpret and connect testimonies, documents, and sources in the explanation of specific events. At the same time, memory is a social activity and a means of socialization. It is a way to assess how history has modeled subjectivities and communities. As the work of many artists has shown since the 1970s, memory is also a way of reviewing highly selective versions of history, including oppositional and alternative voices and visualities (Gibbons, 2007).

**Mass Mediations**

Media images (documentary film, video, and photography) are often used as evidences of how historical and current events are seen and remembered (Sontag, 2005, 2007). The constant production of new images and their global technologies of reproduction and distribution (media companies, satellites, and so on) keep the flow of news going, providing a permanent sense of presentness. But what happens after the new? Contemporary authors,
Art Historical Appropriation

historians, and artists look at different temporalities, situating the time of critical analysis after-the-fact, and reassessing what constitutes an historical event. They provide alternative representations of unstable changing realities by reviewing the meanings of concepts like experience, place, identity, knowledge, and audience (Cotter, Harvey, Wright & Wilson-Goldie, 2006; Enzewor, 2008).

Mass mediations are not only affecting the representation of current events, they also play a role in our present approach to the past. Art historians have coined the word *postmemory* to define the indirect and mediated historical experience of artists who are second and third generations within families, national, or ethnic groups affected by key catastrophic events like the Holocaust (Hirsch, 1997; Young, 2000; Gibbons, 2007). These artists work with after-images and after-memories whose distribution is detached from original causes or direct experiences. Their works interrogate how popular images aestheticize, sentimentalize, and appropriate traumatic memories. They act both as a critique and a substitution of literal and superficial forms of expression, by experimenting with alternative representational practices that pursue deep forms of cognition for complex events like the Holocaust or other catastrophes (Van Alphen, 1998).

**Art as Visual Event**

Because contemporary art practices offer alternative narrative formats and representations of history and memory, we need to consider art as a form of thinking and an agent in history making.

If art “thinks” and if the viewer is compelled, or at least invited, to think with it, then art is not only the object of framing—which obviously, is also true and important—but it also functions, in turn, as a frame for cultural thought. (Van Alphen, 2005, p. xvi)

The act of looking constitutes a *visual event*, where meaning comes about through, rather than existing prior to, the interpretation (Bal 2003). Pollock (2005) insists that artworks and other cultural artifacts have the potential to transcend their historical moment of creation, and speak again and anew in posthumous moments of interpretation, creating belated meanings connected with the contexts and circumstances of the encounter. This encounter is defined by the ethics of what Benjamin (1999a) called the time now or *Jetzeit*. The encounter is “framed by existing knowledges, by repressed knowledges, by questions that were not possible to frame and pose before but which are now not only possible but necessary” (Pollock 2005, p. 17). Here, the histories of art become the histories of cultural, and conceptual, thresholds that allow the renewal of signifiers and the unstoppable semiotic productivity of works of art.

**Shaped by Two Irreconcilable Discourses of Art History Education**

A second reason that might explain why the current debates concerning a visual culture-based art education do not include in-depth reflections on
history and historical knowledge can be found in the long and ongoing history of ideological and institutional separation between two models of art history education, namely academic and pedagogical (or elitist and democratic). These two models can be traced back to the 1930s’ intellectual legacies of Erwin Panofsky and John Dewey.

Panofsky introduced the German model of art history in the United States, transforming the field into an independent discipline and moving it out of its attachment to liberal studies and archeology (Reese, 1995). In “The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline,” Panofsky (1982a) described a model of art history that integrated archeological, philosophical, and aesthetic erudition within an idealistic model of history, which took the European Renaissance as the central focus of study (Summers, 2006). Panofsky’s view of education was inspired by the German gymnasium, directed by master lessons and erudite scholars, who dominated several fields of knowledge such as Greek and Latin languages, archeology, aesthetics, and the history of culture. Panofsky described an elitist model of art history education based on a few schools financed by private funds to educate selected groups of young future scholars (Panofsky, 1982b). The model devised by Panofsky of independent departments of art history is still current in many schools of humanities.

