Greetings, Students of the Man and Art Program!

This is my first opportunity to speak to most of you, and though it is through the medium of a letter, I wish to extend to all of you on behalf of the faculty of the program the warmest welcome possible! Imagine, if you will, the sun breaking through the fog and lighting up the trees and ferns and hills in a splendor of verdant hues...such is my feeling of the adventure that awaits us.

The goals and descriptive content of our program have been rewritten, and a copy of the new program description is enclosed. In a word, the aim of the program is to foster a coherent and integral vision of the present-day cultural situation as it affects all mankind: to see ourselves whole and to see ourselves anew.

Our point of departure is modern Western culture—and so we must begin with an examination of that culture as it has developed since the Renaissance. All of you have been asked to obtain a copy of Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media*. (If you have not already done so, indicate this on the post-cards that you will be sending us, and we shall make provision to have copies sent to you as soon as possible). I would like you to read Part I of this book as carefully as possible. After you have done this, put this book aside, and do as much as you can to forget it! Then, I would like you to reflect on your own personal experiences, and write what you feel is a definition of culture from the point of view of your own experience. In doing so, consider what is the purpose of culture, what are its forms and its limits. Assume nothing. Attempt to define all of your terms.

For this project—which may be of whatever length you feel necessary—you need not resort to other books, not even McLuhan, but rather rely on your own experience and imagination. If you feel the need to express yourself on this matter beyond a written essay, please feel free to do this, whether in poetry, drawing, or whatever way you feel appropriate to your own nature. The purpose of this project is to define and articulate for yourself where you stand. You are not competing with anyone, nor for a grade, not even with yourself, and so your paper need not be written to impress, but instead to clarify for yourself the nature of your own experience. As Socrates declared, "The unexamined life is not worth living." This is your first assignment and it will be due when we formally meet on October 25.

Olympia, Washington 98501
At the moment we do not contemplate asking students outside the Western Washington area to be here early for group activities. Though it may be possible for us to arrange for group meetings off-campus at a later time, we have no such plans for the beginning of our program, nor the possibility of housing out of state students. There are, however, appropriate ways to begin. Thus, we are considering several other plans for meetings and projects for the interim period of October, and for which I would appreciate your fullest cooperation. These plans are:

1. Students from the general Olympia/Tacoma area (including Shelton, Tumwater, Tenino, etc.) to meet as a seminar group some place near Evergreen, on at least a weekly basis, for the month of October. If you are in this category, please send me as soon as possible the enclosed post-card with your name, artistic, self-expressive and crafts skills or interests, address, and where you can be reached.

2. Students from the Seattle area to meet several times at some prearranged location, such as the Seattle Art Museum. If you are in this category, send me as soon as possible the enclosed post-card with your name, artistic, self-expressive and crafts skills or interests, address, and where you can be reached.

3. Students outside of Olympia/Tacoma and Seattle areas may have additional reading and seminar assignments through correspondence for the month of October. Arrangements will be made to have books and other materials sent to you. Those in this category please send as soon as possible the enclosed post-card with name, artistic, self-expressive and crafts skills or interests, address, and where you can be reached. Please also indicate whether or not you have a cassette tape recorder.

We hope that these contingency measures will be satisfactory and provide an adequate entry into the program. We welcome questions, suggestions and any other thoughts and considerations regarding these arrangements and the program in general. I cannot stress enough the importance of individual initiative and resourcefulness through whatever self-expressive means possible. Your fullest cooperation will be the measure of the success of this program. "It works if you work."

The program will be able to support some of the special activities for this month, but we may ask some area students to contribute toward some of the costs. Though you will be officially enrolled and your studies will have formally begun by the end of this month, you may also be reminded of the fact that many of you will be saving room and board money for the month of October!

On this hopefully thrifty note I shall now close this letter, wishing all of you the very best, and looking forward to embarking on our new adventure.

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Excelsior!

José Argüelles
Coordinator
Man and Art Program 753-3960
This program will consider how European culture has been transformed through interaction with native African, Asian, American and Oceanic cultures, resulting in the creation of a potential base for a unique Global culture.

Human artistic expression of the last four hundred years documents this process in a variety of ways—musical, visual and literary—and therefore provides the most intuitive, incisive and visionary comments on the development of this planetary condition.

For this reason, artistic expression will provide the main vehicle of exploration of this problem, which of necessity brings together the cultural manifestations of the different races and peoples of the world.

In a sense, the formation of the European Renaissance culture forms the thesis of this program. The encounter of the expanding Renaissance culture with the cultures of Africa, Asia, America and Oceania represents the anti-thesis. The resulting, and still on-going interplay of these various cultures provides the synthesis.

