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Modern Science and Vedic Science, Volume 7, Number 1, 1997

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The Holistic Education of Artists through Maharishi Vedic Science: Unfolding the Infinite Reservoir of Creativity in Individual Awareness

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the fundamental principles and research outcomes of the Vedic Science-based approach to educating artists as it has been developed and applied at Maharishi University of Management over the last 25 years. The paper outlines several unique features of the curriculum—including consideration of student quality-of-life issues, and the broader social and global dimensions of a college art curriculum—and examines the key element of a Vedic Science-based approach: the systematic and holistic development of the student’s consciousness through the technologies of Maharishi Vedic Science. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi has brought to light that the simplest form of the student’s own awareness is a field of unbounded consciousness—the universal Self—the source of all creativity. This paper explores how the application of Maharishi Vedic Science can bring fulfillment to the long-sought goals of art theory, practice, and education.

Introduction

Throughout time, artists and teachers of art have sought to unlock the full creative potential of the human mind. Despite this worthwhile endeavor, there have apparently been no systematic, verifiable, or reliable means through which this goal could be realized. Indeed, art and art practice have been generally understood to be mystifying, unscientific, random, and subject to the vagaries of the human condition. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi teaches that only through an educational approach based on the systematic development and application of pure consciousness—the unmanifest field of infinite creativity experienced as the simplest form of human awareness—might the long-sought goals of artists and educators be achieved. Such an approach teaches the student to access the inner creativity and intelligence of Nature, or Natural Law—that level of infinite creativity which governs all of life. This is the focus of educating artists in the light of Maharishi Vedic ScienceSM.

As a result of practicing the Transcendental Meditation® and TM-Sidhi® programs—techniques of Maharishi Vedic Science—many artists over the last 40 years have observed profound positive changes in their own art practice, experienced significant

progress in their personal lives, and witnessed the development of their community. Inspired by these experiences, artists, art teachers, and scholars have turned their attention to the knowledge contained in Maharishi Vedic Science. With the founding of Maharishi University of Management 25 years ago, the Department of Fine Arts was created to apply this knowledge to the education of artists (Cain, 1975, 1988; Fergusson, 1991). The result can be called the Consciousness-BasedSM approach to educating artists.

The Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists integrates into a traditional university art curriculum the principles of Maharishi Vedic Science and specific technologies to develop consciousness—including the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs. This integrated approach holistically develops the art student, producing quantifiable results which are satisfying for students, teachers, and society as a whole. This approach to educating artists cultivates: 1) access to infinite Creative Intelligence—the managing intelligence of Natural Law; 2) spontaneous, life-supporting action leading to a balanced, healthy and fulfilled life in harmony with Natural Law; 3) expansion of the artist’s consciousness, supporting the creation of art which is profound and uplifting for the artist, for the audience of art, and for the whole environment; and, 4) the creation of a coherent influence in the collective consciousness of the community, the nation, and the world; resulting in a holistic transformation in the quality of life in society.

Contemporary Issues in the Education of Artists

As evidenced in the history of Western thought, the definition and role of art and aesthetics changes with the philosophical, religious, social, political, and cultural climate of each era. In the early history of art criticism, “high art,” as opposed to imitation and later kitsch, was expected to reveal concepts of the divine, the spirit, or the sublime (Hegel, 1975; Kant 1986; Mitias, 1980, p. 74). According to this theory, art was created by a genius who did not know the creative mechanics of his expression (Kant, 1986, pp. 42–43). However, during the twentieth century, with the rapid growth of science and technology, extreme political upheaval and social turmoil, and new philosophical propositions about the nature of life, numerous alternative art movements arose (Harrison & Wood, 1992), each having its own definition of art and its role in changing society and culture. Of these, American Abstraction or Formalism in the 1950s and 1960s (the so-called pinnacle of Modernism), as articulated by critic Clement Greenberg (1961, p. 5), held that art captured absolute emotions or absolute knowledge (Zakian, 1988, p. 39) because it eradicated relative referents and represented “reality” as abstract and unbounded. Postmodern artists, on the other hand, deconstructed these assumptions. Postmodern critics and artists argued that art, like language, cannot express an “unsayable,” but can only change or reinvent the rules of a relative language game (Kosuth, 1991, p. 247). (The term ‘Modernism’ refers loosely to the period spanning the 1880s to 1960s, finding its culmination in the Formalism of the early 1970s. There are many definitions and interpretations of Postmodernism, a historical trend which emerged in the 1970s and has been influential since [Bonshek, 1996].)

While there have been innumerable theories and movements of art which have informed the education of artists, the Modern and Postmodern approaches have impact-

ed education in important ways during the last 40 years. The American critic Thomas McEvilley (1992, p. 137) describes a Modern cultural period (a phase that he suggests, along with Postmodernism, has occurred many times throughout history) as characterized by mutually supportive notions of history and selfhood. These include: history is linear and progressive; innovation and change are valued over tradition; validated by the progressive force of history, “the self inflates”; self-expression and originality are revered; the self is viewed as heroic; and the Modern artist is a genius, innovator, and hero.

Conversely, Postmodernism denotes that moment when the Modernist faith in history declines and the self deflates: the self has no “anointed mission”; the self is mediated rather than a representation of heroic genius; attempts are made to reconnect with previous traditions; and there is an acknowledgment and appreciation of cultural difference and relative expression. Modernism placed the artist (a European male) at the center of reality and importance; Postmodernism places critical judgement and the contextualization of art within the broader context of cultural and historical parameters of contemporary life (see, for example, Gablik, 1984, 1992; Jameson, 1985; Lyotard, 1988). Drawing extensively on deconstruction, Postmodern theory rejects the notion of a unified, transcendental self or center (Haney, 1989). Modernism and Postmodernism can thus be said to provide opposing and contradictory conceptions of the self.

Some theorists and educators have attempted to articulate issues which go beyond the Modern and Postmodern dichotomy. Recently, theorists have criticized deconstructive Postmodernism (Gablik, 1992) and contemporary artists and art (Kuspit, 1990a). Kuspit has argued, for example, that art no longer speaks of universals, and that the artist is no longer an exemplary human being; he suggests that Postmodern art is simply an art of glamour, making no attempt to express universal value. As Kuspit (1990a) states:

Once upon a time to say art was important meant it seemed inevitable, which also meant that it seemed to speak with a universal human voice. It did not just exist for itself. The experience of the arts inevitability involved the feeling that it articulated what seemed impossible yet necessary to articulate. . . . The attempt to create the sense of speaking from inside of the universally human has been abandoned by high art. Art that even pretends to do so loses face. (p. 36)

Providing a vision for future art, Kuspit (1990b, p. 79) suggests that art should promote an “aesthetic disinterestedness” or special direct awareness (an “aesthetic transcendence” or a detached aesthetic attitude which speculates its own unity), thereby creating the possibility for a new sense of self. While Kuspit does not provide a systematic means for achieving this end, he does highlight the shortcomings of contemporary theory and art practice, which are apparently unable to articulate universals, express unity, or create a possible new sense of self. Oliver and Gershman (1989) and Purpel (1989) have examined educational theory and practice from the Modern and Postmodern perspectives, and Risatti (1989) has considered the status of college art education; each has concluded that significant changes to the very foundations of learning, teaching, and curricula are both necessary and inevitable.

