

LBST 330-01

Dr. Josema Zamorano

### Module 3 – Getting Started

***Tutorial Information:*** LBST 391 with Josema Zamorano

***Proposed Topic of Investigation:***

As a continuation of my previous work on the relationship between artists and restaurants, this tutorial will focus on the conceptualization of an idealistic artist and restaurant relationship. My goal is to research design elements of today's restaurants and then create a unique concept for a restaurant that houses art and music in a thoughtful, provocative, and synthesizing format.

***Resources and Methodology:***

Content analysis will be key in determining how art and music has been used most effectively in a restaurant environment. Interviews will be necessary in order to get an idea of the current methodology of local restaurateurs that house provocative artworks. Surveying will be an asset in understanding the public's opinion on what the ideal space would look like.

***Proposed Learning Outcomes:***

PLO 1 – **Self-directed learning:** Initiate, execute and take responsibility for a self-directed interdisciplinary research project emerging directly from the student's own academic and/or professional interests.

PLO 3 – **Application:** Apply foundational learning (knowledge, critical thinking, research skills, imagination, and judgment) and holistic problem solving skills in academic work

PLO 4 – **Synthesis:** Synthesize to produce critically searching interdisciplinary work.

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PLO 6 – **Communication:** Produce well-organized and coherent university-level materials, individually or in a group, which meet stated objectives and audience needs in written, oral, digital and/or visual forms.

***Literature Review:***

This literature review focuses on sources that are concerned with curation, design and current restaurant spaces. The restaurant industry is filled with spaces that use art frivolously and aimlessly in an interior space that lacks originality. However, it's also home to brilliant art pieces that are used thoughtfully and provocatively. A restaurant space that can be home to a collection of thoughtful art (possibly on rotation), suitable and challenging music, and an interior design that is uniquely suited for the art it showcases, is a challenge in itself. However, there exists modern examples and historic incidents that can be built upon to conceptualize such a space that can be a public haven for artists and non-artists alike.

Interior designers Drew Plunkett and Olga Reid note that the restaurant design “that gets the formula right will do as much to prolong the life of the business as the products on offer” (1). Their book goes into detail about various modern restaurant floor plans and constructions. With the use of various case studies and images, it shows what restaurants are doing to create a unique atmosphere and what the current landscape of restaurant design looks like. They note that the “the utilitarian room that historically fulfilled the demands of bar, cafe and restaurant in one” is exiting the industry in prospering nations (3). Customers are now turning to more focused spaces that have an identity and atmosphere. One example they detail

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is a New York City restaurant called *What Happens When* that dramatically changes its interior, music and menu every thirty days (184). The restaurant thus has a unique concept as well as an identity as a sort of “pop-up” store. It’s a risky idea but one that people would remember and could lend itself brilliantly to various art installations.

Plunkett and Reid’s research on these various restaurants will be quite useful when conceptualizing a space. Not only do they analyze the restaurants they’ve chosen but they also provide architectural maps and drawings to show how these businesses are optimizing and revolutionizing the restaurant space. Their work also discusses the design elements of light fixtures and ceiling sculptures that modern restaurants are using which are proving to be attractions and valuable commissions for artists (186).

In 1958, Mark Rothko was commissioned to paint several murals for the walls of the Four Seasons restaurant. His son Chris Rothko has written a scholarly book published by Yale University that outlines one of the most notable restaurant and artist experiences in history. Chris describes his father’s inspiration for his restaurant paintings and what the goals are for filling a dining space with a specific aesthetic theme. The most interesting aspect of the partnership is that it was failed, thus giving an outline for how a restaurant and artist relationship can go awry.

The author notes that Rothko began his journey with the commission with entirely different expectations for what the restaurant would be. He describes Rothko’s initial intentions, the work itself, and the artist’s eventual disenfranchisement with the project (111-

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125 Rothko). The conclusions drawn are that the artist's intentions and the restaurant space have to be in agreement for the partnership to work. Rothko was a socialist and arrived in America as a poor immigrant. His values and morals simply didn't align for an exclusive high-class restaurant like the Four Seasons. This will be a vital case study for my project going forward.

Dr. Joseph Durocher and his wife Regina Baraban's book *Successful Restaurant Design* is an absolutely vital book on this subject. It outlines every aspect of restaurant design, from practicality and location to interior and exterior design. Of course, many aspects of this book do not relate directly to the artist, but the overall in-depth analysis of restaurant design will lend itself well to the artistic aspects of this project. It's important to gain an understanding on how restaurant spaces actually function in order to theorize the ultimate space for an artistic partnership.

The authors have various research on what makes certain restaurants work and generational differences in customer interest. This includes the notion that baby boomers are now slowly leaving the industry and desires from newer generations are quite different (Baraban 2). They approach this with case studies and a large quantity of restaurant images. They emphasize the importance of theme in restaurants and how guest perception responds positively to a space that makes sense (10). Various examples and floor plans are given to give the reader in grasp on where certain elements work and where they don't. There is also a research done on what customers want to see and what kind of space is needed to target the

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right crowd. Art is extremely aligned with being successful in these aspects and following Durocher and Baraban's advice will lead to educated theorizing of art's role in the restaurant environment.

This project will utilize multiple case studies and design strategies for restaurants to reach the main goal of conceptualizing a unique space. It may end up being much more abstract than described thus far, but the literature provided will be key in understanding this subject matter. There are a large number of factors that come into play because this is essentially a business model and approaching it from solely an artistic perspective will make the project more of a fantasy than a reality. These analytical texts will be key in understanding the business side of things and how these spaces run efficiently. The artistic aspects will be much more open for exploration with various artists and further brainstorming.

**Next Steps:**

After this tutorial, my third tutorial will be more focused on the economical and business sides of the project. I hope to work with a professor in Capilano's business department in order to gain more understanding on the feasibility of the design I come up with in this Spring's tutorial. I would like to conduct some research that will leave me with data that will be useful in understanding just how valuable art can be for a restaurant space.

My graduating project will be something akin to an exhibition. I would like to create an artistic display or environment that brings the project to life in a small abstract environment. I would also like to explore music's role in these spaces and utilize my own skill as a musician for

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this final project. I'm still conceptualizing how this will work, but I will accompany it with a proper research essay that outlines all of my findings. Hopefully it will be a successfully combination of creative spectacle and academic findings.

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### Works Cited

Baraban, Regina S., and Joseph F. Durocher. *Successful Restaurant Design*. John Wiley & Sons, 2010.

Plunkett, Drew, and Olga Reid. *Detail in Contemporary Bar and Restaurant Design*. Laurence King Publishing, 2013.

Rothko, Christopher. *Mark Rothko: From The Inside Out*. Yale University Press, 2018.