



IMAG

The content of the texts is the sole responsibility of (the) authors (as). Admittance reproduction, as long as the source is mentioned: InSEA: International Society for Education through Art <http://www.insea.org>

Contact: InSEA Publications. Quinta da Cruz (APECV). Estrada de São Salvador, 3510-784 São Salvador, Viseu Portugal

Website: <http://www.insea.org/publications/imag>

Email: imag-editor@insea.org

Frequency: Publication three times a year

ISSN: 2414-3332

<https://doi.org/10.24981/2414-3332-10.2020>

InSEA ART Education VISUAL Journal IMAG issue number 10

InSEA ART Education VISUAL Journal IMAG intends to provide a visual platform, which, in line with the constitution of InSEA, will help foster international cooperation and understanding, and promote creative activity in art through sharing experiences, improving practices, and strengthening the position of art in all educational settings. IMAG is an international, online, Open Access and peer-reviewed e-publication for the identification, publication and dissemination of art education theories and practices through visual methods and media.

Guest Editor: Steve Willis

The content of the texts is the sole responsibility of the authors.
Admittance reproduction, as long as the source is mentioned.

DECEMBER 2020

Principal Editors: Teresa Eça (Portugal); Ângela Saldanha (Portugal); Bernardette Thomas (Germany).

Editorial Board (2020): Allan Richards (University of Kentucky, USA); Christiana Afrikaner (Senior Education Officer with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Namibia); Fernando Miranda (Faculty of Fine Arts, Montevideo, Uruguay); Gabriella Pataky (Elte University, Hungary); Glen Coutts (University of Lapland, Finland); Graham Nash (Australia); Jo Chiung Hua Chen (Normal University of Taiwan, Taiwan); Kevin Hsieh (Georgia State University, USA); Li-Yan Yang (National Changhua University of Education, Taiwan); Maho Sato (Faculty of Education, Chiba University, Japan); Manisha Sharma (University of Arizona, USA); Merna Meyer (North-West University, South Africa); Mohammed Al-Amri (College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman); Mousumi De (Indiana University, USA); Rachel Mason (Roehampton University, UK); Rita Irwin (University of British Columbia, Canada); Samia Elsheik (Helwan University, Egypt); Sandrine Han (University of British Columbia, Canada); Steve Willis (Missouri State University, USA); Susan Coles (NSEAD, UK).

Graphics: Ângela Saldanha
Cover Image: ©Seija Ulkuniemi

Making/Teaching ART Differently

Editorial Steve Willis	I	Distance Learning in Lebanon, Missouri Elizabeth Bauer-Barker	50
Project Superhero: Liberating Children's Play Through Socially-Engaged Art Suzannie Leung	01	Imagination Has No Quarantine but It Is Free to Fly Seija Ulkuniemi	57
Arts Education in Third Spaces: A Future for Children's Cultural Participation in Spain? Clare Murray	08	Joseph Beuys and the Artistic Education Carl-Peter Buschkuhle	77
Surprise! Learning to Communicate and "let go" Through Collaborative Artmaking Kristin Vanderlip Taylor	19	Reflection On Visual Art Education And Learning Through Art Rachel Mason	84
Community Art Projects Beyond Borders Ava Serjouie-Scholz & Célia Ferreira	29	Weeds Ana Angelica Albano & Laura Lydia	93
Integrating Contemporary Art in the PYP IB Curriculum to Open Dialogues About Cultural Diversity in Norway Leticia Balzi & Cherise Storlie Kristoffersen	36	Survival Kit C3	151
		International Artist 'Interactions' Andy Ash & Kanae Minowa	174

Community Art Projects Beyond Borders

Ava Serjouie-Scholz & Célia Ferreira

10.24981/2414-3332-10.2020-5

Participating in Project: Leila Farzaneh (artist), Helena Costa and Paula Rios (Primary school teachers).

Abstract

This essay describes a community art project between primary school children in Iran and Portugal. The students designed and painted individual Tiles with a letter written in English as a gift for each other.

Keywords

Tiles; mosaic; ceramic; culture; Portugal; Iran;

PART 1 - concept for the project

Ava Serjouie-Scholz

Community art projects function like a bridge between members of community, society, home, school and even different countries and cultures. They help to enhance the cultural and artistic knowledge of the citizens, as well as providing new learning environment.

Through the community art projects ordinary residents become the chance to take part in the artistic development of their town, city, building or school. It provides a chance for them to learn to think and act in a creative way.

Community art projects also provides the citizens to create something for their community, for their environment, for their city. It promotes them to the state of an artist. They become part of the creativity process. A community or a society that gives its members the possibility to be part of such projects, gives its citizens a sense of belonging, a sense of being seen and accepted for who and what they are.