This thesis-anti-thesis-synthesis structure will provide the broad three-quarter breakdowm of themes within this course. Subsidiary themes to be pursued will be:

— individual and collective forms of expression;
— relating of artistic vision to technology, revolution and breakdown of traditional cultures; and
— understanding the nature and process of multi-cultural interaction and mutual transformation.

Furthermore, there will be ample opportunity for individual exploration in music, language, literature and the visual arts. These explorations may take the form of critical/analytical research projects, or of new, creative artistic endeavors.

Because of the nature of the course/theme, there will be cooperation with other programs, such as Contemporary American Minorities, Space, Time and Form or Communications and Intelligence, as the course develops.
José Argüelles has taught courses in the history of media, modern and oriental art, and visual symbols at Princeton University and the University of California, Davis. Two of his books on aesthetics and the principles of integrative art are forthcoming. In addition, he has published numerous articles on art, philosophy and education. His poetry and illustrations have appeared in Journals of New Thought, and his paintings have been exhibited on both the East and West coasts. With his wife he has conducted various workshops on the mandala as an integrative art form. He was the sponsor and coordinator of the First Whole Earth Festival in California, 1970, and has organized a number of other celebrations and ritual happenings. He is a sometime blower of bamboo flutes, and amateur improvisational flautist.

Donald Chan has just completed his second summer season as associate musical director and conductor with the St. Louis Municipal Opera Association. He has musical directed for several major summer theatres, an off-Broadway production, and an original opera presented by NBC in Denver. He has written original music for ballet, experimental films, and dramatic productions. His recent composition is a jazz liturgy for chorus and jazz quintet. As a pianist he has concertized frequently throughout the U.S. and gave the West Coast premiere of Leonard Bernstein's Second Symphony for piano and orchestra.

Cruz Esquivel has studied and taught music theory, modern European Philosophy, Greek and Romance languages at the University of California, Davis, and Humboldt State College. In addition to his fluency in Spanish, French, Italian, Latin and Greek, he has authored a number of original musical compositions and several philosophical publications. His experience has been wide and varied. He was the official court reporter at the Peace Talks, Pusanjjon, Korea, 1953. He has also worked extensively on various programs for the State of California, and has submitted a number of proposals to the California State Legislature regarding education and Native American Affairs.
The Evergreen State College is located about five miles outside of Olympia, Washington on a wooded 1,000 acre site bordered by Puget Sound. We're concerned with interdisciplinary education and alternate systems of education, thinking, living, and communicating. There are no classes, no departments, no grades. Stresses are put on relationships, and there are groups studying the relationships between science and art, mathematics and the subconscious, ecology and politics, and so forth.

The Man and Art Program at Evergreen, a group of artists, poets, musicians, art historians, sculptors, composers, planners, thinkers, dreamers and visionaries, is planning to compile and publish a journal-book-magazine-catalog-handbook which would express the talents of the people at Evergreen, those of interested people throughout the state, and all along the West Coast as well. Our plans call for a perfect-bound book of around 100 pages, 9 inches by 6 inches. The name of this publication is the 'Oracle', and the theme is survival, in whatever form you might find it.

Contributions can be in the form of poetry, prose, drawings, photographs, photographs of paintings and sculpture, short musical compositions, visions; in short, anything that can be reproduced on a printed page.

The deadline for submissions is March 3rd, 1972. Address all messages, visions, questions and contributions to 'Oracle', c/o Man and Art Program, the Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington, 98505.

We are hoping for publication in late April-early May, and the cost of the Oracle will be about $1.00. The proceeds from this year's Oracle will be used to finance next year's publication. Anything you can do to help promote and publicize the Oracle will be appreciated. Let your friends know about the Oracle.

Survive. 

