

Silent Walk — An Eco-Critical Artistic Approach

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Abstract

In contemporary art, it is long understood that to challenge the modernist universal Truths, art has to go beyond rational and object-based approaches. But there is still not enough description of simple methods of art educational practices that focus primarily on experiences which show the world as it is, instead of the need to evaluate it through concepts and to produce representations of it. The art history gives several examples of environmental artists who have attempted to connect with elements that are larger than humans. However, even these artists may use, or work in dialogue with, natural elements; their works, heavily controlled by human force, stay disconnected from the landscape. In this paper, I introduce a multi-sensory practice, which I call Silent Walk, that allows participants to attune to an experience of interconnectedness with the present (urban or natural) environment. I describe experiences on three different types of qualities and show that Silent Walk is an embodied practice which focuses on observing, witnessing and sharing instead of producing, criticizing and owning, and thus I claim that it is a valuable eco-critical artistic approach. The purpose of Silent Walk is to give time for a recipient to reflect on the self and its interconnectedness to its environment. The multi-sensory approach

does not offer ready-made solutions or quick-fixes to ecological problems, but it endorses imagination, ‘what else could be?’ I hear from the participants of Silent Walks one sentence more often than any other comment: “I did not know that this kind of world existed.”