Power (2012), atones that Community Arts, especially for youth, play a valuable and important role in transitioning societies. The three main themes that have recurred through fieldwork and research are:

- arts projects can help to build self-confidence and positive identity;
- arts can be used as a non-threatening tool to address difficult issues;
- and finally, arts can unify a community; it can bring many diverse people together for a common goal or purpose.

The arts 'allow for communities to cooperate, learn about others, become aware, to take responsibility and ownership, and above all to see commonalities within one another" (Power, 2012).

Because of the great influence of the community art projects, I believe community are projects could also be used in a bigger spectrum because of their influential role in multicultural communities and as a bridge between different countries. In our

world, which is falling more apart every day due to differences and lack of understanding and respect and tolerance, art could be used as a common language to bring us together.

Through international cultural exchange and international community art projects we could bring people of different race (ethnic backgrounds), language, religion, ethnicity, colour of skin, social or financial differences, etc. to learn, to think, to create and to work together. By developing a common project bringing people of different backgrounds to work for a common goal in order to to learn about each other, to see what we share and our similarities and to understand our differences, and not just to respect it but to also cherish and promote it. Diversity should be a jewel that makes our lives and world a much more interesting place. Through cultural exchange we learn about other countries, regions, cultures, tribes, communities, religions, feasts and celebrations, we learn to understand them, to be open to them and so do the other counterparts. Only through these collaborations and exchanges do we also find the possibility to compare our cultures, to get into discussions, to ponder and to change for better. Evolution and will then take place.



Diversity an inseparable part of life

Let us close our eyes and try to imagine living in a world with only one sort of leaves, all the leaves are in one form, one tone of green and they are all in one size, not bigger or smaller, neither of the leaves are in any way different from the other. A walk through a park or the woods where we are surrounded with only one sort of tree with one sort of leaves, be it an acorn, or an apple tree. A planet where only one type of flower, and only in identical shape and colour exists and only one kind of bird, with only one sort of animal, a flat land or a mountainous landscape it's your choice but you can only have one of them. As hard as it might seem to imagine such a world, since we are used to the diversity on our planet, this is what racism is about. Racist, superior thinking pushes us to believe that only one race is superior, that only one race, with one skin colour, one religion, one culture, one language etc. is superior above all and has the right to exist. So often have we witnessed in history how innocent people have been victims of mass murders, genocides just because of being different. Racist mentality has no tolerance or acceptance for diversity.

Our world is a magnificent beautiful place because of its diversity. The richness of different sort of leaves, and their colours and their function, is just as magnificent as different races of human beings, with their different skin colour, language, religion and culture. Diversity is what makes the world, fascinating and exciting, and urges us to learn more about it.

Instead of getting inspired by all the diversity around us and opening our eyes and hearts to all that it offers, for centuries we have imposed suffering and injustice on others who are different. It is an unforgivable sin to be different, to be a minority even in 21st Century. Keating (2007) in her book 'Teaching for transformation', writes, "people generally assume the physiological differences such as skin colour, hair texture, and facial features between various so-called 'races' indicate underlying biological-genetic and/ or cultural differences- differences implying permanent, "natural" divisions between separate groups of people. We have been trained to classify and evaluate ourselves and those we meet according to these racialized appearances: We look at a person's body, classify

her, insert him into a category, generalize, and base our interactions on these racialized assumptions" (p.5).

Community Art Projects

In recent years Dr. Ava Serjouie-Scholz has organized various community art projects between Iran, Germany and Portugal, sometimes internationally, and sometimes nationally. Again, and again she tried to connect Iran and other countries together through art, because so often Iranian people have been misunderstood and misrepresented in the world because of the Iranian government's actions and politics as well as the malfunction of journalism and mass media.

Through these community art projects, Ava Serjouie-Scholz intends to reach different people, from different countries and background to learn about each other, to learn an art technique, to express themselves creatively and to exchange a work of art as well as learn to come closer to each other as human beings.

Through the process of creativity, people also come to show and express part of their personality, their thinking, fears, hopes, dreams. Through their work they come one step closer to seeing each other as human beings, accepting each other and even maybe learning to respect and love each other.

Iran and Portugal have both a rich history and culture in the use of hand painted tiles and Mosaics. In both countries a stroll through beautiful old cities and Towns, like Isfahan, Kashan and Porto or Lisbon will offer breath-taking moments and an experience of handcrafts at its highest possible masterpiece.



Detail of Sheikhlotfollah Mosque in Isfahan



Detail of church "Nossa Senhora do Carmo"-Porto

This inspired Ava Serjouie-Scholz to organise a community art project between school children in Iran and Portugal. The first thing after writing a project plan and proposal was to find artists or teachers who would be interested to participate in this project. Celia Ferreira from Portugal and Leila Farzaneh (Artist) from Iran both expressed their interest to work with children in their home country on their project.