**The Holistic Approach of Maharishi Vedic Science
to the Education of Artists**

In contrast to contemporary theory, with its irreconcilable opposites (Bonshek, 1988; 1996) and lack of methods for developing the self, Maharishi Vedic Science provides intellectual understanding and practical methods to experience the full range of the self. This comprehensive science and technology of consciousness provides a reliable means through which opposites can be reconciled, and through which life can be lived in accord with Natural Law, thereby supporting both individual and cultural differences simultaneously from their foundation: the unmanifest source of pure consciousness. With the development of higher states of consciousness, the artist can become a universal and exemplary human being, and spontaneously express universal values in art without diminishing his or her concern with historical, geographic, and cultural contexts. Such art can create a sense of unity in its audience, which goes well beyond the boundaries of space, time, and place.

In the past, educators have developed a useful body of knowledge regarding art and its relation to social, philosophical, and political concerns. The principles of instructional design, learning, evaluation, and criticism drawn from this knowledge have guided the education of artists. However, from the perspective of Maharishi Vedic Science, these principles represent a partial understanding and experience of life, based on partial knowledge of Natural Law. Now, through Maharishi Vedic Science, the art student can learn to act from the “ground state” of all Natural Law because the technologies of Vedic Science have made available the direct experience of pure consciousness to every student. As a result, new principles are arising to orient an entirely different approach to art and education. As shown below, old principles of educating artists, derived from some of the assumptions of Modern and Postmodern theory and practice, can be contrasted with new principles of educating artists emerging from Maharishi Vedic Science. In this section, we will examine a sample of these principles from the point of view of Maharishi’s contribution to the discipline. We will see how the old principles are expanded and brought to fulfillment through Maharishi Vedic Science.

<p>Old Principles for Educating Artists that have Dominated Contemporary Education</p>	<p>New Principles for Educating Artists to Bring Perfection to Art and Fulfillment to Life</p>
<p>A. The consciousness and identity of the art student are thought to be socially constructed or mediated by experience in the world.</p>	<p>A. The art student’s simplest form of awareness is the field of pure consciousness, the universal Self—the source of nature’s creativity. This Self is the transcendental foundation for more expressed levels of the personality.</p>
<p>B. Approaches to educating artists are derived from various, often conflicting theories of knowledge, which are usually based on philosophical or intellectual concepts.</p>	<p>B. The Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists is derived from the structure of pure knowledge, experientially located in the transcendental, self-referral consciousness of the student and teacher.</p>
<p>C. Artistic genius cannot be taught, but is expressed in the life of a few gifted art students.</p>	<p>C. Every human being has the potential to express the infinite creativity of Nature. This inner genius can be effortlessly cultivated by any student through the the technologies of Maharishi Vedic Science.</p>
<p>D. The art student’s sense of joy and fulfillment is limited to isolated moments of successful creativity.</p>	<p>D. Established in higher states of consciousness, the art student enjoys bliss and fulfillment at all times, thereby expressing the art of living an integrated life.</p>
<p>E. Emphasis is placed on the role of experience in the daily life, and the expression of active levels of the mind, such as the senses, intellect, and emotions.</p>	<p>E. Emphasis is placed on the experience of self-referral pure consciousness. From this level the art student systematically expresses the inner unmanifest value of consciousness in the outer work of art, thus engaging all levels of the mind.</p>

<p>F. In terms of the meaning of art, Modernism places primacy on the art object, which is thought to potentially express universal values; while Postmodernism places primacy on relative meaning in a contextual language game.</p>	<p>F. Primacy is placed on the artist experiencing higher states of consciousness, in which the infinite, universal value of pure consciousness is expressed in the finite, culturally specific values of the work of art.</p>
<p>G. Modern art educators emphasize the art student's individual concerns, while some contemporary art educators call for socially responsible artists.</p>	<p>G. The Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists cultivates the art student as a universal human being, a role model for society.</p>
<p>H. Different schools of thought attempt to raise and transform collective awareness in society through opposition and controversy.</p>	<p>H. Diversity and difference are supported on the ground of unity by radiating a coherent and transforming influence to the collective consciousness of society through the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs.</p>
<p>I. Cultural diversity is emphasized. The dominant paradigm is cultural relativism: each society's culture should be understood in terms of the meanings, attitudes, and values shared by that culture. Universal values and a unified source of all cultures are not thought to be possible.</p>	<p>I. Culture, history and tradition have their basis in the universal field of Natural Law, the ultimate source of all cultures. When individuals experience this Unified Field of pure consciousness, they are able to deeply appreciate both the uniqueness and the universal values expressed by world cultures.</p>

<p>J. In their search for freedom and self-expression, art students often cultivate a lack of conformity with society's traditional modes of expression and conduct in order to set themselves on a unique and creative path.</p>	<p>J. The freedom of the art student is derived essentially from the experience of transcendental consciousness, which is unbounded and not socially conditioned. This experience enlivens life in accord with Natural Law, which enables an artist to spontaneously express the full range of the self, thereby fulfilling individual desires while simultaneously fulfilling the deepest needs of society.</p>
<p>K. Students often create art that seeks to imitate other artists, or that presents localized issues and personal concerns that may be inaccessible to viewers. The art works' effects may or may not be life-supporting for the artist, the viewer and the environment.</p>	<p>K. As they express their own unique individuality, art students reveal universal themes, which arise from the deepest level of consciousness—the level of infinite correlation, harmony, and bliss—and enliven these life-supporting qualities in the viewer and the environment.</p>
<p>L. The creative process is mysterious and unpredictable. It is difficult to teach creativity; art students must wait for moments of inspiration. Creativity involves effort, stress, and struggle.</p>	<p>L. Through Maharishi Vedic Science, the creative process can be clearly experienced, systematically understood, and reliably applied. Creativity is naturally effortless, spontaneous, and enjoyable.</p>
<p>M. The purpose of teaching cultural and art history is to provide a background for the student's artistic development by informing them about the cultural context, styles, techniques, and artistic and philosophical developments of the past and present.</p>	<p>M. The deeper purposes of teaching cultural and art history are to understand the history of individual and collective consciousness and to inspire students to great achievements as individuals, artists, and members of society.</p>

Principle A. The art student's simplest form of awareness is the field of pure consciousness, the universal Self—the source of Nature's creativity. This Self is the transcendental foundation for more expressed levels of the personality.