In 1932, John Dewey gave his Williams James Lectures on Philosophy of Art at Harvard University with the title “Art As Experience,” only 1 year after Panofsky had moved to the United States. In these seminal series of papers, Dewey (1980) questioned an elitist approach to art and criticized connoisseurship and academicism for segregating art from the experiences of everyday life. Dewey defended a concept of experience for the viewer anchored in the present, arguing about the impossibility that contemporary individuals could effectively and genuinely experience the Parthenon or a 12th-century religious statue in the same terms that individuals living back in those times could. Dewey (1998) defined the learning of history in a similar way in his early essay “My pedagogical creed,” affirming that history should be taught in reference to social life, and not as distant knowledge connected to the past.

During the 1990s, Dewey’s pedagogical and democratic legacy influenced a social reconstructionist concept of art education (Freedman, 2000, 2003). Many art educators in this movement elaborated a critique of the dominance of DBAE with its fixed representation of disciplines as stable containers of knowledge, unaffected by social processes and paradigm changes (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996). The publication of Art History and Education (Addis & Erickson, 1993) and Art History: A Contextual Inquiry Course (Fitzpatrick, 1992) incorporated theories based on critical art histories in our field, demonstrating that there is not only one art history, but differing perspectives about the historical interpretation of art. Also, these two texts emphasized a pedagogical approach to art history as a process of inquiry based on description, analysis, and interpretation, and centered on the learner as a producer of historical understandings.
Feminist and multicultural perspectives contributed to the diversification of art histories with an ideological critique to the ethnocentric, androcentric, and heterocentric biases contained in the modernist canon of Western art presented in the DBAE model of curriculum (Chalmers, 1996; Congdon, 1996). In this context, teaching about different versions of the same event and competing histories opened the possibility of reflecting on “power and who owns history—who owns the version that gets put in the books, who owns the version that gets put in the evening news, who owns the version that gets taught in the schools” (Green, 1994, p. 39). Within this context of ideas, cultural and narrative approaches to art were favored against a highly selective model of art history education based on sequences of events and facts. Garber (1996) affirmed that cultural narratives teach viewers that the meaning of art takes place in relation to multiple contexts and multiple interpretations, and that an artwork is “as part of history as well as an outgrowth of the nutrient experiences of its maker” (p. 25).

While for more than 15 years postmodernist and socio-reconstructionist art educators have embraced a model of art history education based on inquiry, cultural critique, and alternative cultural narratives, the institutional realities of how art education students learn art history often do not reflect the theoretical developments in our field. The ongoing institutional division between art and art history departments situates the academic model as the one defining art history education for most future art teachers and artists. As a result, art education students’ exposure to art history is through art survey courses centered on historicist and formalist accounts, where art history is often taught without an acknowledgement of the artfactuality of historical practice and discourse, and without opportunities for students to produce their own art historical interpretations (McKeon, 2002).

**Learning Critical Art Histories: From Internalization to Appropriation**

In his research centered on how people elaborate narratives to explain the influence of past events in their present lives, cultural psychologist James Wertsch (1997) differentiates between internalization and appropriation of history. While the *internalization* of history is the capacity of using previously learned concepts and narratives to situate an object or/and event in a historical frame, *historical appropriation* is the process of making a historical narrative one’s own. As internalization does not question or transcend the ideological implications of historical discourse in the shaping of current realities, appropriation makes this its underlying purpose. Furthermore, subjects who have internalized state-provided or institutionally regulated histories are not totally unsuspicious or uncritical of them. However, the possibility of re-doing and appropriating art histories becomes more plausible if it is nurtured through pedagogical interventions that address new ways of knowing and learning history.
This final section reflects on three practices of art-historical appropriation inspired by the work of contemporary artists, art historians, and curators. Art educators might incorporate these practices in the curriculum as opportunities to overcome existing fragmentations between historical, artistic, cultural, and pedagogical content. Because these practices appropriate art history through art-based strategies, they concentrate on the processes of the artist/learner/art educator. In this respect, they are a potential contribution to earlier socio-reconstructionist agendas and to the idea of producing cultural and temporal narratives that act as a critical force in the shaping and understanding of present cultural conditions.