February 1, 1972
the Evergreen State College
Il faut s'emmerveiller

Man and Art Coordinated Studies Program Autobiography

Faculty seminars - businesslike dialogue, non-videotaped.
Teaching improved through Socratic dialogue, mutual evaluation of student/faculty.
Writing taught as musical composition, poetry, critical reflection, and pure expression.
Morale: Viscissitudinal, high, low, split, independent, buoyant--renewed through
celebration and ritual, creative expression gladly given to the public.
Students met with continuously during the week in individual seminar (three per week;
one by each faculty), special interest seminars and workshops in language, music,
philosophy, arts and crafts and literature - and on one-to-one in office and field.
Students required to be themselves, respond to freedom creatively and constructively
without resorting to earlier forms of conditioning; in certain cases to perform
proper exercises for particular learning skills, especially in music and languages.
Students evaluated through individual consultation, through progress in skills and
work turned in.
Counseling problems often solved by ourselves, some referred to professional help.
Evaluation carried out through student/faculty meetings Monday mornings, through
individual and self-evaluation, through discussion.
Quality and intensity of student/faculty relationships greatly varied, but generally
very close and informal.
Teaching became more individuated and fluid, with increasing team teaching between
some of the faculty.
Book list was cross-cultural, coherent--and it worked!...(but, p.s: Marshall
McLuhan is passe')!
Success is being able to cope with change; we succeeded.
Students - some read, some didn't, some initiated, some held back; many participated,
most learned that there is no dividing line between life and learning; quantitatively
program grew from 58 to 75--faculty of three definitely over-worked despite some
help from language, music and art tutors; some students capable enough taught in music,
crafts and language; those who succeeded were those capable of responding to demands
of freedom and disciplined themselves accordingly.
Advice to future coordinated studies: be prepared to flow with the changes;
strike proper balance between preconceived intellectual regimen and day-to-day
environmental flux; go slowly, know who you are as human beings; go to the
other faculty in other programs for guest speakers and resource people; listen
to students, but do not be afraid to give guidance, and above all, trust.

In fall quarter Man and Art opened in trauma headquarters (alias civil defense bldg.,
on Martin Way, eastside); spent October schizophrenically between Seattle and limbo;
began adjusting to concrete walls, institutional carpeting and plastic mass-produced
chairs in modular windowless seminar rooms; found out it had no facilities for music,
languages or practice of arts; found out coping with the situation was more important
than finding out about the Medici; made batiks in an abandoned dance hall seventeen
miles away; tried to stay calm but sometimes became hysterical; managed to give
Evergreen its first concert and happening despite everything.
Winter quarter acquired 211 building for arts, crafts, general meetings; philosophized anguishedly on the nature of conditioning; learned languages; sang and played music; studied William Blake and the nature of perception; introduced students to Chinese philosophy of Change; slowly began learning how to change; created poetry magazines; gave more concerts; began planning a mural; celebrated a Rite of Spring, a new moon dance, a spaceship ride in a recycled alcoa aluminum and plastic spaceship called "The Ananda".

Spring quarter: Equanimity finally sighted, focussed studies on Opera, using Seattle facilities, created jazz and sang renaissance melodiously; practiced calligraphy on declaration of anti-war/peace sympathy manifesto sent to Nixon with twelve American beauty roses; merged western philosophy with native american and oriental philosophy and literature seminars through various books, the key one being Lord Of The Dawn, culminating in mayfulmoon ritual; initiated and saw to completion "The Dragon Stairwell"; greeted the completion of TESC's first year with joy at the richness of the experience that had been ours over the last nine months--the term of birth: we are reborn, the literal meaning of renaissance, which was the original theme of Mand Art. So we never left it; but came on it from a totally unexpected angle for we were free to work out our own fate, and we did not pass up the opportunity for freedom.

The purpose of education is to know, shape and finally liberate the mind from ignorance, prejudice, the blind transmission of error. To know means to learn--first through information, then through self-verification; to shape means to create--to transform theory into form and action; to liberate means to free--to deliver from error through self-discipline.

TESC has been instrumental in providing the situation where the "free pursuit of ideas" has been possible. What difficulties there have been have been two causes: the slowness of most human beings to respond to a new situation with little else but old habit-pattern conditioning sets; consequently some are even blinded to the truth that has been described as "the contrarieness inherent in all things". Blindness to this truth is the second cause of difficulty. Some of the contradictions are so obvious that they are all too easily taken for granted, as in the primary instance of regard for the environment. In this respect TESC is a three-dimensional bio-electronic concrete computer card dumped on Cooper Point, a veritable microcosm of "the System"--and its failings. The contradiction in TESC may be described by the words of one faculty member in response to his opinion of this school: "It is at once the most and the least institutional of all institutions."

Finally, to wonder whether or not the Man and Art Program, or the first year of TESC was either a "success or failure", is an exercise in absurdity. Success and failure are relative concepts. Not only is success by one standard failure by another, but human standards themselves are arbitrary and subject to change. To seek something more constant it should be realized that man is part of a larger flow, from which point of view it may be said that which man does is no different than what happens to him; for everything happens. What matters is our ability to understand the meaning of what happens and what has happened in order to act more intelligently, more compassionately and with a greater sense of the whole.
Commitment caused problems all year. Of course, there will always be differing levels and interpretations of commitment and participation. However, a certain threshold must be reached by each individual to make the "greater-than-the-sum-of-the-parts" total possible. For the vast majority of program members, the commitment level was very satisfying. A small number, though, only had a big toe across that vital threshold. No real solution to the problem was ever worked out, although many discussions on the subject were held by faculty and students. I have decided that commitment is one of those factors that just cannot be forced. If a person is not ready to take the responsibility and risk to work toward a strong learning community, outside influences either from authority figures or from peers can have only limited effect. The only solution seems to be to encourage the person to leave the situation and find one that better fits his/her needs.