Maharishi's understanding of consciousness is fundamentally different from prevailing views in modern psychology, philosophy, and the arts. These views tend to focus on the stream of consciousness, or on broad patterns of thought as they are influenced by political, social, and gender values. Maharishi, in contrast, brings to light a fundamental aspect of consciousness that lies beyond thought and beyond cultural perspectives. Maharishi Vedic Science, rooted in the ancient tradition of Vedic knowledge, explains that beyond the relative, changing levels of consciousness lies a transcendental, unchanging level of consciousness (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1969, p. 470–71). Furthermore, Maharishi teaches that this transcendental consciousness can be directly experienced by anyone. This is accomplished through the Transcendental Meditation technique, which Maharishi (1994) defines as

a simple, natural, effortless procedure practiced for 15 to 20 minutes while sitting comfortably with eyes closed. During this technique the individual's awareness settles down and experiences the unique state of restful alertness: as the body becomes deeply relaxed, the mind transcends all mental activity to experience the simplest form of human awareness—Transcendental Consciousness—where consciousness is open to itself. (p. 260)

As Maharishi explains, the Transcendental Meditation technique allows the mind to settle down to experience its least excited state—the simplest form of human awareness, where consciousness is open to itself; it is aware of itself. Maharishi (1995a) points out that during the Transcendental Meditation technique, “the mind easily and naturally arrives at the source of thought, the settled state of mind—Transcendental Consciousness—pure consciousness, self-referral consciousness, which is the source of all creative processes” (p. 129).

Maharishi teaches that pure consciousness is the source of thought—of all mental activity—and of all creative processes. Pure consciousness is thus the source of all thinking and feeling; it is the universal, unchanging basis of mental and emotional life. Maharishi identifies pure consciousness as the Self (written with a large “S” to distinguish it from the self, the individual personality). This universal Self is understood as the fundamental nature of every person, regardless of race, gender, or culture, and can be experienced by anyone through the Transcendental Meditation technique, which has been learned by over four million people of different cultures, religions, and educational backgrounds throughout the world. In addition to the Transcendental Meditation technique, Maharishi has brought out the Transcendental Meditation-SidhiSM program, which he describes as an advanced aspect of the technology of Maharishi Vedic Science which “trains the individual to think and act from the level of Transcendental Consciousness” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1994, p. 261). The practice of this program greatly accelerates the development of consciousness.

In modern times, pure consciousness has not been commonly experienced; perhaps because attention has focussed almost exclusively on outer, active values of life which tend to disallow the experience of this transcendental level of the mind. There are exceptions, however. Artists, scientists, and other exceptionally creative people have

reported occasional experiences of expanded states of awareness which appear to be similar to the experience of pure consciousness described in Maharishi Vedic Science (Cain, 1975). These people often feel these experiences are crucial to their creativity. Artist Oscar Kokoshka, for example, writes:

The life of consciousness is boundless . . . therefore we must harken closely to our inner voice . . . the core within . . . the magical principle of living. All that is required of us is to release control. Some part of ourselves will bring us into the unison. . . One's soul becomes a reverberation of the universe. (in Chipp, 1971, p. 172)

The Vedic tradition of knowledge explains that pure consciousness is the ultimate source of both human creativity and of all the creativity expressed in the universe. Maharishi points out that “consciousness is that one element in nature on the ground of which the infinite variety of creation is continuously emerging, growing, and dissolving. The whole field of change emerges from this field of non-change” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1986, pp. 25–26).

The most advanced theories of modern physics have arrived at a similar understanding that there is a unified basis for the diversity of nature. Unified Field theories of quantum physics postulate a single, self-interacting, unchanging, and unbounded unified field that is the source of all the fundamental forces and particles in the universe (Hagelin, 1987, 1989). Maharishi explains that the unified field of all the laws of nature revealed by modern science and the field of pure consciousness revealed by ancient Vedic wisdom are the same reality:

Both understandings, modern and ancient, locate the unified source of Nature's perfect order in a single, self-interacting field of intelligence at the foundation of all the Laws of Nature. This field sequentially creates, from within itself, all the diverse Laws of Nature governing life at every level of the manifest universe. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995b, p. 79)

Maharishi has brought to light a detailed analysis of the self-interacting dynamics of the Unified Field, which he calls the Constitution of the Universe:

The self-interacting dynamics of this Unified Field constitutes the most basic level of Nature's dynamics, and is governed by its own set of fundamental laws. Just as the constitution of a nation represents the most fundamental level of national law and the basis of all the laws governing the nation, the self-interacting dynamics of the Unified Field represent the most fundamental level of Natural Law and the basis of all known Laws of Nature.

The laws governing the self-interacting dynamics of the Unified Field can therefore be called the **Constitution of the Universe**—the eternal, non-changing basis of Natural Law and the ultimate source of the order and harmony displayed throughout creation. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995b, pp. 79–80)

Maharishi points out that these fundamental laws are expressed in physics in precise mathematical formulas, whereas in Vedic Science, “these same fundamental laws—the Constitution of the Universe—are found in the eternal, self-referral dynamics of consciousness knowing itself. This eternal dynamics is embodied in the very structure of the sounds of Rk Veda, the most fundamental aspect of Vedic Literature” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995b, p. 80).

Maharishi has worked with leading theoretical physicists to precisely correlate the mathematical descriptions of the self-interacting dynamics of the Unified Field of all the Laws of Nature provided by quantum physics, with the specific expressions of the self-referral dynamics of pure consciousness found in the structure of the sounds of the Ṛk Veda. Maharishi (1995b, p. 80) points out that the two descriptions of the self-interacting dynamics of the unified field are identical. Thus, the discovery of the Constitution of the Universe by Maharishi Vedic Science is seen to be verified by modern science (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995b, p. 78).

Maharishi (1995b, p. 75) explains that the Ṛk Veda “is structured in self-referral Transcendental Consciousness and is available to everyone” through the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs. While the Constitution of the Universe is the universal basis of life, only a clear, fully awake, self-referral consciousness can know the Ṛk Veda through direct experience. This experience, which is cultured by the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs, may be especially valuable for an artist who wishes to imbue art work with universal value. Maharishi Vedic Science explains that art arises from the fundamental impulses of life and creativity that structure the whole of existence and find expression in evolution (Maharishi International University, 1974, p. 207). This may imply that to consistently create universal art, it would be invaluable for an artist to know the structure and sequence through which Nature creates the universe. Some artists appear to have glimpsed this possibility.

Wassily Kandinsky (1947), one of the pioneers of modern art, wrote, “Painting is intended to create a new world. Each work originates just as does the cosmos—ultimately creating a symphony, the music of the spheres. The creation of works of art is the creation of the world” (p. 24). British sculptor Barbara Hepworth (1977) stated:

I think the very nature of art is affirmative, and being so reflects the laws, and the evolution of the universe—both the power and rhythm of growth and structure as well as the infinitude of ideas which reveal themselves when one is in accord with the cosmos and the personality is free to develop. (pp. 2–3)

In another vein, with respect to the expression of art and language, Postmodern theorist Francois Lyotard has suggested that in art, as in thought, there is, “the desire to present or signify to the limit the totality of meanings” (in Kosuth, 1991, p. xvi). This expression, “totality of meanings,” seems to refer to the infinite possibility of meanings of art. From the perspective of Maharishi Vedic Science, the Ṛk Veda expresses the totality of the Constitution of Universe, which is structured in transcendental consciousness—an unbounded, infinite field which is seemingly beyond expression. This suggests an intriguing possibility for art. If transcendental consciousness can be completely enlivened in individual awareness through the development of consciousness, then art could also express infinity. Art and thought itself could express the totality of Natural Law contained in the Constitution of the Universe.