Autobiography

Artists of all times have used autobiography to transform their life experience into an artistic narrative of retrospection and historization, where personal content is examined through the perspective of broader histories. Rembrant Harmenszoon van Rijn, Vincent Van Gogh, Frida Kahlo, and Louise Bourgeois are well known instances of this practice (Gibbons, 2007). Postmodern, anti-essentialist, and performative definitions of autobiography have influenced contemporary art practice. Performance conceptualizes autobiography as a site where cultural history and present experience collide, and where language, visuality, and embodiment can be used to transgress and rework inherited norms and stereotypes defining life and identity (Garoian, 1999) as the conceptual work of Palestinian artist Emily Jacir demonstrates. Different from many of her compatriots in the occupied territories, Jacir lives in between New York and Ramallah, has a passport and enjoys the possibility of back and forth mobility. Because of this fragmentary situation, Jacir’s work reflects on her experience of moving through different cultural spaces and times. Like many Palestinian artists and authors who are aware that Palestinian history is made up of many losses, erasures, and changing denominations, Jacir’s work interrogates ideas about a unitary and well-defined cultural identity, presenting living experience as a more complex alternative to mass media representations of Palestine. While newspapers and TV tend to represent Palestinians either as terrorists or victims, Jacir dismisses fixed categories. Her work focuses on the space in between the impact of the catastrophe in everyday experience, and the forces enabling the community to cope and continue with life (Rollig & Jacir, 2004).

In her project Where We Come From (2001-2003), Jacir used her passport to go to different territories to perform ordinary wishes, and embody ordinary experiences, which are forbidden to other fellow Palestinians without pass permits. Such experiences include: walking through the streets of Jerusalem, visiting the mother of a friend to bring photographs of him and the grandchildren, or going to a restaurant in Gaza to eat a traditional dish named Sayadiyeh. Jacir’s artworks represent an anti-essentialist and fragmentary process of self-construction shaped by competing cultural discourses, coexisting logics, and relations of power (Miller, 2005).
The cultivation of autobiography as a practice of art historical appropriation informs pedagogies that expose alternative experiences and visualities which remain hidden in hegemonic visual histories. At the same time, Jacir’s situated and relational narrative of self disrupts positivist approaches to art-history knowledge and places their foundations on a individualist model of self as a final container of meaning represented by the myth of the avant-garde artist (Barthes, 1989; Bal, 1996).

Archival Work
Hal Foster (2004) describes contemporary art as infused by “an archival impulse” (p. 3). Artists explore archival strategies and review documents, found objects, and images to produce new orders and possibilities of knowledge to those regulated by institutions like the museum, the state library, the national art collection, and the public monument. As Enzewor (2008) affirms:

[Artists’] interrogation may take aim at the structural and functional principles underlying the use of the archival document, or it may result in the creation of another archival structure as a means of establishing an archeological relationship to history, evidence, information, and data that will give rise to its own interpretative categories. (p. 18)

According to Foucault (1972), the archive is “the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events” (p. 129). It is impossible to describe the archive as a complete entity or totality, limiting our interpretation to the emergence of specific instances, fragments, levels, or regions. For this reason, its cultural critique is not so connected to the archive per se as it is to its institutionalization. It is the “principle of domiciliation” (Derrida, 1998, p. 2) of the archive—the one regulating, and oftentimes limiting, the condition of its existence, its model of authority, and its quality of veracity.

While institutional archives usually represent the interests of the institution, and their documents are found and chronologically classified, art-based archives are fabricated, and take different material forms—concrete, abstract, or immaterial. In art-based archives, documents are not classified chronologically but according to social themes and interests, which emerge in the context of specific political and historical frames. For instance, Francesc Abad’s project El camp de la Bota is a conceptual installation of family and military court archives based on reconstructing the memory of the tragic event concerning more than 1700 people shot dead as a result of the political purges in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War and during the Franco dictatorship. The title of the work is the name of the place where the killings occurred. At the end of the 1930s, El Camp de la Bota was situated in the outskirts of the city, in a no man’s land, where the military forces were using some unoccupied buildings for detention and repression, acting out of most people’s sight. Abad’s work is inspired by Walter Benjamin’s (1999a) Thesis on the Philosophy of History, dealing with the ideas that history should
be written against the grain and centered on the ruins and the victims, and that history should be written in specific moments of danger that force us to both look back to the past to see forward implications into the future. Abad (2004) starts this art project in the year when El Camp de la Bota as a site of devastation is going to disappear to be excavated and transformed into a new urban development to hold a massive international event called the Forum of Cultures. As the artist writes…

Culture has become just a pretext for social progress and economic growth, and also the pressures to bring us together, put into practice by modern society and its conformity within a consumer society.