We developed the program to encourage students to take responsibility for their various directions. Although there was structure in the fall, e.g., seminars, booklists, and large group meetings, blocks of time were deliberately left open during which students were to be exploring areas of interest that would develop into a project(s). Some students got right into different projects, such as the Organic Farm and Experimental Structures, and even fretted because they did not have freedom to spend more time in these endeavors. Others, however, just could not identify an interest or stick to any particular one in a serious way. We, as faculty, did not handle these cases well enough, particularly during the early part of the year. I, for example, was not directive enough in my facilitation. I think that each of us have new ideas to try this next year, and realize better that a higher priority in terms of time should probably be allocated to these students. By spring quarter, as a result of shared decision-making by faculty and students, total program emphasis was on the projects. Students prepared learning contracts and chose time slots for presentations during the quarter. Mondays were devoted entirely to project progress reports.

Communication took many forms in Environmental Design. We had town meetings, bulletin boards, and special notices. We also tried to enhance communication through a common-threads approach such as the fall quarter reading list and spring quarter presentations. Thursday night potlucks were also an effort in this direction. In addition, regular conferences were held throughout the year between faculty and students as projects were designed and implemented. Our evaluation strategy was also directed toward better communication and understanding. The students wrote quarterly evaluations of themselves and the program, including faculty. The faculty with whom the student participated in seminar wrote an evaluation of the student. A conference was then set up during which each commented on the other's writing. These sessions, from reports and experience, seem to have been valuable time, characterized by sincerity and candor. Communication with other components of TESC was not as good as had been hoped. This was a built-in dilemma. By structuring learning at Evergreen into full-time programs, isolation was almost insured. A program's day-by-day unfolding was of such intensity and complexity that almost total commitment in terms of time were demanded in order to just keep up with events. Efforts were made to post notices of meetings and events around school, but the usually small attendance by members of other programs clearly pointed out that the isolation was a campus-wide problem.

There was considerable trust among members in the program. This feeling was probably given a strong impetus during our first week away from campus. Students
and faculty became acquainted in a relaxed, unstructured setting that facilitated directness and intensity. This intensity carried through the year and not only enhanced interpersonal relations, but also made accelerated learning the norm. Trust was also built during the year as town meetings and work sessions were held to iron out winter and spring schedules and booklists. Unfortunately there were some expectations, such as the question and purpose of credit and quality of work, that were never discussed by the entire community. In part this lack stemmed from our lack of experience in this type of learning environment, as well as some uncertainty and insecurity about what our faculty roles and responsibilities should include.

We viewed the entire experience as having a process- instead of a product-orientation. Throughout the year, with few exceptions, we emphasized the dynamics of the program by encouraging flexibility and custom-tailored learning, as evidenced by shifting winter and spring quarters into a learning mode that provided increased freedom and responsibility to students. The program also tried to be responsive to student needs and interests through workshops, outside guests, and field trips off-campus.

Innovation is a basic element in a process orientation, but one which is difficult to maintain. For example, our plan to use utopian thought as our fall quarter theme was probably a good one. However, as we got into the routine of the quarter, we reduced our process to a fairly strong product-orientation of one book from the booklist per week as the seminar assignment. Even towards the end of the quarter when not that much new material was appearing, we kept to the schedule instead of taking serious account of the learning process, thinking on our feet, and devising some new scheme that would have better serviced our needs. Of course, part of this dilemma was caused by our having to adhere to a quarter system. We did learn our lesson, in part, though. Toward the end of winter quarter after the snow/mid-term depression, the mood was shifting toward greater commitment for projects instead of the book seminars, etc., of winter quarter. Again, through a joint student/faculty effort, a new proposal was drawn up, and previous schedules were compressed to allow us to move into projects as soon as we returned from the quarter break. Learning contracts were completed before leaving for vacation.

In conclusion, I feel our program was fairly successful in building a learning community. Our development did promote a synergy characterized by magnified breadth and depth of learning as well as increased self-awareness and understanding of others. About the only way these results could have been improved would perhaps have been through a residential component that could have enhanced a more complete expression and comprehension of expectations.

CD/cmc
8-31-72