Similarly, Lyotard suggests:

the work of art ‘presents’ in the perceptible space-time-matter, something—a gesture—that cannot be presented there. This ‘presence’ cannot be a presentation. It remains silent. And this is its sign. . . . Thought is also an art, because we think in sentences, and the sentences themselves also ‘present’ gestures of the space-time-matter of language. (in Kosuth, 1991, p. xv)

Art, like thought, can signify a presence which is ultimately silent. Maharishi Vedic Science and Technology cultures both intellectual knowledge and direct experience of the self-referral dynamics of Nature’s functioning so that the field of infinite silence,

pure consciousness, the total potential of Natural Law, can be enlivened and expressed by any individual.

The unified understanding of human nature and Nature in Maharishi Vedic Science establishes a new foundation for the education of artists. Maharishi points out that for the individual who is established in pure consciousness, the infinite organizing power of Natural Law guides action (Maharishi, 1986, p. 32). Such a person's action is appropriate for the time, the place, the individual, the culture, the environment, and the universe. Functioning from this level, the artist's actions would be in full accord with Natural Law, and would receive full support from Nature—from the environment and from the culture. The artist's actions would be fully life-supporting—they would not create any strain, stress, or negative influence in the individual or the environment. Furthermore, by establishing individual awareness permanently on the level of pure consciousness, the artist would spontaneously express the cosmic creativity that creates and sustains the universe. Some artists seemed to have sensed the need to operate from such a fundamental level—for example, Michelangelo wished to be an instrument of the divine (Clements, 1961); American painter, Agnes Martin, sought to express eternal beauty and perfection in art (in Bonshek & Fergusson, 1988); and the Taoist artist, Chan-Huai-Huan, sought to identify with Spiritual Reality and thereby create as limitlessly as creation itself (in Chung-yuan, 1963, p. 206).

Swiss artist and Bauhaus teacher Paul Klee gave this description of the universal foundation of art and creativity:

It is the artist's mission to penetrate as far as may be toward that sacred truth where primal law feeds growth. Which artist would not wish to dwell at the central organ of all motion in space-time . . . from which all functions derive their life? It is the womb of nature. In the primal ground of creation, where the secret key to all things lies hidden. Our beating heart drives us downward to this primal ground. (in Jung, 1964, p. 263)

B. The Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists is derived from the structure of pure knowledge, experientially located in the self-referral consciousness of the student and teacher.

Maharishi explains that the state of transcendental consciousness during the Transcendental Meditation technique is a self-referral field of consciousness: “As the body becomes deeply relaxed, the mind transcends all mental activity to experience the simplest form of human awareness—transcendental consciousness—where consciousness is open to itself. This is the self-referral state of consciousness” (Maharishi Vedic University, 1994, pp. 260–261). Transcendental Consciousness is a state of “self-referral” because in that state consciousness, being awareness or wakefulness, refers only to itself: awareness is aware only of itself. In being aware or awake to itself, as Maharishi further points out, three values of self-referral consciousness can be located within the one unbounded field: the knower, the process of knowing, and the known. These three values are all aspects of pure consciousness knowing itself. As Maharishi (1986) explains, “because the awareness knows itself it is the knower, it is the known, and it is the process of knowing. This is the state of pure intelligence, wide awake in its own nature and completely self-referral” (p. 29). The terms “pure intelligence” and “pure consciousness” as used here are synonymous.

As is evident from this analysis, pure consciousness has a three-in-one structure: it is the knower, the process of knowing, and the known—at the same time it is a singular field of unbounded awareness (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1994, pp. 55–56). This three-in-one structure is called the structure of pure or complete knowledge, or “Veda,” in Maharishi Vedic Science. It is the fundamental structure of the individual’s simplest form of awareness; it is also the source of the ever-changing world of forms and phenomena. As Maharishi (1986, p. 27) points out, Veda means “pure knowledge”—the “solid mass of knowledge” where the knower, process of knowing, and known are the same structure of knowledge.

These three fundamental values of consciousness in Maharishi Vedic Science are called *Ṛishi*, *Devatā* and *Chhandas* and their unified, holistic state is called *Saṁhitā*, or the togetherness of the three values (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1994, p. 109). This value of *Saṁhitā* is the unified value of the Self. Inherent within this structure is the co-existence of opposites: one and three simultaneously (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1994, pp. 59–60). Maharishi (1994) further discusses this structure and dynamic of pure knowledge in terms of an education which provides total knowledge:

In the process of knowing itself, wholeness of consciousness, pure consciousness, self-referral consciousness, pure wakefulness, in its singularity, takes on the threefold structure of knower, process of knowing, and known; or observer, process of observation, and observed; or in Vedic terminology, *Ṛishi*, *Devatā* and *Chhandas*. *Saṁhitā* (togetherness) of *Ṛishi* (the observer), *Devatā* (the process of observation), and *Chhandas* (the object of observation) is the structure of pure knowledge. This is the level of absolute education, where the knower is the embodiment of total knowledge—pure knowledge and its infinite organizing power. (pp. 108–109)

Here Maharishi describes pure consciousness, self-referral consciousness, pure wakefulness, in terms of “wholeness.” Wholeness is the “all-comprehensive, eternal reality in its unmanifest, unbounded state of intelligence” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995a, p. 41). This value of wholeness moves within itself; through the interaction of the values of *Ṛishi*, *Devatā*, and *Chhandas* within *Saṁhitā*, further values of consciousness are generated as frequencies of consciousness. These frequencies, Maharishi explains, are the eternal sounds of the Veda and the Vedic Literature recorded in Vedic Sanskrit, and are the basic building blocks of the material world. Maharishi teaches that the first and most fundamental aspect of the Vedic Literature is the *Ṛk Veda*; *Ṛk Veda* is the structure of pure knowledge—the Constitution of the Universe, as we saw in the previous section (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995b, pp.79–80).

Ultimately, the purpose of Vedic Science-based education is to bring the student’s awareness from what Maharishi describes as object-referral consciousness, where awareness is as if separate from its own subjective basis, back to self-referral consciousness, the source of creativity and the field of total knowledge and its infinite organizing power. Maharishi (1994) elucidates this point by emphasizing that the real purpose of education “is to bring the awareness from knowing anything else (object-referral consciousness) to knowing oneself (self-referral consciousness, subject-referral consciousness)” (p. 111). Indeed, the dynamics of education itself, Maharishi (1994) teaches, is the phenomenon of the “knower returning from the vast field of knowing, the field of form and phenomenon, to the field of knowingness, the field of his own consciousness” (p. 111).