Our well-being has been constructed on the basis of forgetting. Forgetting the past is an injustice upon which we build our present. (http://www.francescabad.com/campdelabota/)

Abad’s work takes this act of forgetting as a departure point to make a public call for the families who want to provide testimony and visibility to the stories of murdered fathers, brothers, grandfathers, and husbands, and thus, put some public faces to the impersonal number of dead. His mixed media installation of personal and military documents underscores the limits of archival evidence by revealing contradictory stories and differing rhetoric. His installation makes it almost impossible to know who the victims really were, and instead, points to the archive as a container of memory and unbearable loss.

The question of remembrance and loss, as opposed to the continual presence of streaming news, is imperative in defining the need to intervene, create difference, and add complexity in ongoing archival constructions. This is true not only for revisions of past events but in the representation of present catastrophes. Contemporary artists’ critical responses to the complex issues of the military conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon work in this thin line between history and memory. Their art is a critique toward dominant representations of war as an event that swallows up long-term effects and affects, like individual memories and personal losses.

The photographic series *The Victor Weeps: Afghanistan* by Fazal Sheikh (1997), pictures hands holding little passport images of lost family members, together with captions of voices remembering and paying tribute to the beloved ones. The installation of these images makes visible the social and historical potentiality of the archive for testimony, ritual, mourning, and monument (Enzewor, 2008). They also show the critical role that photographs play in shaping visual evidences of the war, accounting for competing versions of history (Sontag, 2005).

The constant proliferation of images, and visual gadgets, tells us that archival work is a key cultural practice defining the contemporary. In art-based processes of documental creation, recollection, reenactment, and/or reorganization, artists and art students have opportunities to reflect on the history of images and their cultural status, “their generations and genealogies, their modes of address, their traversed historical grounds” (Enzewor 2008, p. 36).
Global Narratives

One of the main purposes of art historical knowledge is to organize a picture of the world through its cultural and artistic practices. However, the instability, multiplicity, and temporal-spatial complexity of contemporary political and artistic realities makes questionable any intent to write a history of art with pretensions of universality or durability. In a time when the global and the local appear in a constant flux, geography—instead of chronology, style, or national school—becomes a more relevant metaphor to articulate histories of the present.

Geography as an epistemic category is in turn grounded in issues of positionality, in questions of who has the power and authority to name, of who has the power and authority to subsume others into its hegemonic identity. (Rogoff, 2000, p. 21)

Space, movement, and non-linear journeys are critical concepts informing histories revising how power structures define relations between subjects and places. But how can historical narratives represent existing connections between creative ideas and contingent realities, moving geographies, cultural differences, and unequal opportunities? Recent curatorial practice is trying to provide some answers to this question. Exhibitions like Documenta 12 (Buergel & Novak, 2007) or Brave New Worlds (Chong & Raymond, 2007) address the representation of multiple unstable worlds coexisting in the present time and define global narratives made of multiple stories, art practices, and localized projects.

Curators Buergel and Novak (2007) use the metaphor of “a radical formlessness” as the most appropriate way of representing the present and “to keep the balance between identification and fixation” (p. 11). In Documenta 12, most of the contemporary works shown are presented in a tense connection between past and present, between local art histories and global forces with economic, political, and cultural implications. Examples include works by artists African Romuald Hazoumé and Inuit Annie Pootoogook. Inspired by Yoruban traditions, Hazoumé’s masks translate spirituality into a form of imagery connected with the present. To infuse this feeling of now, he constructs bodies and faces out of Western garbage and found objects, producing a commentary on how African knowledge and artistic traditions are becoming more polluted and hybridized day by day. Pootoogook’s drawings are inspired by a family legacy of Inuit art that goes back to her grandmother. The representation of modern interiors and ordinary life challenges Western stereotypes that Inuit art is about dancing bears or hunting seals. Pootoogook belongs to the first generation of Inuit growing up between the isolated traditions of the far North Pole, and the televised realities of the Western world. Her art represents these shocking realities and “insists on the primacy of place, of the flux of the global in the local” (p. 164). The pedagogical potential of a model of global narrative like Documenta 12 is based on its proliferation of alternative itineraries that barely stop by hegemonic centers. Because there is no idea of center but
of many different localities, the viewer is constantly invited to assess the impact of Western culture from its outside.

