

## **Anticipation as a Cultural Condition (within the Field of Art)**

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*Globalization fundamentally transforms the relationship between the places we inhabit and our cultural practices, experiences, and identities.* - John Tomlinson

How do we see art? How do we imagine, envision, and produce art of our own in the current condition of globalization?

The concept of globalization is about the circumstances of cultural exchange, and the question of cultural perception. The contemporary cultural condition is being viewed with anticipation and angst as many wait for the emergence of a unified global culture. The space for art production is still restricted by the market on the one hand, on the other hand by the long history of institutional perspectives. For better or worse, we might anticipate and see art through an invisible pair of glasses of a single, unified aesthetic. But what is the cultural bias behind this premise?

The seeing/be seen relationship is much more complicated than might appear on the surface. As in art world, an example could be raised here is Okwui Enwezor's postcolonial curatorial praxis in *In/Sight: African Photographers, 1940-Present* (1996). This exhibition showed that photography executes an artistic vision about seeing and being seen, about representation and identity discourse. The idea of subjective anticipation is sometimes constructed from both inside and outside. Christopher Pinney pointed out in *Notes from the Surface of the Image*, "the surface and the depth are no more sedimentary layers, but more profound positionalities which fuse the ethical/political with the chronotopic." In contemporary visual art praxis, the surface becomes a site of the depth. Developing new articulations and interpretations of the image and gaze helps us understand the concept of what is behind the conventional iconophilia and institutional ethics.

Anticipation is an emotion involving pleasure or sometimes anxiety, in considering expected or longed-for events. The project *In Anticipation* was organized by a group of thirteen students and directed by one instructor. As the title hints, the viewers' act of looking forward plays a crucial role in this project. The act of anticipation is to take up, prepare and consider something beforehand. With a promise of an alternative reality, the effects of contemporary artists constantly looking forward play a significant role in demonstrating anticipation through the structure of art practice. In the process of *In Anticipation*, we articulate the idea of "anticipation" through artists' proposals, website, posters, an event, the people and the documentation. This project recorded the way in which earlier generated ideas, ours and the artists, may seem to foretell a later event developing. The process intrigues the viewers trying to pass the time waiting for the making and unmaking of art. There's a public interest involved - everything from curiosity, angst, expectation and passion.

In this seemingly unified global culture, art gains an open space for interpretation and expectation. In this project, the space between seeing and to be seen, between viewer and image is deliberated by the curators, arts administrators, artists and viewers. Art could be conceived by

different disciplines, by curators' and artists' desire to consolidate the intimate space between viewer and image, and between the making and unmaking of art per se.

John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture*, published by University of Chicago Press, 1999, 106