Thus, the most basic aspect of individual awareness and manifest creation is the structure of pure, absolute knowledge, the infinitely silent and infinitely dynamic structure of consciousness. This state of knowledge is not a concept derived through philosophical speculation; it is the actual structure of one's own consciousness which can be directly experienced through Maharishi's technologies of consciousness. Functioning from this level, the artist can create an art which truly embodies absolute knowledge—one of the aspirations of Modernist theory.

Maharishi has observed that for knowledge to be complete and fulfilling, the knower of knowledge, the Self, must be known:

If we look into the process of gaining knowledge we find that there are two sides to knowledge: the object of knowledge, that which we seek to know, and the subject of knowledge, the knower. What the present system of education provides is knowledge of the object; what it misses is knowledge of the subject, knowledge of the knower in the knower's infinite capacity. When the knower is ignorant about the Self, the whole structure of knowledge is as if baseless. (*Maharishi University of Management Bulletin*, 1996, p. 7)

It can be said that every educational experience involves to some degree a knower, a process of knowing, and a known. In a simple analysis of the study of art, the art student can be understood as the knower, the process of creating and evaluating art is the process of knowing, and the art object itself is the known. Most art curricula focus primarily on the known (for example, the physical work of art—i.e., learning about materials and media) and the process of knowing (for example, cultivating the development and expression of form and content). Some art educators point out the importance of educating the knower—the artist—for example, culturing the art student's sensibility, intellectual skills, intuition, and critical judgement; but most do not provide effective methods to develop these faculties (Fergusson, 1991). All of these subjective faculties are developed by enlivening the different levels of the mind during the Transcendental Meditation technique, and experiencing pure consciousness, the source of thought. At Maharishi University of Management, art students are well educated in the materials, content, and processes of art, but an even greater emphasis is placed on the full development of the knower—the consciousness of the artist—as the basis for artistic activity.

Maharishi Vedic Science explains that the self-referral process of pure consciousness knowing itself is the seed of all creativity in the universe. This self-referral dynamic is found at every point in creation (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1993, pp. 276–277). When an artist consciously experiences self-referral, he or she awakens creativity at its source, and then greater creative intelligence is expressed on all other levels of existence: mind, body, and environment. Maharishi predicts that the repeated experience of pure consciousness unfolds greatly expanded levels of creativity, comprehension, vitality, and support from the environment, culminating in higher states of consciousness.

Maharishi (1995b, p. 146) identifies seven states of consciousness: a) the three relative states of waking, dreaming and sleeping, b) a fourth state called transcendental consciousness, where the individual experiences pure consciousness, c) cosmic consciousness, the fifth state of consciousness, in which the state of pure, transcendental consciousness is maintained in activity, along with the three relative state, d) God consciousness, the sixth state of consciousness, in which the individual begins to appreciate the finest relative values along with the permanency of pure consciousness and, e) unity consciousness, the seventh state of consciousness, where everything in creation is

appreciated as impulses of one's own self-referral consciousness—wholeness moving within itself. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995b, p. 146; Alexander & Boyer, 1989.) In higher states of consciousness, when pure consciousness is permanently maintained in activity, action is always life-supporting for the doer and the environment, and in accord with Natural Law (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1986, p. 32). Such spontaneous action can be called completely “socially responsible,” thereby fulfilling the goal of revisionary Postmodern theory and practice.

Principles D & F: Primacy is placed on experiencing higher states of consciousness, in which the art student enjoys bliss and fulfillment at all times, and expresses the universal value of pure consciousness in specific works of art.

The ability to manifest the unmanifest in art occurs when the student is established in transcendental consciousness, in the state known as cosmic consciousness, where the experience of the Self or pure consciousness (also referred to as Being) is permanently maintained amidst dynamic activity (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1969, p. 315). While Maharishi describes seven states of consciousness, he indicates that the artist should be established, at the very least, in the fifth state of cosmic consciousness in order to be truly successful. The goal of art education, therefore, is to promote in the student growth to higher states of consciousness. As Maharishi (1973) points out, “in Cosmic Consciousness, the artist not only gains the ability of simultaneously maintaining broad comprehension along with sharp focus but also the ability to express, through his imagination and feeling, the unexpressed level of Being in such a way as to make it concrete.” Maharishi (1974) emphasizes that:

Cosmic Consciousness is the ideal awareness of the artist, because in this state of consciousness the artist can spontaneously maintain unbounded awareness while maintaining the boundaries and can depict the unbounded value onto the bound; unbounded values get transported onto the finite values of his strokes on paper. He is able to sustain that unboundedness, and he is able to move that unboundedness through his brushes.

In cosmic consciousness the artist lives the full value of the Self, and can depict the universal value of unboundedness in the art work. Maharishi (1979) explains that this universal value is what defines a successful work of art:

Universal value is the defining quality of a successful piece of art, and is created from the level of pure consciousness which is a field of all possibilities. It has universality, all possibilities, expressed within its individuality. Successful art is the profound and precise expression of life from the level of the simplest form of awareness. From this level, art is capable of displaying all possibilities. Expression from the level of the simplest form of awareness is ‘artistic’ expression because it has universality imbibed within its individual content.

Universality and individuality co-exist in the successful work of art. It is possible to create art which embodies all possibilities within one finite expression by creating from the level of pure, transcendental consciousness, the field of all possibilities. Maharishi explains that such universal art appeals to every heart:

A piece of art that is capable of whispering the songs of life in eternity can clearly whisper a message of love and happiness and ‘cheer-up’ to every heart, to every mind, to every level of consciousness no matter what—dreaming or sleeping or waking or deep rest or depressed or whatever. A piece of art is just a wave of life, a wave of love, a wave of happiness, a wave of eternity. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1970a, pp. vi–vii)

When art embodies this universal value, it naturally nourishes its audience. It affects every heart and every mind, every state of consciousness, even one who is dreaming, sleeping, waking, or enjoying deep rest. As Maharishi (1976) emphasizes, it nourishes the environment and all people—no matter what state of consciousness they are experiencing—because it is generated from the unified level of self-referral consciousness.

Some critics and artists, especially in traditional cultures, have glimpsed exalted possibilities for art which are akin to the attributes of art and creativity identified by Maharishi Vedic Science. The Taoist tradition of China provides an example of artists who seek to attune themselves to a higher Spiritual Reality and so be transformed. Taoist painter Chan-Huai-Huan reflects: “Only he who reaches Reality can follow Nature’s spontaneity and be aware of the subtlety of things. . . . His brush will secretly be in harmony with movement and quiescence and all forms will issue forth” (in Chung-yuan, 1963, p. 206). Titus Burckhardt (1967) observes that Taoist landscape painting, “unveils the primordial harmony of things, a harmony that is ordinarily hidden under the subjective continuity of the mind. When this veil is suddenly torn, hitherto unobserved relationships, linking together beings and things, reveal their essential unity” (pp. 136–137). Speaking on behalf of the Islamic tradition of art and architecture, Ardalan and Bakhtiar (1973) explain, “The traditional artist creates the external art form in light of the inspiration which he has received from the spirit; in this way the art form is able to lead man to higher states of being and ultimately to unity” (p. 7).