The curatorial project of *Brand New Worlds* offers a different model of dialog and connectivity between artists around the globe. All the exhibited projects are reflections of Benjamin’s (1999b) critique of authorial work as the one where product and process intersect to become a critical reflection on the means and logics of cultural production (Chong & Raymond, 2007). The resulting global narrative is based on defining common political strategies in contemporary art while acknowledging the specificities of their transference into local realities (Raymond, 2007a). These strategies are:

1. **Poetic repetition/replication.** Artists use replication as a reflective strategy to return, re-examine, and re-organize specific forms and contents, not to search for sameness, but for unexpected meanings. For instance, Fernando Bryce, one of the artists in the show, creates impeccable and obsessively detailed drawn duplicates of archival documents connected to key historical events (e.g. Spanish Civil War, Cuban Revolution, Chile at the time of Salvador Allende, the bombing of Hiroshima), and more recently to modern colonial endeavors in Latin America. The installation of the archive in series and inventories of drawings hanging in gallery walls acts as “iconographical nets that collect subjective, political, and cultural meaning” (Raymond, 2007b, p. 61).

2. **Performing conceptual journeys into a variety of ideological landscapes.** This strategy produces visualizations of specific sites, geographies, or itineraries as a revision and remapping of political subjectivities and social crossroads. For instance, Artur Zmijewski’s film triad *Danuta, Dorota*, and *Halina* (2006) reconstructs, in a highly edited form, the cyclical structure in the lives of three Polish working women, creating a sense of monotony and loneliness while suggesting an anti-heroic view of proletariat after the collapse of communism and the golden years of the Solidarity trade union led by the charismatic Lech Walesa.

3. **Collage and collecting.** Artists develop processes of gathering, recuperating, and reclaiming forgotten and silenced images. For instance, Walid Raad has developed various forms of documenting the different Lebanese wars with the explicit intention of blurring the frontier between fact and fiction, questioning any official history or version that can explain the monumentality of the long-standing disaster of Lebanon’s wars. There is a great deal of black irony in Raad’s work, as his collection of documents, belonging allegedly to a certain prominent historian Dr. Fadl Fakhouri, shows. Amongst those documents, there is a systematic taxonomy of the exact make and model of every car bomb used in the Lebanese war of 1975-1991.

Kassel, Germany and Minneapolis, Minnesota—the cities where these projects originated—are not examples of global metropolitan centers.
this same reason, they show that the global can be imagined otherwise from marginal or relatively isolated places (Chong & Raymond, 2007). Inviting students to explore shared global issues in contemporary art and to create their own curatorial projects (even if it is only in virtual forms) can be a way of learning art history while constructing responsible connections to reality, political issues, community, social history, and the environment. Increasingly our student bodies are also a reflection of a changing world made of many different placements and displacements. An art history education based on the construction of global narratives can be a better model to connect art historical content with the social and cultural experiences of our audiences.

Conclusions
This article has recreated an overlapping space between critical art histories and visual culture studies with the aim of introducing historical depth into the critical understanding of visuality. This space questions the academic hegemony of a modernist model of art historical knowledge centered on the study of objects, styles, and linear chronologies. The complexity and instability of present history requires new critical concepts in the writing of art histories. These concepts have to reflect on issues of multiple temporalities and cycles, the connection of history and memory, the mediated construction of current and past events, and the critical agency of works of art in the re-making of history. Existing research projects in cultural psychology show that art historical appropriation is a cultural and cognitive ability of high order, which needs to be taught through specific pedagogies. These can be based on the work of many contemporary artists, art historians, and curators operating in the interconnections between revised histories, memory work, and alternative visualities.

This article has taken a revisionist stance in looking to the recent past of our field. A model of art history centered on visual practices, and situated in the time of the viewer, is seen as consistent with social reconstructionist ideas developed for well over a decade. However, the arguments presented need also to be connected to the future of our field, and more specifically, to the current debate about new foundations and new principles of art education (Barrett, 2006; Tavin, Kushins & Elniski, 2007; Gude, 2007). This is an objective to be covered in future research work.

References
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