The aim was to teach the children about the arts, cultures, language, geographical situation of the other country and inspire the children to work on a piece of art to give as a gift to another child from another country. So, for example Iranian children while learning about Portugal, its history, culture, food and people also got a chance to create and paint a picture on a tile through learning about ceramics and tiles painting (Glazing). But above all, children in both countries worked together to create works of art to send as a message of peace to the children in the other country. These children cooperated in two different continents, with the help and support of their teachers to create a work of art, that was a message of peace and friendship as well as a piece of art for the community of the other country. Each single tile was made with the hopes and dreams of a child to bring a message of harmony and love to another child across the borders as well as to function as one piece of one whole work dedicated to adorning a wall in a community. These little tiles

painted with small hands were made with big dreams of making our world a better unified, harmonious and loving.



Children in Iran learning about Portugal, the country, Lisbon, the language, the culture and arts in Portugal.



Children in Iran making the tiles, working together learning about a technique seldom used in schools (Glazing) under the instruction of an artist (Leila Farzaneh) and her assistants.



Tiles being prepared for oven, after which the children will get to see the real colours.

PART2 - The project in Portugal

Célia Ferreira

This community art project was proposed to Celia by Ava from Iran. She accepted the challenge to participate but had to persuade primary school teachers to participate on this project. She contacted the director of a school in the north of Portugal with pupils aged between 8 to 10-years old. Two teachers and their students volunteered to take part in this project (3rd year students, with teacher Helena Costa and the 4th year students with teacher Paula Rios.

After Célia have presented the idea to the students it was accepted with great enthusiasm. The project was divided into three stages:

1. Presentation of Iran's part of the project as well as a short introduction of the art and culture of Iran, to students;
2. making sketches for the preparation of tiles.
3. Painting glazed tiles to be sent to Iran.

In the first stage a video about Iran was projected, and students learnt some aspects about Iran: its capital, Tehran, history and culture. In the second part students were asked to draw what they thought would be "A Better World". The theme of the drawings was based on the message of the project, to bring countries and nations across borders closer to make our world a safer and harmonious place. After students learnt about the technique and how to transfer their sketches and drawings on the tiles, with the help of the English language teacher students wrote small texts to their co-partners in this project in Iran. Below are transcribed are some fragments of the letters that children in Portugal wrote to the children in Iran:

"...I'm glad to do this work to show you. I hope peace comes to your country and that you are very happy", William, 10 years old.

"...I want you to know that I'm proud to be part of this project. My wishes are that all the world live in pace", Rodrigo, 8 years old.

"...I'm 8 years old and I'm glad to do this work to you", Rodrigo, 10 years old.

"...I enjoy working on this project. I hope the world turns a better place.", Nuno Rodrigo, years old.

"...If I was in your country, I would make it better for all kid's study and together with me make a better place", João Paulo, 8 years old.

"...Don't be afraid, fight for the peace in your country. God bless you!", Joana, 8 years old.



Children painting tiles with Glaze technique. It's very different to paint with normal fluid paint, since the colours will first achieve their true shade after they are burned between 950 to 1100 degrees Celcius.

Children

Children from Iran sent their tiles to the school in Portugal and the works were exhibited in the main hall of the school. For the community the project was a very rich activity, teachers wrote various comments in their Facebook page; and it was noticed in the local newspapers. The project was a wonderful community art project and like many other cultural exchange projects between schools; this project proved that the arts can build bridges between people and cultures.

Conclusion

As art teachers and art educator we believe this kind of cultural and artistic exchanges between children offer a unique way for children to learn about cultures and countries and other nations. It helps them to become active members of society by taking part in a cultural project to bring communities together, which create works of art that add to the beauty of their living environment as well as a very strategy to develop a strong sense of solidarity with others. It helps the children to also reflect on their own country and cultures the community they live in, the image they want to give of themselves and their community. Just as Powers (2012) has atoned, art can help to bring people and communities together and even countries in two different continents. Art is a language that can speak louder and clearer than any other and can be understood by everyone.





The tiles put together to make one whole piece, adorning the wall in school, a community space to remind children of the friends on the other side of the world, of the cultural exchange, of their messages of piece in visual and verbal form as well as a deeper understanding and knowledge about another country from another continent.

References

- Keating, A. (2007). *Teaching transformation: Transcultural classroom dialogues*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Power, Katherine (2012). *Creating Transformation Through Art the Role of Community Arts in a Transitioning Society*. Ballymun, Dublin and Belfast Northern Ireland. Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection. Paper 1439. [Retrieved from http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/1439]