Principle L. Through Maharishi Vedic Science, the creative process can be clearly experienced, systematically understood, and reliably applied. Creativity is naturally effortless, spontaneous, and enjoyable.

Many artists, especially in modern times, have not experienced consistently spontaneous, effortless, and fulfilling creativity. The reason for this may be the lack of the conscious experience of pure consciousness, the source of these characteristics of creativity. The experience of pure consciousness can be blocked or occluded by stress in the individual nervous system and also by stress in the collective consciousness of society. Many artists have found the Transcendental Meditation technique an effective means to release stress and experience effortless and enjoyable creativity (Cain, 1975).

In contrast to modern assumptions about creativity, Maharishi Vedic Science defines the creative act as inherently joyful since it follows the creative mechanics of self-referral consciousness, the field of bliss. Maharishi (1970b) indicates that “the character of that field of pure Creative Intelligence, which is the source of thinking and the basis of action and expression, is infinite and bliss.” In creating art from this level, “infinite bliss should pour out through every wave of artistic creation” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1970b).

From Maharishi’s analysis we can conclude that struggle and suffering are antithetical to creativity, because the primordial creative impulse is understood as the self-refer-

ral move of bliss consciousness, when pure consciousness becomes aware of itself. This self-referral performance at the deepest level of consciousness is the source of creativity at more expressed levels of life:

Art is the skillful expression of life. The artist, constantly utilizing his creative impulses, continues to draw from the reservoir of creativity present in his own being. This is how his consciousness, bathing in the fresh springs of creativity, rises to the prodigious brilliance of natural creation. Exposed to the beautiful process of unfoldment, an artist, when he opens his awareness to the fullness of pure creative intelligence within, draws together the strokes of inspiration and ultimate achievement and enjoys them in the oneness of freedom. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1975a, p. 157)

When the creative mechanics of artistic performance follow the creative mechanics of Nature—the self-referral functioning of pure consciousness and its sequential unfoldment as the laws of nature—then art is on a par with “the prodigious brilliance of natural creation”; it speaks with a universal voice, and the art student enjoys his or her achievement as the experience of “freedom.”

Scientific research indicates that the Transcendental Meditation technique develops creativity and faculties related to creativity. Psychological research has shown, for example, that creativity increases in college students as a result of the Transcendental Meditation technique (Travis, 1979). From the perspective of modern psychological theory, the ability to maintain broad comprehension and narrow focus has been associated with higher levels of field independence, which has been positively correlated with creativity. Field independence is held to be a measure of an individual’s part-to-whole awareness and refers to an analytic style of perception. Pelletier (1974, 1977) has suggested that increased field independence is indicative of improved pattern recognition and increased accuracy of perceptual judgement, specifically the ability to focus on a defined area of the sensory field without losing broad comprehension of the total environment. This ability, he maintains, is greater in those who practice the Transcendental Meditation technique. One would expect that the art student, who deals with many parts within the context of the creation of a “whole” work or performance, would benefit from increased field independence.

Research by one of the authors has shown that Maharishi University of Management art students have significantly higher levels of field independence when compared to both peers and normative data (Fergusson, 1992, 1993). In order to verify whether field independence is relevant to art practice and achievement in art, Fergusson has investigated in these studies the relation of field independence and standard measures of accomplishment in college art education, and found significant and consistent correlations.

C. Every human being has the potential to express the infinite creativity of Nature. This inner genius can be effortlessly unfolded by anyone through the practice of the technologies of Maharishi Vedic Science.

Modernists hold that the artist is a genius whose creativity is unpredictable. For example, Kant (1986), whose ideas directly influenced Modern theory, defined genius as “a talent for producing that for which no definite rule can be given” and “it cannot

indicate scientifically how it brings about its product” (p. 42); an innate faculty, genius dies with the individual. Postmodernists declare the notion of genius to be nothing other than an elitist, relative conception. Maharishi Vedic Science, on the other hand, totally redefines the meaning of genius. Maharishi (1970b) explains genius in terms of naturally expressed creativity:

There is a difference between the creativity of a genius and the creativity of a non-genius. A genius is a naturally creative person. A creative person is someone who is able to do less and accomplish more, someone who doesn't have to struggle in order to create: this is creativity.

Maharishi (1970b) continues to add that, “because a genius is a person with very clear consciousness, he sees things so clearly he does not even experience obstacles or resistance to creativity; he just keeps on progressing on the steps of greater achievement.” Thus, “facility and ease in the field of achievements is what marks the steps of a genius, the steps of a creative man” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1970b). In this way, Maharishi brings out the principle that natural creativity is the hallmark of genius, and is the property of any individual who functions from the level of pure consciousness, the Unified Field of Natural Law.

The Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists is founded on the assumption that this inner genius of everyone—natural and unrestricted creativity—can be unfolded simply and easily through the practice of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs. As Maharishi (1975b) concludes:

Although art has always been taught, it had been thought that it was some inborn faculty that structures the artist, his vision and skill. But those days have gone when the genius of man was thought to belong to a few people born with a high level of consciousness. Now is the time when physics has declared the existence of a field of all possibilities located in the least excitation of consciousness. With this understanding about the different levels of creation, the unfoldment of the innermost level of life and its display on the surface values of living has become simple and easy.

Principle G: The Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists cultivates a universal human being, a role model for society; and Principle H: Art students can create a coherent and transforming influence in society and the world through the practice of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs.

The life of an artist has sometimes been associated with an erratic or anti-social lifestyle. Artists, who may think that intense states of creativity can be stimulated by extremes in behavior and experience, may feel compelled to be active at all times of the day and night, disregarding balanced patterns of sleep, eating, and recreation. Underlying this view of an artist's life is the mistaken assumption that heightened activity is the basis of the flow of creativity.

As discussed above, artistic creativity can be understood as the expression of cosmic creativity, and as Maharishi explains, cosmic creativity unfolds through the cycles of rest and activity. Rest in the night prepares nature for the activity of the day. In the same way, the deep rest gained through the practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique serves as the basis for the most creative, dynamic activity. “In repose, the mind

becomes a mirror of all creative possibilities. Emerging from this state it creates dynamically without effort” (Maharishi, 1973). Pure consciousness, a field of absolute silence, is the source of all dynamism in creation. By establishing individual awareness on the level of pure consciousness, the artist can create as Nature creates: spontaneously and with infinite organizing power.

To promote the development of consciousness among students, Maharishi University of Management structures a comfortable routine with a balance of rest and activity as a framework for promoting maximum energy, creativity, and health (Bonshek, 1989). Applying the guidelines of the Maharishi Vedic Approach to HealthSM program, which include knowledge of behavioral, dietary, and daily and seasonal routines to promote perfect health and life in accord with Natural Law, the faculty are given the responsibility for organizing a healthy learning environment. As a result of the comfortable routine and supportive learning environment, students increasingly enjoy improved quality of life while achieving their academic goals. Research indicates that the health and health-related behavior of college art students are associated with outcomes in an art curriculum when 106 students from four universities were measured (Fergusson & Bonshek, 1996). This research also indicated that Maharishi University of Management art students are generally healthier than their peers.

With respect to the role of the artist in today’s society, faculty at Consciousness-Based institutions generally endorse the view that artists have a social responsibility. Maharishi (1975b) indicates that, “the role of an artist in society is to create a model human—an individual who is growing in the ability to express the full value of life. The life of an artist should always be a model to all other people in society.” The artist’s primary responsibility is to develop his or her consciousness to radiate a harmonious, life-supporting influence in the environment. “Such should be the life of the artist: fulfilled in himself and in good harmony with the environment. Only then will he create more complete pieces of art, where life will be lived and eternity will be pictured” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1970a, p. vi).

Art is structured both by the individual artist’s consciousness and by society. The society and culture influence to a large degree what the artist can experience, imagine and create. Maharishi (1976, pp. 123–124) points out that any social group has a collective consciousness (the wholeness of consciousness of the entire group); for example family consciousness, community consciousness, city consciousness, national consciousness, and world consciousness. Collective consciousness is understood as the major determinant in the quality of social life. Maharishi (1986, pp. 74–75) explains that pure consciousness, the Unified Field of all the Laws of Nature, is at the basis of all levels of collective consciousness. Because pure consciousness is an unbounded field with the qualities of perfect orderliness and infinite correlation, just a few people creating a profound influence of orderliness within this field can catalyze major changes in collective consciousness, and therefore in the behavior and values of society. (Maharishi European Research University, 1979, pp. 28–29)

This influence, called the “Maharishi Effect,” has been repeatedly tested by measuring the societal effects of groups practicing the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs, which create coherence from the level of pure consciousness, the Unified Field of all the Laws of Nature. Scientific studies have found the group practice of this program results in holistic, positive, and statistically significant changes in the

quality of life of the surrounding community, nation, and world (Alexander, Nader, & Davies, 1989; Gelderloos, Frid, Goddard, Xue, & Löliger, 1988; Institute of Science, Technology and Public Policy, 1994; Orme-Johnson & Dillbeck, 1987). Maharishi (1995b, p. 70) has predicted that a group as small as 7,000 practicing the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs together can completely transform world consciousness. Following the same principle, much smaller groups can significantly improve community, city, state, and national consciousness. Through the practice of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs, art students can enliven harmony and coherence in society, and contribute to the quality of life in their communities. Thus, Maharishi Vedic Science greatly expands and fulfills the aspirations of art theorists and educators who call for an artist who is socially responsible (Fergusson & Bonshek, 1990; Gablik, 1991; 1992), and who is an exemplary human being (Kuspit, 1990a).

Principle I. Culture, history, and tradition have their basis in the universal field of Natural Law, the ultimate source of all cultures. When individuals experience this Unified Field of pure consciousness, they are able to deeply appreciate both the uniqueness and the universal values expressed by world cultures.

From the perspective of Maharishi Vedic Science, the verb “culture,” meaning to cultivate or refine, is fulfilled in the process of evolution to higher states of consciousness. Maharishi (1978) explains that the culture of a country refines the individual, enabling the development of enlightenment:

Culturing life, that is refining the crude values, is like refining gold ore, where fine, pure gold particles are mixed up with mud. Through the refining process the ore is cultured from a crude muddy form to a refined gold. In the same way, the culture of a country puts the crude human element, starting from birth, through the evolutionary process of refinement to produce very cultured, refined, and enlightened persons. An enlightened person is one who does not violate any laws of nature. It is the laws of nature which are responsible for the creation and evolution of life.

When a person acts in harmony with the laws of nature, he steps on the effortless and royal road of evolution. In evolution, life grows in steps of fulfillment and the person continually goes from more to even more and still more fulfillment. In the higher stages of fulfillment is the joy of life and strength. We call this inner fulfillment the integration of life, because mind and body act in full co-operation and co-ordination. Such culturing of life is culture according to natural law. The nation’s cultural integrity is built up on this basis of integration within the individual. (pp. 91–92)

From Maharishi’s explanation, we can see that a society’s or nation’s culture is crucial to the development of life. On the individual level a fully cultured state of mind is one which is established in the self-referral state of consciousness, “where the unbounded range of pure intelligence is available in the form of infinite Creative Intelligence endowed with the total potential of infinite organizing power” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1994, p. 148). Evolution, Maharishi teaches, is the goal of all cultures; culture is the basis for progress in any land. While cultural values help the individual evolve, the omnipresent, universal foundation of culture—pure self-referral consciousness, the total potential of Natural Law—is not influenced by the specific characteristics of any partic-

ular culture. By enlivening this total potential, however, through regular practice of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs, the universal and specific values of all the laws which support culture are strengthened. Thus, students in Consciousness-Based educational institutions, through the practice of technologies of consciousness, naturally enliven cultural integrity and the harmony of cultures. As experience of pure consciousness grows, students also become increasingly able to appreciate both universal values and specific cultural values in their own culture and other cultures.

Recent developments in the world show an increased concern for indigenous peoples and the revival of cultural traditions. It could be argued that this is not simply a Postmodern phase but that attempts to revivify tradition and indigenous cultures suggest an important change in world consciousness. Maharishi (1978) emphasizes that the specific values of culture actually sustain life for a particular group and, for the full development of individual cultural values, have to be preserved or life will not be sustained:

All the values that enrich life in a particular geographical area constitute its culture. Creativity is the source of all culture. The infinite potential of creativity lies in the state of pure intelligence—unmanifest, unbounded, absolute. The unmanifest Absolute is self-sufficient. It cultures itself from within its own nature. All cultures are the expression of the eternal impulse of the Absolute to know itself. (pp. 317–318)

In this context, the recent revival of culture and traditions, it seems, could be an indication of an upsurge in the degree of Natural Law being lived by the people of the world.

Similarly, traditions are living structures which support evolution. Maharishi (1975a) explains that just as “cultural values lie at the basis of all progress,” traditions are, “those modes of creative intelligence which, embedded in the nature of life, have withstood the test of time and therefore serve as a safe ground for currents of creativity to grow and find fulfillment generation after generation (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1975a, p. 249). For this reason, pedagogy must strike a balance between innovation and tradition, a principle upheld at Maharishi University of Management. Maharishi (1975a) emphasizes that:

Knowledge has three aspects: understanding, experience, and tradition. The strength of education lies in its innovative nature; yet the basis of innovative education must be maintained. This means our innovative techniques should not disturb what we are teaching. The basic traditional values must be maintained. Whatever our methods of teaching, the content of knowledge has to be maintained. (p. 247)

As discussed earlier, the fundamental content of knowledge is the self-referral value of consciousness, and the development of this value is the aim of the Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists.

New Developments in Maharishi Vedic Science Related to Art

As discussed previously, *M.on*—the Constitution of the Universe, *Ṛk Veda*. *Ṛk Veda* is not just a conceptualization about the nature of reality; the sequence of sound and silence in the *Ṛk Veda* recapitulate the fundamental mechanics of the transformation of

pure consciousness into matter (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, pp. 95–108). In the last few years, Dr. Tony Nader, M.D., Ph.D., under Maharishi’s guidance, has discovered that the Veda and Vedic Literature express the fundamental structures and functions of the human physiology. In his book, *Human Physiology: Expression of Veda and the Vedic Literature, Modern Science and Ancient Vedic Science Discover the Fabrics of Immortality in the Human Physiology*, Dr. Nader writes:

the laws that construct the human mind and body are the same as those that give structure to the syllables, verses, chapters, and books of the Vedic Literature. The human physiology (including the DNA at its core) has the same structure and function as the holistic, self-sufficient, self-referral reality expressed in Rk Veda. The specialized components, organs, and organ systems of the the human physiology, including all the various parts of the nervous system, match the . . . branches of the Vedic Literature one to one, both in structure and function. (1995, p. vii)

Nader goes on to explain that this discovery reveals the secrets of orderly functioning of all the organs of the body, and how this orderliness can unfold the absolute order of the universe, establishing the individual physiology and consciousness on the level of cosmic life. Some artists and critics have glimpsed the close connection between cosmic creativity and individual creativity, and perhaps experienced it in their own physiology. Kasimir Malevich (1969, p. 24), a pioneer of modern abstract art, wrote, “Creating means living, eternally creating newer and newer forms. . . . We are the living heart of nature. . . . We are the living brain which magnified her life. An artist is given talent in order that he may give to life his share of creation and increase the flow of life.” In describing the essence of traditional Chinese painting, Roger Goepfer (1963) explained that “Art seeks to capture the breath or in a wider sense the energy or essence that pervades the whole of animate and inanimate nature.” The artist, Goepfer continued, “allows the life forces operating through him to crystallize in the work of art he creates, so that they may then be felt, and awakened to fresh life by the receptive viewer” (pp. 30–31).

The discovery of the Veda in human physiology is practically applied, Dr. Nader points out, through the Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health program, resulting in freedom from disease, disorder, and suffering in life. For educators this program offers ways to bring “the fruit of all knowledge to everyone—a mistake-free, problem-free, healthy, happy life” (1995, p. viii). Art faculty and students at Maharishi University of Management have integrated aspects of the Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health program into their daily life, resulting in better health, more clarity, and greater balance and fulfillment in art and in life.

Another recent development in Maharishi Vedic Science especially relevant to art arises from a branch of the Vedic Literature called Sthāpatya Veda. Maharishi Sthāpatya VedaSM highlights the establishing quality involved in the structuring of self-referral consciousness (Maharishi Ved Vigyān Vishwa Vidyā Peetham, 1996, pp. 104–105). As Nader (1993) points out, “Sthāpatya Veda is the science and technology of establishing every individual in accord with Natural Law” (p. 57). While Maharishi Sthāpatya Veda includes knowledge of city and town-planning, architecture, art, and design (Fergusson, Bonshek, Norman, & Norman, 1990), Maharishi explains that the ultimate purpose of Sthāpatya Veda is to

awaken and enliven consciousness, enliven intelligence, in the structure of inert matter; enliven the energy of Cosmic Intelligence in every material structure; enliven the whole in every part; raise every aspect of life to perfection and render every aspect of living in the evolutionary direction of Cosmic Life. (p. 179)

More recently, Maharishi (1996) has referred to Sthāpatya Veda as *Vāstu Vidyā*, the knowledge of Vāstu, the harmonizing power of Natural Law. In this context, art becomes a part of the expression of material life in terms of Natural Law, supporting life in an evolutionary direction. This knowledge is currently being applied in the design and construction of architectural structures in many cities around the world including Fairfield, Iowa, with the participation of architects, designers, and sculptors who are faculty of Maharishi University of Management. Some studio courses and seminars have been taught which incorporate projects utilizing Maharishi Sthāpatya Veda principles. For example, students have been involved in the construction of prototypes for a Maharishi Vedic Observatory™ (Maharishi University of Management, 1996, p. 34) whose core design is a three-dimensional structure of the Veda itself.

Conclusion

Since the basis of all knowledge is the consciousness of the knower, the development of the art student's awareness is the primary concern of the Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists. The enlivenment of this fundamental level of pure, self-referral consciousness is achieved primarily through the practice of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs. The field of pure, self-referral consciousness is unbounded bliss consciousness, infinitely creative, the home of all the Laws of Nature, beyond time and space yet the ultimate source of all art and all cultures. This pure consciousness can be experienced as the simplest form of the artist's own awareness—it is the Self of everyone. Learning to function from this level, the artist can become a universal human being whose thoughts, speech, and actions are fully in accord with Natural Law and are therefore always nourishing to the actor and the environment. Functioning from pure consciousness, the artist can express universal values in the art work, radiating the eternal beauty of pure consciousness. Such art inspires its audience and communicates infinity universally throughout time.

We have seen how Maharishi Vedic Science reconciles the opposing world views of Modernism and Postmodernism, supporting difference and relative meaning on the basis of absolute knowledge, the unified basis of theory and of all forms and phenomena in creation. This approach naturally unfolds the inner genius of every art student, allowing the student to access infinite creativity and realize his or her personal and professional goals. With its unique understanding of selfhood and a means to unfold the unified Self in the student and in art, it allows for the experience of a new sense of Self, which is a field of all possibilities. Thus, the Consciousness-Based approach to educating artists fulfills the aspirations of artists, educators, and theorists by holistically developing the artist to be an inspired creator of art, and an exemplary human being who contributes a life-supporting influence to the community and the world.

Art is structured both in the consciousness of the artist and in the collective consciousness of the culture. For artists to fully realize their highest goals, the level of col-

lective consciousness in contemporary culture must be raised. Maharishi Vedic Science provides systematic, field-tested technologies to develop collective consciousness, centering on the group practice of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs. These programs have been shown to create a powerful influence of coherence, creativity, and harmony in the environment, silently inspiring individuals everywhere to live life in accord with Natural Law. In the light of the complete knowledge and scientifically validated technologies now available in Maharishi Vedic Science, Maharishi (1991) has envisioned the creation of an enlightened civilization in this generation: a Unified-Field based civilization where cultural variety flourishes on the field of infinite unity; a civilization characterized by peace, unlimited creativity, and wholeness of life; a civilization which Maharishi has named Heaven on Earth.

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